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# Employee Relations Committee

## Annual Report

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Norfolk City Council

FROM: Patrick Roberts, City Manager

SUBJECT: Employee Relations Committee – Annual Report

DATE: March 26, 2024

In accordance with Ordinance No. 49,415, Sec. 2.2-42 (b), I am providing City Council with a summary report of all Employee Relations Committee (“ERC”) meetings which have occurred to date, following the adoption of this Ordinance on November 23, 2023. Attached are copies of the agenda for each of the four employee committees. The meeting dates, location of meetings and a brief summary of the matters discussed are provided below. All meetings were facilitated by the City Manager, with Human Resources staff in attendance. Time was allotted for each member of the employee committee to report out on issues of concerns or interest, and to ask questions of the City Manager. The duration of each of the meetings was roughly 90 minutes.

Items of interest to the employee groups, such as compensation, equipment and facility needs and other specific matters have received recommendations in the proposed FY 2025 Operating and Capital Budget, within the overall context of affordability and prioritization of the City’s competing needs.

**Employee Committee:** General Administration

**Date:** February 8, 2024

**Time:** 10:00 am

**Location:** Human Resources Multi-Purpose Room, 800 E. City Hall Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

**Union or Professional Organization(s) represented:** None

**Issues Discussed:**

- The City Manager provided information on the FY 2025 budget proposal. The City Manager encouraged members to provide input for provisions within the budget.
- The Committee asked the City Manager to look into the reclassification process for filled positions.
- The Committee discussed feedback from the recent healthcare survey and concerns that were raised by employees with regard to their healthcare needs and wellness programs. The Norfolk Healthcare Consortium is reviewing concerns.
- The Committee discussed staffing and vacancies within the city. The Manager reported positive changes to staffing and increases in the application rate. The administration is looking at different ways to attract and retain employees.

**Employee Committee:** Operations

**Date:** February 12, 2024

**Time:** 10:00 am

**Location:** Human Resources Multi-Purpose Room, 800 E. City Hall Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

**Union or Professional Organization(s) represented:** None

**Issues Discussed:**

- The City Manager provided information on the FY 2025 budget proposal. The City Manager encouraged members to provide input for provisions within the budget.
- The Committee discussed concerns with regard to salary compression and vacancies in their respective departments. The Manager acknowledged citywide issues with compression and shared his plan to address the issue over the next few budget cycles. The Manager also requested the Committee provide him with an update on staffing issues within their departments.
- The Committee also questioned whether the city will ever bring back the “step” pay plan. The Manager advised a consultant will be brought in to look at the city’s pay plan and provide recommendations.
- The Committee discussed feedback from the recent healthcare survey and concerns that were raised by employees with regard to their healthcare/dental needs and wellness programs. The Norfolk Healthcare Consortium is reviewing concerns.
- The employee engagement position was discussed during the meeting. Employees would like to see employee events/discounts come back. They feel it helps to boost employee morale. Human Resources staff advised the position has been posted and they are actively trying to fill the position.

**Employee Committee:** Fire-Rescue

**Date:** February 26, 2024

**Time:** 10:00 am

**Location:** Human Resources Multi-Purpose Room, 800 E. City Hall Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

**Union or Professional Organization(s) represented:**

- Norfolk Professional Fire Fighters — IAFF Local 68: Mark Old, Firefighter EMT— Advanced

**Issues Discussed:**

- The City Manager discussed the timeline for the FY 2025 budget proposal. The City Manager encouraged members to provide input for provisions within the budget.
- The Committee discussed concerns regarding the pay scale and compression. The Manager asked the Human Resources Director to complete an analysis to determine whether there is an imbalance as a result of the \$18 minimum wage increase. The Manager also acknowledged citywide issues with compression and shared his plan to address the issue over the next few budget cycles.
- The Manager discussed the need for a safety officer and the need for EMS personnel. Committee members acknowledged there are concerns that non-emergency calls have increased and more resources are needed to deal with those calls. The Manager suggested staff research what is working for other cities.
- The Committee reported that the city needs to invest in its training facilities in order to compete with neighboring cities and employee retention. The City Manager is open to additional conversation.

- The Committee raised concerns with healthcare in regard to available cancer screenings for firefighters. The Director of Human Resources reported the city is actively working to figure out payment and administration of the screenings.
- Several other discussions were held with regarding to deduction of union dues (Payroll is working through deductions for union members), drug testing policy, creation of a paramedic academy (in-house) and training, and additional ERC slots for the Fire-Rescue Committee.

**Employee Committee: Police**

**Date:** February 28, 2024

**Time:** 10:00 am

**Location:** Human Resources Multi-Purpose Room, 800 E. City Hall Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

**Union or Professional Organization(s) represented:**

- Southern State Police Benevolent Association: Michael Lynch, Police Officer (absent but was represented by Joseph Brown)
- Fraternal Order of Police: Brian Lee, Police Lieutenant (absent)

**Issues Discussed:**

- The City Manager provided information on the FY 2025 budget proposal. The City Manager encouraged members to provide input for provisions within the budget.
- The Committee discussed concerns with regard to salary compression. The Manager acknowledged citywide issues with compression and shared his plan to address the issue over the next few budget cycles.
- The Committee discussed the bilingual certification process. There is some concern that certified officers are not receiving bilingual pay. Human Resources staff asked the Committee to send names of certified police officers for verification.
- The Committee discussed a cost of living adjustment and how the implementation of a COLA can have negative consequences for the city and NERS. Unlike NERS, VRS has a built in COLA.
- The Committee expressed concern about Anthem's increased out-of-pocket expenses. The Norfolk Healthcare Consortium will look into this.



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## **City of Norfolk Employee Relations Committee (General)**

### **Meeting Agenda**

February 8, 2024 - 10:00 am

(800 E. City Hall Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Human Resources Multi-purpose Room)

<b>I.</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	<i>Patrick Roberts, City Manager</i>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Introductions</b>	<i>Group</i>
<b>III.</b>	<b>Recap of Previous Discussion</b>	<i>Eric Daoust</i>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Topics to be addressed/discussed</b>	<i>City Manager / Group</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Salary Compression</li><li>• Budget</li><li>• Elevance/Anthem</li><li>• Staffing</li><li>• Additional employee benefits</li><li>• Wellness Program</li></ul>	
<b>V.</b>	<b>Open Forum (Concerns and Suggestions)</b>	<i>Group</i>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Action Items and Responsibilities</b>	<i>Eric Daoust</i>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>Adjournment</b>	

**Please note: All attendees are expected to stay for the entire meeting. Interruptions should be minimized, and all cell phones should be silenced as we respect each other's time.**



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## **City of Norfolk Employee Relations Committee (Operations)**

### **Meeting Agenda**

February 12, 2024 - 10:00 am  
(800 E. City Hall Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Human Resources Multi-purpose Room)

I.	Welcome	<i>Patrick Roberts, City Manager</i>
II.	Introductions	<i>Group</i>
III.	Recap of Previous Discussion	<i>Eric Daoust</i>
IV.	Topics to be addressed/discussed	<i>City Manager / Group</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Salary Compression</li><li>• Budget</li><li>• Elevance/Anthem</li><li>• Staffing</li><li>• Additional employee benefits</li><li>• Wellness Program</li></ul>	
V.	Open Forum (Concerns and Suggestions)	<i>Group</i>
VI.	Action Items and Responsibilities	<i>Eric Daoust</i>
VII.	Adjournment	

**Please note: All attendees are expected to stay for the entire meeting. Interruptions should be minimized, and all cell phones should be silenced as we respect each other's time.**



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## **City of Norfolk Employee Relations Committee (Fire-Rescue)**

### **Meeting Agenda**

February 26, 2024 - 10:00 am  
(800 E. City Hall Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Human Resources Multi-purpose Room)

<b>I.</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	<i>Patrick Roberts, City Manager</i>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Introductions</b>	<i>Group</i>
<b>III.</b>	<b>Recap of Previous Discussion</b>	<i>Eric Daoust</i>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Topics to be addressed/discussed</b>	<i>City Manager / Group</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Salary Compression</li><li>• Budget</li><li>• Elevance/Anthem</li><li>• Staffing</li><li>• Additional employee benefits</li><li>• Wellness Program</li><li>• Renovations to fire trucks and other vehicles (Fire)</li></ul>	
<b>V.</b>	<b>Open Forum (Concerns and Suggestions)</b>	<i>Group</i>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Action Items and Responsibilities</b>	<i>Eric Daoust</i>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>Adjournment</b>	

**Please note: All attendees are expected to stay for the entire meeting. Interruptions should be minimized, and all cell phones should be silenced as we respect each other's time.**



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## **City of Norfolk Employee Relations Committee (Police)**

### **Meeting Agenda**

February 28, 2024 - 10:00 am  
(800 E. City Hall Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Human Resources Multi-purpose Room)

I.	<b>Welcome</b>	<i>Patrick Roberts, City Manager</i>
II.	<b>Introductions</b>	<i>Group</i>
III.	<b>Recap of Previous Discussion</b>	<i>Eric Daoust</i>
IV.	<b>Topics to be addressed/discussed</b>	<i>City Manager / Group</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Salary Compression</li><li>• Budget</li><li>• Elevance/Anthem</li><li>• Staffing</li><li>• Additional employee benefits</li><li>• Wellness Program</li><li>• Resources for on the ground officers</li></ul>	
V.	<b>Open Forum (Concerns and Suggestions)</b>	<i>Group</i>
VI.	<b>Action Items and Responsibilities</b>	<i>Eric Daoust</i>
VII.	<b>Adjournment</b>	

**Please note: All attendees are expected to stay for the entire meeting. Interruptions should be minimized, and all cell phones should be silenced as we respect each other's time.**

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