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Wednesday, 11 January 2012 19:52

Salary increase for 2012 applies to nearly all Port workers except police officers

Most City of Port Washington employees will receive a 1% raise this year, the Common Council agreed after a closed session Tuesday night.

“There could be some adjustments in the future,” City Administrator Mark Grams said, noting that aldermen will conduct performance evaluations for department heads and some of the support staff in the next month or so.

The salary increases approved Tuesday apply to all city employees except police officers, Grams said.

The Common Council on Dec. 20 approved a two-year contract with its police officers that calls for them to receive 1% salary increases on Jan. 1 and July 1, 2012, and 1.25% increases on Jan. 1 and July 1, 2013.

However, officers will be required to pay 3% of their retirement in 2012 and 5.9% next year. The city has paid the full cost in the past.

Like other employees, officers will also be required to pay 12% of their health insurance premiums both years.

The contract has been approved by the police union, Grams said.

Port Washington is one of the first communities in the area to reach a contract agreement with police since the state budget-repair law was approved last year, he added.

“Most other communities are in arbitration right now,” Grams said.

Aldermen also approved on Jan. 3 an employee handbook that outlines many of the benefits workers receive.

The changes incorporated in the handbook will help the city reduce its costs, Grams said.

To help cut overtime costs, the handbook no longer sets hours for employees but instead allows for flexible time within the 40-hour work week, he said. For example, if a street department employee works an extra two hours clearing brush, he could be required to work fewer hours the following day, Grams said.

The handbook also eliminates double-time pay on holidays, he said. Instead, employees will receive time-and-a-half for time worked over 40 hours.

Longevity pay is also eliminated, he said.

There are no changes to the vacation or sick leave provisions currently in effect, Grams said, although the amount of sick leave that will be paid to employees when they retire will be limited to a maximum 45 days.

In the past, he said, employees could accumulate as many as 150 days of sick leave and receive compensation for them when they retired. Now, they will only be able to bank 90 days and be paid for half of those days.

Workers who have already accumulated 150 days will receive compensation for those days, he added.

Employees will now be required to pay 12% of their health insurance premiums and 5.9% of their retirement, Grams said.