

STATEMENT BY MAYOR JOHN CRANLEY ON PROPOSED WAGE INCREASES

Today, I will be referring a proposed ordinance to Monday's Budget and Finance Committee that would provide raises to all City employees who are represented by the FOP, IAFF, AFSCME and CODE. The raises are for 5 percent beginning on December 4th, 5 percent for Fiscal Year 2018, and 4 percent for Fiscal Year 2019. Law is finalizing the ordinance, which will be released later today.

For the better part of the last decade, these employees have been impacted by the City's fiscal burdens. They have too often gone without raises or been given small wage increases that do little to accommodate for a rising cost of living. According the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the local cost of living has increased by nearly ten percent since 2010. During this time period, the FOP and IAFF saw only a single wage increase in 2014, at a modest 1.5 percent. AFSCME and CODE fared only slightly better. This ordinance will put these employees on par with the real cost of living increases that they are owed. It is the right thing to do for people who provide the front line basic services we all depend on.

Even when budgets were tight, these men and women came to work every day to keep our City moving forward, many of them prepared to risk their lives.

The general fund impact of this ordinance is estimated to be an additional \$3.1 million in Fiscal Year 2017. When we passed this year's budget we knew that collective bargaining outcomes were uncertain and planned to use the surplus accordingly. With an improved credit rating, structurally balanced budget and strengthened economy, we are positioned to provide raises in a way that is both responsible and sustainable.

This action is an investment in our community that will benefit all citizens. A talented, fairly compensated workforce, is at the core of our ability to maximize safety and provide the most basic services to all of our neighborhoods. If we want to prioritize the services that constituents have made very clear are important to them, then at the very least we must pay these employees the cost of living increases they deserve. Since the economy is growing and tax receipts are up, the time to act is now.

Approving these increases communicates that we value and respect the dignity and sacrifices of our first responders and dedicated public servants. I urge Council to stand with me in sending that message.