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The scheduled hearing was held on Proposed Salaries, Wages and Employee Benefits for 1970-71, on Friday, July 17, 1970, at 4:00 o'clock p.m., in the Council Chamber, City Hall, with Mayor John M. Belk presiding, and Councilmen Fred D. Alexander, Milton Short, John H. Thrower, James B. Whittington and Joe D. Withrow present.

ABSENT: Councilmen Sandy R. Jordan and Jerry Tuttle.

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PURPOSE OF MEETING.

Mayor Belk stated Council has been going over the preliminary budget every night this week, and according to the policies set up by Council this public hearing is set on three subjects: (1) Salaries, (2) Wages and (3) Related Benefits.

He stated this year the primary emphasis is on the people's salaries. Of the proposed budget only 1.2% of the entire budget will go towards capital improvements; this is the smallest amount of monies appropriated for capital improvements in a number of years. One reason is because of the bond package. He stated because re-evaluations will not go into effect until January 1971 because of inflated market and various other conditions, salaries are being emphasized.

Mayor Belk stated Council is here today to listen to anyone who has anything to say; no decisions will be made today, but everything will be taken into consideration.

MAYOR BELK DONATES SALARY TO CITY.

Mayor Belk stated to start things off he would like to donate his salary as Mayor to the City.

STATEMENTS BY VARIOUS GROUPS.

Lieutenant J. B. McLaughlin, Charlotte Fire Department, stated in the preliminary budget an increase in salary has been recommended for all lieutenants of the Charlotte Fire Department which will bring their salary range closer to that of captain. He stated since they have the same responsibilities it seems this salary adjustment is justified.

Lieutenant McLaughlin, speaking for his fellow lieutenants, stated they would like to publicly thank Mr. Bob Earle and Mr. Bill Veeder for their fairness in judging their request.

Mr. Gene Gore stated originally he had intended to appear before Council today and tell them how they can find nearly \$70,000 in the present budget. It is very simple. By treating all city employees equally.

In the present budget there is a cost item of over \$70,000 in wage increases over and above the one step pay range proposed for the rest of the city employee. All this increase goes to 79 high paid employees who the city manager says has taken on additional responsibilities.

Mr. Gore asked what the Manager thinks the other city employees are doing? There is not a single employee in any department or classification who is not working harder and doing more. After all Charlotte has grown and serving more houses and people and installing more lights and signs, making more arrests, typing more letters - they ask what about them. But maybe Mr. Veeder is right. Maybe some of these people are doing additional work. The City Attorney's office

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is drawing up injunctions against City Employees; the personnel office is spending long hours trying to figure out how they will hire scab in the event there is a strike; the Public Service Information Director is busy putting out news releases each day telling how bad sanitation pickups are, and blaming it upon the workers instead of supervision. But they realize it cannot be blamed on Mr. Beaver as they are trying to give him a raise of \$1860 this year.

Mr. Gore stated if they really want to save money they can start by trying to get efficiency in public services. You can tell poor underpaid Mr. Beaver to put his personnel department spies back to work in City Hall instead of following him (Mr. Gore) around and making out ten page reports each week on what he is doing. You can put the personnel director to work bringing safe working conditions to city employees and cutting out the feather bedding at top level of management instead of spending all this time cutting wages and increasing workloads to lower paid workers and drawing up strike breaking plans. You can tell the propaganda expert who has only been here one year and has already had a pay increase, that he can share the suffering with the rest of the employees who work for the City of Charlotte and have been here for 20 and 30 years and who are not getting a raise large enough to cover the cost of living which is 6.13%.

Mr. Gore stated if they really want to find the money to hold the tax rate down, they ask why Council does not try treating all these employees alike. It will cost less, promote harmony and increase efficiency. He asked if there is anything wrong with treating city employees fair in Charlotte. After all, other cities do.

Instead of allocating nearly \$110,000 for 79 over-paid employees, they ask that they be given the small 5%; treat them all equal, and by doing this the City will save nearly \$70,000.00.

Mr. Gore stated it surprises him when there are no questions when he comes and presents to Council the fact that full time spies are employed to do nothing, but make out reports and follow Jack Hartle and the rest of his staff around; it seems the Council would be interested as this is wasting around \$20,000 a year; that this is not a service to the public.

Mayor Belk stated he and Council are proud of the job the city employees are doing. That he feels as if the citizens of Charlotte sometimes do not appreciate the fine job the people who are working for the city, and the benefits the citizens received. That this is the reason during the past fiscal year the public relations officer was employed so that the citizens can be better informed on the job being done and the services they are receiving.

Mayor Belk stated he and Council know the city employees are doing an outstanding job. He stated he personally is proud to have been associated with the city during the past year and looks forward to another good year of service for the people.

He stated he knows we will never be able to satisfy everyone, but he believes if those who are not satisfied would put out a little more effort then we would have a better city.

ADJOURNMENT.

Upon motion of Councilman Short, seconded by Councilman Whittington, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.

Ruth Armstrong
Ruth Armstrong, City Clerk