

From: [Justin Nickels](#)
To: [Jessie Lillibridge](#); [Eric Sitkiewitz - D6](#); [Brett Vanderkin](#); [Shawn Alfred](#)
Cc: [Pamela Wimmer](#); [Debbie Charney](#)
Subject: RE: Personnel Committee Agenda Item Requests
Date: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 8:53:21 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[Memo 2024 Compensation and Comp Structure Increases Policy Deviation \(1\).pdf](#)
[image002.png](#)

Good Morning,

I am considering asking for a change to the employee policy manual for compensation on the compensation schedule as I am putting the 2025 Budget together.

A simple change from the word will to may. Article 4, Section 1A

“The 5-Year rate ~~will~~ may be adjusted based on the data received in the annual compensation survey.”

Creating the budget becomes even more complicated when we are beholden to a survey outside our control. Half of our employees are already set in wages (unions, but that is within our control as we agreed to those wages, and we now know precisely what they will be, not random every year like we have with non-reps), and to have no wiggle room on non-represented (at-will employees) is just another difficult hurdle to overcome. Again, we use a survey from an outside source to determine that we will increase the rate by a specific percentage.

For example, throughout the entire budget process so far, I have had a placeholder of 2.5% for non-reps. I even told the Finance Committee this. Now, the numbers came back at 2.9%. While not drastic, those numbers add up quickly, especially when I do my best to push items to pay-as-you-go instead of continually borrowing. If this language remains, I am required to put 2.9% in without any other consideration.

We also ran into this issue last year, where I recommended 2.5% and had to go to the Personnel Committee to “Deviate from the Current Annual Compensation Plan Wage Percentage Increase for 2024”. The numbers last year came in at 2.78%/2.98% (comp structure increase and employee annual increase). I attached the memo from last year to the Personnel Committee, where this was approved. Remember, last year, I added the 5-year bump and 10-year bonus, which cost us dearly. So, in my mind, giving a 2.5% instead of the Carlson Dettmann recommendation was fair. But, according to policy, I recommended deviating from the policy. We should have more flexibility to make these decisions than being required to put whatever number we receive in.

My frustration with this is that if, after compiling everything in the budget, I cannot make 2.9% work (remember, this compounds year after year), and I recommend 2.5%, employees will feel like they are getting the shaft (all thanks to me) because policy states we will increase by the number Carlson Dettmann tells us to. Then I have to go to Personnel to “deviate,” and that just adds more frustration to everyone.

We will not be required to use that percentage if we change the language. As always, however, the number we receive will be a goal to achieve, as we use this same firm for market adjustments. We do not want to get so far behind because the cost of catching up will bite us someday (as it has in the past). But if it means saving an employee or two because employees will still receive a generous increase in the City of Manitowoc, then it is a win-win.

FYI, I will likely give the council a budget that has 2.9%. Seeing what the unions have, we will start having compression in some departments, and it will be closer to being fair for our non-represented employees. That is my goal, but at the end of the day, if I can make everything work, and I can save positions, and it comes in closer to 2.5%, then that is what I want to do.

I am willing to discuss this more before I officially request it be on the agenda. I realize this could concern some employees if they feel we are playing with their wages.

Thanks.

Mayor Justin M. Nickels

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From: Debbie Charney <dcharney@manitowoc.org>
Sent: Monday, September 23, 2024 3:22 PM
To: _City_Managers <_City_Managers@manitowoc.org>; Common Council <CommonCouncil@manitowoc.org>
Cc: Pamela Wimmer <PWimmer@manitowoc.org>
Subject: Personnel Committee Agenda Item Requests

Good Afternoon:

The next scheduled Personnel Committee meeting is for **Monday, October 7, 2024** at 5:30 p.m.

Please submit agenda items to Alders Sitkiewitz and Vanderkin by the end of the day on Monday, September 30, 2024 and kindly copy me and Jessie Lillibridge.

Thank you,

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