

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING ON AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE
PENSION PLAN: SECTIONS 30-16, 30-19, 30-23B, 30-27A, 30-31,
30-47, 30-53A, 30-53C, 30-53D, 30-53G, 30-53I

March 8, 1994

Council Chambers

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President Sandy F. Klebanoff called the hearing to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present were Councilors Robert Bouvier, Owen Eagan, Sandy F. Klebanoff, Charles R. Matties, Patrick McCabe, Madeline S. McKernan, Larry Price, Andy Schatz and Alfred Turco.

President Klebanoff: Mr. Feldman, does the administration have a presentation?

Barry M. Feldman, Town Manager: Madam Mayor, I do. It is a brief presentation. The ordinance that is before you this evening reflects the changes that were negotiated some two plus years ago, going on three years ago in the collective bargaining agreements for Town employees. The changes are fairly comprehensive and are reflected by the various changes in the section of the pension ordinance itself. Maybe instead of taking lots of time right now, if you should have specific questions, be it now or later this evening, I will try to respond but again what the ordinance does is that it catches up to the collective bargaining agreements that you have previously ratified and have actually implemented those changes that are now in place for the past two plus years. Again, the pension ordinance itself, if you adopt the ordinance later this evening, basically then reflects that you have already ratified in the collective bargaining agreements.

President Klebanoff: Thank you, Mr. Feldman. Does anybody have any questions regarding this ordinance and the changes? Mr. Matties.

Councilor Matties: It is a little too broad. One of the underlined sections introducing a name or title that previously was not in the contract, that would be underlined section on the first or second page, there is nothing of that nature?

Mr. Feldman: In the pension changes? No, we are dealing in pension changes with such issues as a pre-retirement death, you may remember that one about there was some concern about the employee dies. There were some changes on that. We have dealt with, the Council dealt with the Board of Education, a certain grouping of Board of Education employees. You may remember that from a Finance and Budget Committee meeting of a number of months ago. There is a clarification of what annual rate of pay is. Another

section deals with the member's contribution. Another section deals with again the Police and the Fire Department changes as far as when they are eligible to retire. Another section deals with their percent of final average compensation. There is another section that basically makes the ordinance gender neutral. There is a section that deals with the amount that the employee pays. Does any of that address your question, Mr. Matties?

Councilor Matties: Pretty much so. The fact that I guess what you said initially that we are codifying it basically.

Mr. Feldman: The collective bargaining agreements, that is correct.

Councilor Matties: Nothing new is being done?

Mr. Feldman: No, sir, not at all.

President Klebanoff: Are there further questions? Is there a sign up sheet for this hearing, Mr. McCabe?

Councilor McCabe: No, Mayor.

President Klebanoff: Is there anyone with us this evening that would like to speak to us regarding the changes in the pension ordinance? Would you like to speak to the pension ordinance? There is a podium right here. If you would like to come up and give us your name and address then you can speak. Thank you.

Mr. Feldblum: Nat Feldblum, 54-E Starkel Road, West Hartford. Now, I saw that in the paper. It was very little which a lot of people could not see. It is so small it was just about the print on it and what you have on there, trying to do away with the pension itself which I don't agree because after all we have worked practically half of our life on that and it has helped us quite a bit. I would say that it should be kept up instead of trying to do away with it. A lot of people probably did not see this piece that was in the paper because it was so small.

President Klebanoff: No, we are not doing away with the pension.

Mr. Feldblum: Well, according to that amendment, it means to try to do away with.

President Klebanoff: Not in this instance. In this instance it does not. In this case it does not mean do away with it. It is making some changes in the wording that has no, that will have no affect.

Mr. Feldblum: Well, I hope it doesn't because I am not the

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only one that has worked practically half their life.

President Klebanoff: We cannot and would not take away the pension.

Mr. Feldblum: I don't know. The way it was worded about amending means to do away with things.

President Klebanoff: No, not this one.

Mr. Feldblum: It didn't explain that you were going to just change things. That is why I thought I would come.

President Klebanoff: Mrs. Wilder is the Town's attorney.

Mr. Feldblum: And more people would have come but they probably did not see what was in the papers.

President Klebanoff: Would Mrs. Wilder please just make sure that I am correct. Am I correct, Mrs. Wilder?

Marjorie Wilder, Corporation Counsel: Yes, Madam Mayor. In fact, these changes are actually improving, making better some of the provisions of the pension ordinance which are employees have negotiated with us in the past.

Mr. Feldblum: Can I ask you what kind of changes are there made to make it better? You are not going to get any more than you were getting before. That is understood. You will probably get the same amount that you probably had before.

President Klebanoff: They don't deal with the amount of money.

Mrs. Wilder: For example, one of the changes allows someone to be eligible for a pension at an earlier date than they might be otherwise.

Mr. Feldblum: You mean it is for others?

Mrs. Wilder: For people who retire in the future.

Mr. Feldblum: In the future.

Mrs. Wilder: Correct.

Mr. Feldblum: Is that what it is for?

President Klebanoff: It is for people who are still working for the town.

Mr. Feldblum: It isn't for people that have worked before and the changes are still going to be made, aren't they? They are still going to be made, right?

Mrs. Wilder: No, it is my understanding that people who have already retired, there won't be any change in their pension benefits. Is that correct?

Mr. Feldblum: In other words, it is going to keep on going, is that the idea?

Mrs. Wilder: That is absolutely correct.

Mr. Feldblum: That is what I wanted to know. That is why I am here. I would have brought more people but some how or other they didn't see what was in the Hartford Courant. That is where I got it from. That is why I came on account of that reason.

Mrs. Wilder: Good reason.

President Klebanoff: Thank you.

Mr. Feldblum: I wish more would have come and it would have been much better but they did not do it. That is all.

President Klebanoff: Anybody else have any questions regarding these changes? If not, I will close the public hearing.

The hearing adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Norma W. Cronin
Recording Secretary