

## VILLAGE OF BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

### MINUTES OF A MEETING

#### WAGE & SALARY

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The Wage & Salary Committee meeting of the Village of Brooklyn Heights, Ohio was held on February 6, 2023 at 6:15 p.m. with Mayor Procuk presiding.

Present at roll call:	Council Members:	Lasky, Presot, Schuckert, Tommer, Walsh
	Mayor:	Procuk
	Clerk/Treasurer:	Frank
	Law Director:	Dowling
	Engineer:	
	Police Chief:	Meade
	Fire Chief:	
	Assistant Fire Chief:	
	Service Director:	Blados
	Building Commissioner:	
	Assistant Building Official:	Sonenstein
	Comm. Service Director:	
	Recreation Director:	
	Soccer Commissioner:	
	GUESTS:	Kevin Shebesta, Clemons, Nelson Sgt. Chris Leahy, BH Police Department

The purpose of the Wage & Salary Committee meeting is to discuss Police Department tuition reimbursement.

Mr. Shebesta stated that the current reimbursement contract language states that officers will be reimbursed \$1,500 per year with a cap set at \$6,000. Sgt. Leahy is asking for adjustments to that amount stating that it doesn't even cover one semester. He is attending Tiffin University and explained one semester, which is two classes, is \$4,500. They have a condensed master's program for criminal justice degrees. Sgt. Leahy explained that for his degree it is a five semester course and that comes out to \$21,000. The FOP gives a thirty percent discount and that takes \$6,000 off leaving a balance. He stated he is going to exhaust that \$1,500 per year reimbursement and would have to wait a year to take another semester. He said it would take him four years to get a degree when he can get it done in a year and a half. Sgt. Leahy thanked Council for getting the ball rolling on the reimbursement program. He stated that he can't remember the last time they had a complaint from the public against an officer for use of force. He said that correlates directly with their education and being one of the last few departments that requires officer's to have some type of degree, says a lot about who they are and what they are doing. Mr. Walsh asked how many officers on the force currently have a degree, Sgt. Leahy responded just over half.

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Mr. Shebesta read to council what the language in the contract stated.

Chief Meade suggested they don't wait until the contract expires to review tuition reimbursement, stating he currently has at least two other officers interested in getting their master's degree. Mr. Walsh said they could change it with an MOU and he suggested if they do that they should put into place some sort of a payback provision. If the officer were to get their degree and then leave the department right away they would have to pay the Village back and Council agreed.

Mr. Lasky asked if all of the programs at different universities were on the same cost level as Tiffin University. Chief Meade stated that Tiffin is one of the cheaper universities to get your master's degree and they offer the FOP discount. Mrs. Presot asked if all universities offered the FOP discount and Chief Meade stated not all of them. Sgt. Leahy stated when he was looking into different places to enroll they were all similar in price. Chief Meade explained that the issue is, this is an accelerated program, and it will not take them the traditional four years to get their master's degree. The officers can get in five semesters.

Mr. Shebesta stated that he and Mayor Procuk would have to meet and further explore what adjustments could be made that would be reasonable and Council agrees to. He said that it would have to be done by MOU and signed off on by both parties, stating that anything can be done midterm by MOU as long as both parties agree.

Mr. Schuckert asked what an MOU was. Mr. Shebesta answered, a memorandum of understanding. Mr. Schuckert asked what that meant and Mr. Shebesta explained that it is an additional addendum to the contract that modifies something already addressed. He said it is an attachment to the back end that updates the contract.

There were no further questions and the meeting was adjourned.



Matt Walsh  
Wage & Salary Committee Chairperson