



City of San Marcos Fire Meet and Confer

August 1, 2023



What is Meet and Confer?

- **Texas Local Government Code Chapter 142**
- **Process for sworn civil service employees and management to discuss interests regarding wages, hours of work and working conditions.**
- **Provides the opportunity to modify Texas Statutes, such as Civil Service (adopted October 30, 1974), through agreement of the Association and the City.**
- **The proposed agreement is our fifth agreement.**



The Meet and Confer Process

- The City and the SMPFFA agreed to use the Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) Process and participated in IBB training.
- Each team brought issues and teams met jointly to identify common interests. The items that moved forward are reflected as changes in the recommended successor agreement.
- Upon agreement of parties, the successor agreement is presented to the Association membership for ratification.
- Upon ratification by the Association, the agreement is presented to the City Council for ratification and approval.



Negotiation Highlights

Hiring and retention of officers:

- *Increase maximum age at hire through forty (40) years of age.*
- *Widen applicant pool by adding the option to hire candidates without minimum certifications at hire and providing training.*
- *Add tiered ranking of candidates from most qualified to least qualified within an eligibility list.*
- *Applicants with degree in social work, sociology, psychology, human services or human relations receive additional points.*
- *Expand probationary period to 365 days following mini-academy.*
- *Lateral entry:*
 - *Provide higher starting pay for experienced Firefighters (expansion of lateral entry).*
 - *Hire certified firefighters without an entrance examination.*
- *Allow hiring of part time non-classified firefighters for limited purposes.*



Negotiation Highlights

Encourage career growth through promotion:

- Update list of training classes and required points to be eligible for promotion.
- Add Assessment Center for Battalion Chief promotions. This provides an opportunity to evaluate candidates using scenario-based exercises in addition to the written examination.
- Physical examination required only if promotional rank is more physically demanding.



Negotiation Highlights

Fire Marshal:

- Authorize an additional Assistant Chief position for the Fire Marshal. (Prior non-civil service Fire Marshal was an Assistant Chief).
- Realign job requirements for fire marshal.
- Continue provision to hire a Fire Marshal from outside the department (outside of Civil Service) if there is not a qualified candidate(s) who is interested in serving as fire marshal within the department.



Negotiation Highlights

Discipline / Accountability:

- **Investigations & Disciplinary Suspensions**

- Time for Chief to file complaint:

- *Non-criminal violation - 180 days from occurrence*
 - *Criminal violation - 180 days from Chief's discovery of act*
 - *Sexual harassment – 300 days from occurrence*

- Time to take formal discipline:

- *Non-criminal violation – 180 days from date of complaint*
 - *Criminal violation – 180 days from date of complaint; extended not to exceed 30 days following final disposition of criminal proceedings regarding alleged act*
 - *Sexual harassment – 180 days from date of complaint*



Negotiation Highlights

Discipline / Firefighter Accountability: *(continued)*

- Expand eligibility for minor suspension substituting paid leave to waive arbitration rights from 24 to 48 hours.
- Authority of an Arbitrator/Third Party Hearings Examiner - Negotiation on this items will continue in the next negotiation

Financial Triggers:

- Clarify provisions regarding reduced sales tax and when contract discussions will be triggered in alignment with City's financial policy.



Negotiation Highlights

Competitive wages:

- Base Pay:
 - Year 1 – 8.0%
 - Year 2 – 5.0%
 - Year 3 – 4.5%
- Add the rank of recruit for candidates who do not possess minimum requirements for Fire/EMS certifications at hire.
- No other compensation changes.



Agreement Cost

Year 1: Base Pay Increase	\$ 612,883
Year 2: Base Pay Increase	\$ 421,116
Year 3: Base Pay Increase	<u>\$ 403,492</u>
Three-year Agreement	<u>\$1,437,492</u>



QUESTIONS