



City of Tarpon Springs, Florida

324 E. PINE STREET
P.O. BOX 5004
TARPON SPRINGS, FL 34688-5004
(727) 938-3711

OFFICE OF
MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Board of Commissioners
FROM: Commissioner Panagiotis Koulias
DATE: July 25, 2022
RE: FY 2023 Budget Recommendations

Before I delve into the purpose of my memo, I would like to express my full confidence in our budget process. This is just one of the many reasons I take pride in being part of this Commission and the reason I am writing this memo.

This memo is to share with the board my concern with the proposed 5% pay increase for our city employees, specifically the lower wage employees.

First, we all recognize that our employees are hardworking, dedicated and need to be rewarded fairly through this process. They work tirelessly to keep our services operating for the community.

Second, we need to retain our employees, so what I am proposing is necessary for our future. The employment market is competitive, and we need to be resilient to compete with the county and other municipalities.

Third, we are facing a historical increase in the cost of living.

I recommend the current proposed five percent increases be an average of a tiered pay increase for this year.

For example:

- Salaries over \$100,000 receive a four percent increase
- Salaries between \$75,000 to \$100,000 receive a five percent increase
- Salaries between \$50,000 to \$75,000 receive a six percent increase
- All Salaries below \$50,000 for full time employees receive a seven percent increase

Or

If staff would like to keep a minimum of a 5 percent increase for all general employees, then have a higher percentage increase for general employees whose total salaries are below \$75,000, have a tiered system of employees' salary increases.

- Salaries between \$60,000 and \$75,000 receive a six percent increase
- Salaries between \$45,000 and \$60,000 receive a seven percent increase
- Salaries below \$45,000 receive an eight percent increase

On Call System and pay scale for employees.

All On Call employees currently receive \$75.00 per week. I would ask to increase all On Call employee shifts to receive a minimum of \$150.00 per week with a schedule or planned increase over the next several years to compete with nearby municipalities.

I propose implementing a mandatory cost-of-living annual increase of three percent each year, (not requiring an evaluation for approval). If the cost-of-living increase is dependent on a supervisor's evaluation, and the increase is based on an annual review of attendance, performance, and more, then it is a merit-based system. I would recommend a merit-based raise on top of the three percent cost-of-living raise. In the past it seems it has been an unfair process in our city. In other municipalities the process does work, and the reason to have this system implemented is to increase and improve employee morale.

Employees are often deadlocked into positions and have no way to move up and only rely on a three percent increase annually. Other utilities and municipalities give cost of living raises and merit-based raises to keep employees happy with a livable wage.

I am not asking to pay them more than what they are worth, but we do not want to lose employees to similar positions in other municipalities because they pay more.

Thank you,
Panagiotis Koulias