

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF RUIDOSO DOWNS
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SPECIAL WORKSESSION
WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 7, 2016
5:30 P.M.

The Council of the City of Ruidoso Downs met in a Work Session on Wednesday, September 7, 2016. Mayor Pro Tem Miller called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer to take roll call. The following were present:

Councilor Morales (via telephone)
Councilor Walker

Mayor Pro Tem Miller
Councilor Romero

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer informed Mayor Pro Tem Miller there was a quorum.

Also present:

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll
Kenny Ellard, Fire Department
Dale Graham, Public Works Director
Joe Jarvis, Project Manager
Steve Dunigan, Planning & Zoning Director
Darrell Chavez, Lieutenant - Police Department
Virginia Armstrong, Court Administrator
Dakota Crouch, HMAW Director

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said the next item on the agenda was - Discussion of Salary Step Increase System for the City of Ruidoso Downs.

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll said I put together a package that has our current wage and salary chart. There is also a copy of the Village of Ruidoso wage chart and a copy of the Village of Ruidoso certification and wage plan. There is also a municipality

wage comparison report that I got from the New Mexico Municipal League. There is also a copy of the Village of Ruidoso merit policy in their Personnel Policy. The only other policy that I could find that showed their compensation policy was the City of Las Cruces. I really don't know where to start. I guess you need to tell me what you want.

Councilor Morales said Donna, I think what we're looking for more than anything else, and Mayor Pro Tem please correct me if I'm wrong, is that the step program that we have in place right now, it does not work well for our municipality. I think what we're more interested in is a step program, well not a step program but a merit increase that would work for our municipality.

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll said probably what you want is something like the Village of Ruidoso has. They have a merit increase.

Councilor Morales said I did look at that and that's kind of what we are looking for as far as what do they have if an employee has been there 12 months, 24 months, 4 years, 5 years, I don't know. I looked at that merit policy they had and I think that's basically what we're looking for.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said being on the Budget Committee this year we talked about discontinuing the step program because we found out about that it's not fair to long time employees that have been here a long time and that the new employees seem to make more than the older ones. It's kind of embarrassing even I think for us to do that. My opinion on this, I don't know that much about this merit thing, merit pay/performance pay that would be up to the Director for the people underneath them. They know what training they've been to and their education more or less and that would be kind of up to the Director for that employee. I just wanted to get rid of the steps.

Councilor Morales said I agree with you on that.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said I would just like to get rid of the steps and go back to where we start on our wages and then of course everybody gets their COLA and everybody gets that at their one year but also if they show they are doing more on their job I would say that's up to the Director to come to the board and ask for it. That way we eliminate the steps. Of course we would have to pay the newly hired that got hired under that step increase. That's my opinion on this.

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll asked how are you going to know where to start the pay when you hire someone?

Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked is this your hourly pay here at the beginning?

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll said yes. This is the chart after everyone got their raises last year.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked do we need to go through and do an hourly wage on everyone that is in here now on the people that have been here?

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll said okay, when someone is hired do you want them to start at the rate of Step 1 and then that would be the base rate that they start?

Councilor Walker said I think with like Dale and them they have different levels of operations and I think if a guy comes in highly qualified he should be paid more to start. It goes by his qualifications where he should get a certain amount to start but then he should be able to progress as he does schooling and classes. I think all of that should be up to the Director's. They would just come in front of us and ask approval.

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll asked so the starting place would be up to the Director?

Councilor Walker said I also think we should get an average of what it is throughout the state for each position and base that on a starting rate.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said that's a very good idea. Some of these are very low.

Councilor Morales said yes they are very low.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said these are very hard working people. I think our minimum wage we could vote on that also and a new minimum wage instead of some of these lower \$8.53 and like that. They won't want to come to work for that price. Nobody I know wants to. That's one thing we will have to decide on as Council is the minimum wage in the future for sure. I don't know if our budget will allow it right now but it's something we need to think about.

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll said the Village also has a certification incentive plan and so you may want to have a plan like that.

Councilor Walker said also like for firefighters and stuff when they come and they've been here awhile and show that they care about their job and I'm talking about any department and they care about helping the City progress that should also be accounted for in raises. And, when they are going after grants to save the City money and I mean just showing that they care about their jobs deserves a raise. I think that should be one of the steps that we look at also.

Councilor Romero said the way I was reading the step chart was the entry level pay, let's take Animal Control Officer, the hourly is \$12.64 and that's based on if we hired one right now. And the next step would be to bump them up to \$13.00. So, this is kind of chart you use to start them off like at the level 4 position which is the Animal Control, Police Officer, Firefighter, laborer so there is a base to go off of and we need to adjust that.

Councilor Walker said what we're also looking at is in the State of New Mexico as comparison then we could base our pay on that. Not that they're going to get the highest out of all or equal to the big City but they are going to get something comparable.

Councilor Romero said there are a lot of guys that work for the City that don't have certain levels of certifications. Some people can't get those but there still needs to be some kind of incentive plan because they're hard workers. They come out late night when they're not on duty. There are some that jump down in ditches when there's six inches of snow. We need to make sure there is some kind of incentive plan for them also and not just for certifications.

Councilor Morales said I'm having a hard time hearing you.

Councilor Romero said basically to make sure that every employee has the opportunity to advance in their pay and in their jobs. Not just for certifications. They are still hard workers and should advance in their jobs.

Councilor Morales said that's what you said right?

Councilor Romero said yes.

Councilor Morales said one thing that I do think and I don't see it right now in the Village of Ruidoso merit policy was giving an increase for certifications is I think that very important to get an increase if you go through the classes and you are willing to go through the classes and you have the incentive. And now I don't find it.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said I believe that's "E" on criteria for awarding employee merit raise. It talks about the employee being evaluated against his or her own performance evaluation and merit pay. That one.

Councilor Morales said yes I think so. I still haven't found it but I know I read it.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said it states at least one performance evaluation from the employees recent work history reflects satisfactory or above ratings shall be included as support documentation. The employee's performance shall have been merited to sustain over a 12 month period or longer period. For an employee to be considered for merit pay the employee must demonstrate increased performance above the noted for a previous merit pay award. The written justification shall site the sustained above average performance supported by data, specific circumstances with measurable outcomes or other tangible data which accurately describes one or more of the qualities. Then it goes on to the next page there are six conditions there. But, the Director of that employee would know this and like I was saying it would be a lot up to the Directors who work side by side with these people and know their performance.

Councilor Morales said exactly.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said but for right now it's all for discussion but for right now our biggest thing is to stop these step increases. From there we can go ahead with something else to take its place with the merits and certifications and other stuff.

Councilor Morales said in looking at the merit plan that Ruidoso has looks like a pretty good plan. We would have to tweek it for our municipality but ours can't be exactly like theirs but I think that you have a good policy.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said no, we're not going to try to copy theirs. It's just to get ideas.

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said my personal opinion is your whole wage rate needs to be looked at like Councilor Walker said because you have people here who are way underpaid. For instance, we have an equipment operator who works for the street department that makes \$11.62 an hour a museum gift shop person making \$15.85. An equipment operator is just as important to me as a gift shop person. In fact more important to me because this is the person that goes out and fixes the streets and plows the snow in the wintertime. The wage rates here are way off one side or the other. The whole thing needs to be looked at and rebalanced and then put in an incentive plan like we used to have back in 2007.

Councilor Romero said I agree.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said that sounds good to me. I know there are a few people who barely make enough to get by on. That's kind of sad because I know they are very good employees.

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said and another thing is we have the certified people that have to be certified to have their job. Our certifications are just as hard to get as other people. Sometimes like to go get a Water Level IV it takes four years to be able to move up to that Water Level IV. You can't just go get one. Those certifications are just as important as other certifications here and our water guys are just making \$12.00 and \$13.00 an hour and the other certified people in the City are making \$18.00, \$19.00 and \$20.00 and that's not right. It's not fair. Our jobs are just as dangerous and just as important. There needs to be some equality there and that needs to be looked at.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said we need to take all of that into consideration.

Councilor Walker asked if we should leave it up to the Department Heads to contact other entities for like the average of what these different towns are making for these positions? It would eliminate a lot of work for just one person if the Department Heads would get it all together and then have another meeting on what we're going to decide.

Councilor Morales said I would agree with that. It's a lot for one person to do it all. I think there's a lot of municipalities that are our size that we would be comparable with. Obviously you can't be comparable with Albuquerque but I think it's a great idea to pass that on to Department Heads and then let them get the comparables and then have another meeting to decide which direction we want to go and how we want to go.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said I was looking at Santa Fe's today and they base a lot of their wages on the cost of living in their area because the cost of living there is very expensive. We're also a tourist town here and the cost of living here is more expensive in Ruidoso Downs. I just came from Alamogordo and the gas is \$1.89. That just proves to you. You can go in a grocery store and \$20.00 goes a lot more down there. Our cost of living is high here. That's what Santa Fe is looking at. Of course you've got to be able to handle that in your budget. But, for our people that stay with us and be compatible with other towns we have to look at the cost of living in this area also when we go down to doing these wages.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said I just wanted to elaborate on what Dale Graham was saying. When I started here for the certifications there were levels I, II, and III. IV, and V. It wasn't much but it was something. I was told by different people that oh, it's going to be put back in but it's never been done. We are one of the few cities in New Mexico that cannot pay for certifications for water or wastewater or CDL. Looking through Ruidoso's if you look on the certification incentive plan it does show they pay water, wastewater, and CDL. All those are very beneficial to our department for when one of us is sick or where we've had some instances where our guys quit and go to Ruidoso. They're doing the same job for \$3.00 more an hour. They say okay, I've been here five years, what do I have to look forward to? I think Ruidoso does 5% every five

years or something. Maybe that is something to look at. Something for the people that stay here so they will stay here because there is none. We definitely need to look at levels and CDL drivers. Do you know how many in the old days were driving when they shouldn't have been driving? They had to or we wouldn't have water.

Councilor Walker said the City spends money on training these people so why are we going to give our money to another town? We're going to pay money to train them and then let them go over there where they don't have to pay to train them.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said the last three water operators have left for more money and that's the only reason they left. As far as looking at towns our size I've been through this before. I don't know if it's the right way. Maybe we should look at other towns' gross receipts or something. We gave a Super Walmart. I don't know, maybe we should look at gross receipts or something. We can't compete with Ruidoso and we know that. Maybe Cloudcroft.

Councilor Morales said it doesn't have a Walmart.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said I do want to go back to 2007 when the educational incentive pay was structured under that many years of previous administration. I'm going to jump on the wagon with Mr. Graham and Mr. Jarvis for Public Works employees only, provided that the employee pay for their own testing, and they do pay for their own testing. The reason for that is because if they should leave the City of Ruidoso Downs that certification goes with them. That's why they did level II, III, and IV and then a double level IV on the educational incentive pay. It was structured also for administrative Public Works employees also. Then employees paid for their own testing. For Finance/Administration there was certified professional public buyers. There was only one up to 2014 in Lincoln County and that was Terri Mosley and she paid for her own test for that certification. What they did at the time and they had a Fire Department and attended regular meetings and if you can recall Mr. Ellard it was the Public Safety Department at the time under the Police Department and Certified Firefighter levels issued by the State of New Mexico was increased by \$1.00. If it was a Certified Firefighter level II then it went up to \$1.10. Then it goes on and on and on. Back when Jay Smith was here back in 2012 or 2011 in that area we did have a meeting of all Department Heads. We had several meetings of all Department Heads to revise the Personnel Policy Manual. At that time all were in agreement to remove the educational incentive pay because at the time the budget didn't allow any more increases other than if there was going to be a COLA. Knowing that we have the structure that we now have in place on each categorized employee in looking at the rates from Ruidoso, and this is only my personal opinion, that there is no way that we could use Ruidoso's incentive pay and/or their structure of their range. The reasons for are there are almost double employees; their budget is probably tripled if not more so

they can afford it. Their GRT alone are substantial in comparison to ours. In giving the Department Heads the authorization or direct the Department Heads to go and contact other municipalities as Councilor Morales said in comparable size, what's going to happen is you may find some municipalities that may have that structure and then again you're going to find other municipalities within the same range that don't even have that structure. So you're going to hit a wall there. On the advance comparison detail report from the compensation survey system that was from the League, if you look at it you have Billing Clerk, Utility Clerk, City Manager, Town Administrator, City Administrator, Administrative Secretary. I didn't see anything in here that dealt with the Police Department, Fire Department, and Public Works with streets, garage, parks, and so on. I know they do have them.

Councilor Morales said you say the League Carol?

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll said this is all they have right now.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer asked if they don't have Parks & Rec?

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll said no.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said this one to me personally I wouldn't even consider looking at Ruidoso's or the advanced comparison detail report for the compensation survey system that produced the surveys. I'm going to guess why they're not in there is because it's up to whoever is responsible for putting the data in are not supplying that information to the compensation surveys. I do totally agree with Dale and Joey and I'm sure that everyone here is in agreement that the rate structure that the City of Ruidoso Downs has makes no sense. We have tried for year to figure out what the percentage was. It was a different percentage for just about every position here within the City or the Village at the time. We just couldn't make heads or tails of it. You could, depending on what is available, in funds in the budget, is take what is currently the hourly rate for each position and maybe tie in a percentage, a substantial percentage, and make it comfortable for the next five years or three years and then jump to the next three years for a lesser percentage. I don't know but that makes a lot more sense. But, I also do agree with Public Works that equipment operators, your seasonal laborers, your mechanics, your water operator I and II, your wastewater operator I and II certainly needs to be looked at whether it's this year or next year. You really need to look at those hourly wages. They pay for their own testing. The certification is a requirement under the job description as well as the CDL and it does benefit the City of Ruidoso Downs.

Councilor Walker said even like with me being a businessman and what I go through with my employees in order to encourage them to stay I will pay for their testing but I

have them sign an agreement that they'll stay so many years after that. That's just an idea you can look at.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said the testing is kind of small but it doesn't have to be a big issue.

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said I think they tried that before to try to get them to sign something but there was a reason you couldn't tie them to something like that.

Councilor Morales said I remember that and there was some legal reason you couldn't bind them that way.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said because they paid for it.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said I also remember training a lot of police officers for many years and as soon as they got their certification they would go somewhere else for more money.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said Ruidoso laughs at us every time someone goes to school and they say who are you going to give us next? He said last time we put out for a level II water we didn't get one application. They offer so much more.

Councilor Morales said if we could just fix that margin a little bit more.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said our benefits are a little bit better with 90% on the insurance.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said they also pay more in retirement and that's how they say it balances out.

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said I believe Jay Smith left in 2010 and then Jim Kofakis was the interim.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said when I came back on the Council it was Jim.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said it was 2011-2012.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked if there were any other comments? She asked Steve Dunigan, Planning & Zoning Director if he had any comments?

Steve Dunigan, Planning & Zoning Director said I agree with what you are trying to accomplish. If it was a level playing field it would be easier and I agree the system is out of whack. It would be easier to start with a benchmark for each position. The

challenge is that we have a lot of employees who are already at step III and have been with us a long time more than the newer ones coming in. You would just have to work through that and figure out what's fair based on an average. I do believe the incentive should be brought back. Certifications certainly because it benefits the City. I think we can do this and I can't see that we can't bring something to the next meeting for an average for each position and figure out what to do with the people that are already at their highest level. You would want to reward them for what they already have but we can't break the budget. It's a puzzle but I think you're on the right track. You should see where the starting should be and then the education incentive. You certainly don't want them to take the certification and go to another municipality where they make \$3.00 more an hour. That's just a waste of training and counterproductive for us.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said I think everyone is in agreement and we need this input from the Directors.

Councilor Romero asked Dale how long does it take for a person to reach a water level I? A day? An hour? A week?

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said generally you have to do a lot of studying before you go to the school where we send them. The school is a week-long school but you're going to have to do quite a bit of studying up to that time. The last guy we had come in it took him about a year to get ready to go take that test.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said you also have to have a certain amount of time in that job before you can take the test.

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said it's one year of experience before you can take the test.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said and thirty hours for the test. You're looking at two classes.

Councilor Romero said so all the prep time is on their own.

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said they have to work for it. You don't just go and sign up for the school and take the test and get the license. You get level I and level II. You have to hold your level II for one year before they will allow you to test for a level III. Then you have to hold your level III before they allow you to test for a level IV.

Councilor Romero said so that better defines the value of the certification.

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said that's right so when you start from scratch you're looking at around four years to go from the bottom to the top. That's with a person who is a good test taker.

Councilor Romero said this takes a lot of years of hard work and dedication. How would you rate that and base that on?

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said on their years of experience.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said experience, knowledge, and years of service.

Councilor Romero said and performance right?

Dale Graham, Public Works Director said so if you have an employee now that's performing very well but on a low pay scale that's something you need to figure out.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said I have a prime example. Right now we have a blade operator working on Griffith Drive. He make \$11.00 something an hour. We have a CDL truck driver with no experience but he backs it with his CDL and makes \$2.00 more an hour. The blade operator is upset because he's been here seven or eight years and a new guy comes in with no experience and can't operate a blade but can operate a dump truck. That's what we need to adjust. Neither one of them can do their job without the other.

Councilor Morales said that is the problem that we had with that program. It's the new guy coming in making more than the one that's been here. Of course he's not going to be happy. That's why we had to eliminate that step program because it was detrimental to the previous employee that was hired.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said the longevity is very important for these guys. We have a lot of guys that have been here quite a while. Every day we hear from them 'what do we have to look forward to?'

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said that's what I was just thinking. You have the possibility to look at the training, knowledge, and years of service where you could come up with an hourly wage for that employee.

Councilor Walker said what I would like to ask the Department Heads when they are calling around is find out what the average is. Maybe you could ask them like say do you have anyone that's been there ten years because we have a guy that's been here ten years and about what does this guy make? So compare the years with that also and try to get that comparable so it will be more black and white.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said you would want to talk to Capitan and Ruidoso. They both offer a five year and ten year across the board percentage increase.

Councilor Walker said you should talk to the State or the County because their wages are pretty close to the City anyway.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said the County of Lincoln has a range for each department and each position. I believe it's like every three years and Ruidoso is from 103 to 105 or 104. You could also do a minimum and a medium and then a high. Depending what their knowledge and years of service regardless if they worked somewhere else. You could base that off of the low, medium, or high.

Councilor Romero asked with the Department Heads, how does it work with the evaluations?

Dakota Crouch, HMAW Director said I would put it out there as an option on the pay raises is perhaps some sort of weighted system where you weight your longevity as some sort of percentage and then weight your performance as some sort of percentage. That way they have the opportunity to get a raise for staying with us and get incentives for their performance because you don't want to get locked into a system like we're in now where after your year is over we don't have that provision for evaluating employees and we're sort of committed to giving everybody money no matter what. I can't think of a lot of instances right now where people are undeserving or performing poorly but if at some time it should come up that they haven't merited a \$2.00 increase or whatever this year. I would echo what a lot of others have said that is that in general the employees of the City are underpaid and we're not giving our staff incentives for furthering their education whether that be certifications or advanced degrees or like that. Whenever it comes to finding out averages of what people get paid that may be difficult because we may not be comparing apples to apples because what we may call a position here may not be the same. They may have different duties. Most staff aren't getting paid what they are deserving because of the fact that we have a large work load with not as many employees as other places have.

Councilor Morales asked if that was Dakota?

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said yes.

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said I'd like to mirror what Steve said with the raises but the only thing different is the certification. We receive State Fire Protection funds and EMS funds. Training and recertifications are part of that money. Like me, I recertify my EMT Intermediate License every two years. That's part of the reason the State sends

us that money. The same with Fire Department training. I don't think we've ever made anyone pay for their own training. There's not a whole lot of recertifications on the Fire Department side but there are refreshers. I just want to make sure we don't take that away from the Fire Department/EMS side.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said I think most of them are volunteers and that's one incentive for our volunteers to be there and that should not go away.

Councilor Romero said to Kenny you are the only Fire personnel right?

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said yes and I have twelve volunteers.

Councilor Romero said and they get training and certifications just like everyone else in the City?

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said yes.

Councilor Romero asked so you have a Fire I and a Fire II?

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said I have three personnel Fire II that have been with me quite a while.

Councilor Romero asked and Wildland certifications?

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said a little less than half because we have some new recruits right now.

Councilor Romero asked what the requirements are for Wildland certifications?

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said basic wildland.

Councilor Romero asked if there were any incentives for the volunteers?

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said pay-wise, no.

Councilor Romero asked on the Wildland side?

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said yes. If we were called out by New Mexico State Fire out of Capitan they go out to Hondo for mutual aid. Every type of truck that we use gets a certain pay line. I believe it was before Terri Mosley left that we set it aside to where the money came back into the Fire Department instead of the General Fund for

the volunteers that went on that fire to be paid a certain amount. That's the only pay they received.

Councilor Romero said so that's the only pay they received for Wildland?

Kenny Ellard, Fire Department said if it's out of our district then yes.

Lieutenant Chavez said I agree that something needs to be done. From my end, when we get this done. As you see on the news and everywhere else not a lot of people want to be a Police Officer anymore which makes it hard for our department. Not only that but we can't approve non-certified because as you mentioned before they end up going somewhere else as certified. We have a position open that we haven't received any applications for. A lot of the reasons include incentives like Ruidoso and Alamogordo and other places that do offer something. The only thing we can offer new recruits is training and in today's generation they are looking at 'what's in it for me' and besides training. I'm in agreement with everyone else. With certifications there might be a cap on that and we all have different levels like myself that have 1400 advanced hours and a college degree and my command certification. Fair is fair and we all understand budget and everything has to be reasonable.

Councilor Romero said we just went through Public Works and where they pay for their own training.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said not training.

Councilor Romero said but they do pay for their own certifications and the Fire Department pays for their training but they are volunteers. Does the Fire Department pay for your own certification?

Lieutenant Chavez said generally for police certification no. If you go to Santa Fe you will not pay for that certification. Any advanced training that we do offer because of budget concerns, if it comes for free we send our officers. Some of the training can go from \$150.00 up to \$2,000.000 notwithstanding. We do have to pay for meals and lodging.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked if there is a certification you have to keep up yearly?

Lieutenant Chavez said you do have to keep up your basic police certification every two years.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked how long does that take? A week usually?

Lieutenant Chavez said usually a department will wait until the instructors hold training that are local and are free.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked you are for the incentive then?

Lieutenant Chavez said absolutely.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said definitely education and training. Our biggest problem was the steps where an employee working here three years was making more than someone who has been here ten years.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager said the cost of living wasn't even figured into this.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said so something new has to be done and all of your input is important so thank you.

Councilor Walker said I would like to encourage the Department Heads to come to more of our meetings because we need your input as well as the citizens input. Like tonight we're talking about budget and money and so many times our payroll manager and them and we're talking about money. I think they should be here at our meetings. I myself am getting tired of coming and they're not here. I think that needs to be addressed also.

Donna Miller, Personnel/Payroll said I think if you do a merit increase I think we need to do yearly evaluations on all the employees because that would give us something to support giving them a merit increase.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said I agree and that would be the Directors to do the evaluation.

Councilor Morales said I agree.

Councilor Romero stated that in some of our departments, that is all there is. Who evaluates them?

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said the Finance Director, Personnel/Payroll, and Kenny Ellard, Dale Graham report to the mayor and Steve. Is that correct? She said Chief of Police and City Clerk/Treasurer are classified under the FLSA as at-will employees so we serve at the pleasure of the mayor with board concurrence. Therefore, what I'm getting at is the Chief and my evaluation would have to come from the whole Governing Body and not just one person. I believe. It makes sense. I could be wrong and stand to be corrected.

Councilor Morales said so I think we all know where we are headed but what we need to do basically come to a unanimous, and I don't want to say decision because this is a workshop, but a consensus of what the direction we want to go now. Does that make sense?

Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked Carol, City Clerk/Treasurer to summarize to come down to a direction?

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said this is just my perspective of the workshop in discussion of the salary step increases system for the City of Ruidoso Downs. I believe the City Governing Body tonight has the consensus to allow each Department Head to come up with comparable wage structures for each position within their department keeping in mind years of experience, training, and the knowledge, and any type of certifications that they hold currently. On the incentive pay or the educational incentive pay, that's going to have to be structured and taken into deep consideration due to the fact that you're going to need to find out how many certifications there are out there besides Water and Wastewater, Police Department, Fire Department, Planning & Zoning services. On the other side of the coin you have Certified Municipal Clerk. That's a three year process and when I got mine in the early 80' there was an advanced education which also took three years. I was very fortunate to come to Ruidoso Downs in July 31, 2001 and have the opportunity to again take another higher step to a Master Municipal Clerk and that took another three years. That's all based on years of service, attendance in the required workshops and seminars. For me it's not going to do me any good other than to do one for the Secretary/Finance. I only have one person to take care of. I know she has an Associate's Degree. She is well-organized and I've said this many times, she's always willing to learn so that part is easy for me. These guys are going to have the hard job. What I was getting to was you need to allow your Department Heads to come up with some type of wage structure and you're going to give them more than a week or two or even a month's time and then come back and have another workshop so they can introduce their structure to you all. You'll have to look at it and then include finance to give a picture of the availability of funds for those wage structures.

Councilor Morales said exactly. But, they could do this in their spare time right?

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said you need to allow them an opportunity to work at it and not just throw numbers together and really look at it.

Councilor Morales said I agree.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said I also want them to think about in the evaluation on the merit system of a hard worker that cannot get out and get these degrees and certificates

but a very hard worker that our City could not do without. I think they need to be included in this merit system for evaluation.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said you would have to include all of your employees whether they have a college degree or not because some do have a community college certification and you're looking at all walks of life within our organization. They are all important people and they all have responsibilities and they take themselves seriously.

Joe Jarvis, Project Manager asked if it would be certification pertinent to the job?

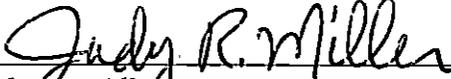
Councilor Walker said I think if you're operating a blade and you have a degree in accounting and you make more money in accounting then you should go get an accounting job.

Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer said you also need to put this in mind that the New Mexico Department of Transportation provides or offers those courses free in Roswell and you get a certificate for that.

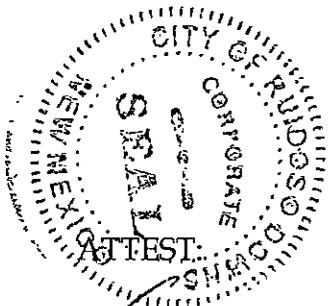
There was no other discussion or comments.

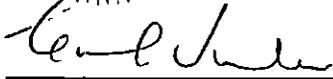
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to attend to Councilor Morales moved to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Walker. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.



Judy R. Miller, Mayor Pro Tem





Carol Virden, City Clerk/Treasurer