

Fertile City Council Minutes Special Meeting October 19, 2021

The Fertile City Council held a special meeting on Tuesday, October 19, 2021 at 6 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Daniel Wilkens and Council members Stanton Wang, Todd Wise, and Matthew Massmann. Also present was Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, and City Administrator Lisa Liden. Fair Meadow Personnel and Budget Committee member Michelle Cote was present by phone. The purpose of the meeting was discussion of the wage scale and 2021/22 budget for Fair Meadow.

The meeting was called to order at 6:11 pm by Mayor Wilkens.

The first item on the agenda prepared by Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting was the wage scale. There had been earlier discussions of making the \$2 per hour wage incentive that began in September permanent since the addition of that amount across all positions made Fair Meadow's wages more in line with other nursing home wages in the area. The wage scale that Leiting presented had been updated with the \$2 per hour added to all positions and steps on the scale. Leiting noted also that there were two wage lines for the Director of Nursing and the Administrator. The top line was with the \$2 per hour increase and the bottom line was with an adjustment to the scale based on the market data that Leiting had found.

Discussion was held on the wage scale and then switched to discussion of longevity versus accountability bonuses. Michelle Cote read from her notes of the last meeting and reminded those present that it had been decided at the previous meeting to explore accountability bonuses rather than longevity bonuses. There were so many new staff at Fair Meadow that longevity bonuses would be minimal. With the continuing staff shortages, an accountability bonus would hopefully reduce call-ins and also reward staff who consistently show up for every shift.

Discussion then reverted back to the wage scale. After further discussion, a motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the wage scale with \$2 per hour added across the board effective at the start of the current pay period. The motion was seconded by Council member Massmann and was carried.

This was followed by discussion on the market adjustments to the DON and Administrator wage scale. Michelle Cote noted that Leiting should be prepared for negative feedback from staff on the adjustments. Council member Massmann cautioned as well that there could be profound upheaval especially with the RN staff for the DON to get a large increase after being gone most of the summer and the other RN's having to pick up the slack.

Administrator Leiting then reviewed the market data that she had provided. She noted that both the DON and Administrator starting and ending pay are both well below market in the area. She noted also that both the DON and the Administrator are held to the highest level of responsibility at the nursing home and that both of their licenses would be in jeopardy if something happened. She noted further that both the DON and Administrator are solely responsible for meeting with the State surveyors whenever they come in to the facility.

Mayor Wilkens added that while he understood that the wage adjustments may cause some discontent with the rest of the staff, he felt it was important to get the compensation for those positions in line with what other homes are paying.

After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the market adjustment to the DON and Administrator wage scales to account for the added responsibility of the positions and the additional assisted living licensure for the Administrator. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

More discussion was held on the accountability bonuses and whether or not part-time staff would be eligible and also on how often the bonuses would be paid out. Discussion was also held on whether there would be any exceptions to absences for things such as a death in the family or Covid.

It was determined that the full-time staff would be eligible for the full amount of the bonus each month and that part-time scheduled staff would be eligible for a percentage of the total based on how many hours they work. The bonuses would be earned monthly and the payout would happen each mid to late November so the funds would be distributed in time for holiday shopping. Finally, staff would have to work all scheduled shifts in a month to get the bonus and if staff had to miss work, they would still be eligible for the bonus only if they found someone to cover the missed shift for them. Mayor Wilkens asked Leiting to run the numbers for offering bonuses of \$100 and \$50 bonuses per month and to provide those numbers at the next meeting.

Leiting then moved on to the budget that she had prepared for the fiscal year that began October 1st. She noted that all the staff costs had been put in the budget at the new wage scale numbers including the market adjustments for the DON and Administrator. The budget was then reviewed with questions on the composition of some of the numbers. It was noted that some of the numbers would change depending on the offering of accountability bonuses.

A motion was made by Council member Massmann to approve the budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 pm on a motion by Council member Massmann.

Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator