



**Special Council Meeting Minutes  
December 9, 2019  
5:30PM**

**Present:** Scott Hess, Katie Michels, Pat Siergiey, Steven Farnham, Olivia Dunton, Julia Goldstein (by phone), Eric Jacobson, Eva Schectman, Jess Knapp.

**Staff:** Kari Bradley, Lisa Rochelle, Tim Wingate, Jay Wisner

**Facilitator:** Scott Hess

**Note Taker:** Rowan Sherwood

**Note:** Audio recorder was switched on after meeting was in progress, roughly at the beginning of Item 2, Community Comments.

- 1. Welcome, agenda review.** Scott thanked everyone for attending and stated the purpose of this meeting: To hear the terms of the tentative contract with the union and ratify it (or not).
- 2. Community Comments.** Lisa said she has been a member for 13 years and a staff member for 5 and she is very disappointed in how long it took to come to agreement on a contract. The divide between the union and management is deeper than ever and we all pay the price. She stated that the members and the union are activated.  
Eric asked if it would be helpful if the council established a policy on transparency. Lisa said she was in full support of transparency and reiterated the depth of the trust issue.  
Scott asked what the council could do differently. Lisa said that going into executive session makes people uncomfortable. She doesn't think Kari is being held accountable. She reiterated her disappointment that contract negotiations lasted so long.  
Scott acknowledged that there is a lot to talk about and that everyone would like to improve the process.  
Eric asked when can we talk about this more. Scott suggested putting it on the February agenda as January is already packed.
- 3. Discussion of tentative labor contract agreement. (02:48)** Kari began by clarifying that the agreement is tentative until ratified by both the council and the union and that we should not publicly share the terms until it is ratified.  
One significant change is in wages – a 3.4% increase for each of the three years, which exceeds sales growth and is more than budgeted. This will have implications for future budgeting.  
Another change is in the hiring process – preference can now be given to people within a department if they are qualified for the job. Scott asked about qualifications and Kari explained they are laid out in the job descriptions.

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The issue around managers performing bargaining unit work was not resolved; Kari expects it will play out through the grievance process up to and possibly including arbitration.

Julia asked how the council could vote on something that was not final. Kari explained that it's not final until both sides ratify it. Scott added that if it is not ratified then it goes back to the bargaining table. Julia asked what the council thought of the Bridge article and Kari responded saying he thought it was balanced.

Eric inquired about other things in the contract. Kari mentioned job posting and a change about life insurance. This came about because the insurer won't cover employees if they don't work at least 16 hours per week. Up until now the Co-op has been self-insuring.

Julia apologized for missing the beginning of the meeting and asked Lisa to reiterate her points, which she did.

Eric motioned to ratify the contract. Pat seconded.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

- 4. Action items. (13:08)** What can the council do to help the process in the next round of negotiations? It will be on the February agenda to discuss and Lisa will follow up.

Eric asked if we could use a formula to calculate wage increases that everyone agrees on based on CPI or inflation. It was agreed to discuss at a later time. Kari said it's a good idea in theory, but both sides need to agree and he doesn't think price inflation was a significant factor for the union. Scott thinks it would be hard to agree on a measure. Eric thinks the union should consider these things.

Olivia asked about binding arbitration. Kari explained that it's the final step in the grievance process if Union and management cannot reach agreement. Both sides help choose a mediator. It is an expensive process and the cost of the mediator is shared between parties. There have only been two arbitrations during Kari's tenure as GM.

Steven motioned to adjourn the meeting. Eva seconded.

**The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.**