

CITY OF LAWRENCE
Common Council
February 3, 2025
Regular Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilors Kristie Krone, Tyrrell Giles, Rick Wells, Sherron Freeman, Zach Cramer, Lisa Chavis, Carlos Jennings, Liz Masur, and Betty Robinson

MEMBERS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO, BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

ALSO PRESENT: Clerk Adkisson, Scott Carr (VP at Catalyst Public Affairs Group), Amy Levander (Krieg DeVault LLP), Scott Krapf and Carrie Doehrman (Frost Brown Todd)

STAFF PRESENT: Mayor Whitfield, Greg Goodnight, Jami Weinrich, Eric Martin, Humphrey Nagila, Amber Riley, and LeAndre Level.

STAFF BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Chris Wilburn, Shawn Fugate, Jeanette Jackson, Robert Wallace and Curtis Bigsbee

President Cramer called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was administered, followed by a prayer given by Council, Tyrrell Giles.

President Cramer recognized there was a quorum. It was also recognized there were extra copies of the agenda located at the back of the room along with a sign-up sheet for comments from the citizens.

COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS: Councilor Masur expressed concern over legislation in the Indiana legislature that could severely impact the City of Lawrence. She stated, the proposed property tax legislation could result in a nearly \$2 billion loss in funding, which would affect the city's safety, economic development, and essential municipal services. Additionally, House Bill 1402 and Senate Bill 443 were mentioned as potentially harmful, as they would allow business personal property tax to be reduced to zero over three years, significantly impacting the city's budget. Councilor Masur recommended contacting Governor Braun and challenging the Indiana State Legislature's approach to the City of Lawrence's infrastructure.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS OR RESOLUTIONS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES REGULAR MEETING 1-9-2025

Councilor Chavis made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilor Jennings 2nd the motion. The roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS 1-15-2025: This agenda item to approve vouchers and claims was addressed. Council Chavis inquired about an issue with the cover sheet, specifically a duplicate entry. Councilor Chavis moved to approve vouchers and claims with the payroll date of January 15, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilor Jennings. Before the vote was taken, Councilor Jennings mentioned, according to Ordinance No. 11, 2013 [1-2-1-6. (E)]. The city controller shall provide, at the end of each month, submit under oath, to the Common Council a report of the accounts of the city and showing revenues, receipts, expenditures and sources of revenues. The question was asked by Councilor Jennings, how many times, at the end of each month, have the controller under oath given the council this report. Councilor Jennings question went unanswered. Roll call was taken, (8) ayes, Councilors Giles, Chavis, Robinson, Cramer, Jennings, Freeman, Krone and Masur. (1) nay, Councilor Wells. Motion carried 8-1 to approve Payroll Claims for \$1,189,331.29 [January 15, 2025, payroll] and Invoices [for vendors] as presented today [for \$1,450,726.95]. No other claims were approved due to no explanation given regarding duplicate entries.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Consideration of Council appointments to the Economic Development Commission. Councilor Robinson moved to nominate Ray Anderson. Councilor Jennings 2nd the move. Roll call was taken, (8) ayes, Councilors Giles, Chavis, Robinson, Cramer, Jennings, Freeman, Krone and Masur. (1) nay, Councilor Wells. Motion carried 8-1. Mr. Ray Anderson was reappointed to the Economic Development Commission.

Proposal No. 1, 2025 - An ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Lawrence, Indiana, amending Ordinance Number 10224, an ordinance fixing the salaries of appointed officers and employees of the police department and the fire department for the year 2025. Proposal was read in the record. President Cramer stated the administration requested that the council consider passing the ordinance on the same evening. For this to occur, the council must provide unanimous consent, and then a two-thirds vote in favor must be received. The administration explained that this amendment is required due to discrepancies found in the initial salary ordinance passed last year. The issue relates to certain positions in the police and fire departments (such as police training officers and certain command and coordination roles) whose pay was not properly reflected in the ordinance. The discrepancy was discovered when police officers noticed that their salaries were not fully in line with the collective bargaining agreement (CBA). It was noted that some positions were left off the salary ordinance despite being agreed upon during the CBA discussions. The payroll staff in the controller's office, bound by the city ordinance, recognized this error and brought it to the council's attention to avoid future audit issues with the State Board of Accounts.

Specific Changes Proposed:

- Two additional positions, Professional Command and Training Coordinator, would be added to the salary ordinance.
- Additionally, a pay adjustment of \$5 per hour for certain specialty positions is being proposed.

Mr. Level, Deputy Chief of Staff, distributed a redline version of the proposal to amend Ordinance 10 (2024) which was presented, addressing the amendments to the FOP CBA (Fraternal Order of Police Collective Bargaining Agreement) and the Professional Firefighters Association CBA. Mr. Level also mentioned a technical error was discovered in the salary ordinance for police and fire departments. Specifically, there was a duplicate listing under "Technical Pay" for the "Recruit Field Tactical Instructor." The second entry needs to be corrected to "Recruit Tactical Field Operator." The correction is needed to ensure that officers receive the correct compensation on the upcoming pay schedule (10th and final disbursement on the 15th). Administrative officials emphasized the importance of addressing technical errors to ensure the accuracy of pay and to avoid potential audit issues from the State Board of Accounting. If the council moves forward with the first reading, the technical corrections will be made to the ordinance and reflected in the pay schedule. Councilor Chavis expressed concerns about rushing the process. Although acknowledging the errors that need correction, she expressed hesitation in supporting the first reading due to the recent discovery of additional errors. She also emphasized the importance of ensuring thorough review and legal consultation before proceeding. She stated she would feel more comfortable voting in support once the legal team reviews the document and all errors are addressed.

President Cramer requested consent to consider the proposal on first reading. Motion made by Councilor Giles for consent to suspend the rules and vote on the first reading. Roll call vote was taken to suspend the rules on first reading. (2) Ayes, Councilors Freeman and Cramer. (7) Nays Councilors Giles, Chavis, Wells, Robinson, Jennings, Krone and Masur. Motion to suspend did not pass and was referred to the Public Safety Committee.

COMMENTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION: Mr. Level addressed the councilors with an update on an inquiry presented by Councilor Krone regarding some infrastructures in her council district. Councilor Krone inquired about traffic concerns in the Indian Lake area. Director of Streets, Jim Heneghan, responded via email and acknowledged that addressing this issue would require significant financial investment. This includes Right of Way acquisition, engineering costs, utility relocations, storm water drainage improvements, curbing, and sidewalk construction. Infrastructure projects are prioritized, especially with the current legislative situation and funding constraints. Mr. Level also addressed the concerns of Councilors Wells and Masur regarding the Lobbyists that was hired to advocate and represent the city at the Indiana State House. The administration emphasized that this is crucial due to ongoing legislation that could affect the city

budget, particularly Senate Bill 1 and related legislation impacting property taxes and the tax formula. The city's reliance on property taxes (approximately 43-45% of general fund revenue) makes this issue particularly urgent. The Council was encouraged to monitor any changes that could affect revenue, especially regarding business and personal property taxes. Councilor Wells also expressed his concerns with the issues regarding the medians on Pendleton Pike. Amy Levander from Krieg Devault LLP and Scott Carr from Catalyst were introduced as the city's lobbyists. Council members were invited to ask questions regarding the ongoing legislative issues and their potential impact on the city. The Council had an educational discussion last Monday with lobbyist Scott Carr from Catalyst regarding these matters.

Mr. Level mentioned the City of Lawrence will host its annual Black History Month celebration at the Theater at the Fort on February 26, in partnership with Art for Lawrence. Additional details will be announced. The Lawrence Fire Department and EMS were officially certified as an EMS training institute by the state of Indiana. This certification will reduce outsourcing of EMS training and provide an opportunity for other agencies to meet Indiana's training standards.

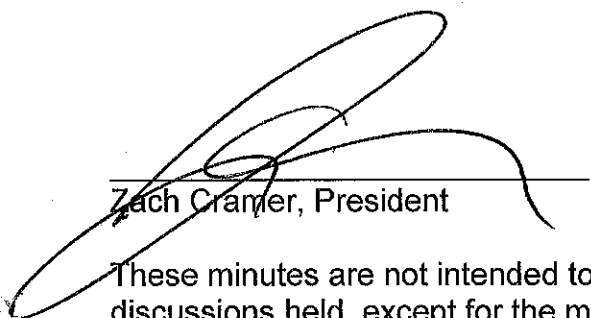
Mr. Level also introduced the city's newest employee, Jim Perron. Former mayor of Elkhart has joined the City of Lawrence as Director of Communications for Fund Development. Jim will focus on securing state, local, and federal grants and other funding opportunities. Jim and his wife are residents of Lawrence, and he currently serves as the chairman of the Board of Public Works and Safety.

COMMENTS FROM THE CITIZENS: Charles Knapp, 5728 Wallingwood Drive, Lawrence, IN. Mr. Knapp addressed concerns about a traffic problem in the Wallingwood Drive and Boy Scout Road neighborhood, specifically regarding high-speed driving. He requested the installation of additional speed limit signs, stop signs, or speed humps to reduce speeding. Mr. Knapp also raised concerns about a proposed telecommunications utility tower to be constructed near his neighborhood. He noted that the address provided in the notice (5828 Boy Scout Road) does not exist and questioned the impact of the tower on the neighborhood. He expressed concerns about potential health effects and requested support from the city to address these issues. He plans to schedule a meeting with the mayor to discuss these concerns.

Ms. Andrea Ostrander, 5728 Wallingwood Drive, Lawrence, IN. Ms. Ostrander addressed her concerns about the tower planned to go up in her neighborhood. The same neighborhood mentioned by Mr. Knapp. She emphasized the health concerns raised by the community regarding the potential impact of the tower. Ms. Ostrander requested that the issue be documented in case there are future concerns, ensuring there is a record to support their case.

Mr. Brandon Warren, 6456 Royal Oakland Place, Lawrence, IN. Mr. Warren addressed the ongoing traffic issues on 63rd Street due to an overflow of parent pickup traffic from the nearby schools. Mr. Warren explained that the traffic problems affect both Fall Creek Valley and a neighboring school, Forest Glen Elementary. As a 4-year resident of 63rd Street and a teacher at Fall Creek Valley, Mr. Warren has witnessed continuous traffic developments related to similar issues. He stressed that the traffic problem is an ongoing issue that needs to be resolved.

ADJOURNMENT: Councilor Cramer called for adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m., by President Cramer.



Zach Cramer, President

Leatrice Adkisson, L.A.

Leatrice Adkisson, Clerk

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, except for the motions.

11

12

13