

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA, HELD IN THE CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 100 NORTH U.S. #1, FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA, AT 9:00 A.M. ON THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026.

1. **Call to Order**

Mayor Hudson called this meeting to order at 9:00am.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Roll Call**

Present: Commissioner Michael Broderick; Commissioner Chris Dzadoovsky;
Commissioner Arnold Gaines; Commissioner Curtis Johnson, Jr.; Mayor Linda Hudson

Staff Present: City Manager Richard Chess
City Attorney Sara Hedges
City Clerk Linda Cox

4. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Any person who wishes to comment on any subject may be heard at this time. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes or less, as directed by the Mayor, as this section of the Agenda is limited to thirty minutes. The City Commission will not be able to take any official actions under Comments from the Public. Speakers will address the Mayor, Commissioners, and the Public with respect. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.

No comments.

5. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Quasi-Judicial Hearings follow a strict set of rules and procedures which can be found on the City's website using this link: <https://www.cityoffortpierce.com/DocumentCenter/View/6740/Quasi-Judicial-Procedures>. All Quasi-Judicial decisions by the City Commission must be based on competency substantial evidence. Competent substantial evidence is evidence which will establish a substantial basis from which the fact at issue can reasonably be inferred. It includes fact or opinion evidence offered by an expert on a matter that requires specialized knowledge and that is relevant to the issues to be decided. It is evidence a reasonable mind could accept as having probative weight and adequate to support a legal conclusion. Hypothetical, speculative, fear or emotion based generalized statements that do not address the relevant issues and that cannot be reasonably said to support the action advocated, are not competent substantial evidence.

A. Impasse Hearing - City of Fort Pierce and Teamsters Local Union #769 (General Employee Unit)

Mayor Linda Hudson asked all present to listen carefully to what City Attorney Sara Hedges would read regarding Impasse Hearings.

Sara Hedges, City Attorney, reviewed the impasse hearing rules and procedures.

Mayor Linda Hudson called the proceeding to order.

City Clerk, Linda Cox, confirmed that the City complied with the advertisement and notice requirements.

Ex parte communications:

Commissioner Broderick – No

Commissioner Dzadoovsky – Yes, created a wage comparison document that was provided to City Attorney Sara Hedges.

Commissioner Gaines – No

Commissioner Johnson – No

Mayor Hudson – No

City Clerk, Linda Cox, swore in those wanting to speak during the impasse hearing.

Steve Myers, Teamsters #769 Union representative, stated the case is regarding whether the raise will be meaningful for the employees at the bottom of the pay range. The dispute between Teamsters and the City of Fort Pierce is \$0.40 per hour—the Union is proposing a minimum of \$1.60 per hour and the City proposes \$1.20 per hour. Mr. Myers presented variables to showcase how the 5% increase is not equal for all employees. Mr. Myer stated their proposal supports recruitment and retention, promotes fairness and equity within the bargaining unit, and is reasonable and sustainable. Commissioner Michael Broderick inquired how many of the employees represented by Teamsters would be affected by the \$0.40 base level increase. Mr. Myers responded that half of the represented employees, which is around 70 employees. Commissioner Chris Dzadovsky provided background information in regard to his involvement with unions and past bargaining discussions with Teamsters' representative Steve Myers. Commissioner Dzadovsky reviewed a salary comparison he created to demonstrate the effect the proposed increase would have on salaries. Commissioner Dzadosky inquired if Teamsters got a salary study for the City of Fort Pierce and if there was any comparison of local municipalities around the area. Mr. Myers stated they had not received one for this fiscal year, but they reviewed a small salary study from the previous fiscal year supplied from the City of Fort Pierce. Commissioner Curtis Johnson Jr. questioned whether the calculations done by Teamsters for the total cost to fund the proposed \$1.60 increase matched the calculations shared by Commissioner Broderick, which amounted to \$58,000; Mr. Myers confirmed they had reached the same calculations.

JK Keller, attorney representing the City of Fort Pierce, stated that the City is in agreement with Teamsters about the increase being for fairness, but the City is unable to grant the \$1.60 increase as it is not in the City's budget. Mr. Keller informed the Commission that we are already half-way through this fiscal year and the contract with Teamsters is up for re-negotiations in May 2026. Mr. Keller stated that whatever is decided in this meeting will set the floor for negotiations once the contract is ready for new terms. Mr. Keller stated that the City had met with the Teamsters two weeks prior to this meeting offering either a 5% or a \$1.20 increase, whichever would be greater; however, this increase would put the City \$34,000 over budget. Commissioner Broderick questioned how many employees fall under the \$1.20 threshold. Jared Sorensen, Human Resources Manager, shared that based on the two proposals: 124 employees would be brought up to meet the \$1.60 minimum and 79 employees would be brought up to meet the \$1.20 minimum. Johnna Morris, Finance Director, gave a brief presentation showcasing the impact the \$1.20 or \$1.60 increases would have on the City's budget. Mr. Keller asked Ms. Morris where the \$151,229 overage would come from to fund the Union's proposed increase of \$1.60. Ms. Morris stated it would have to come from the City's fund balance reserves. Ms. Morris stated, however, this reserve is set for unexpected fees such as the parking garage repairs and payment of the FEC bill. Mr. Keller stated the Commission will have to decide if the increase is going to be implemented retroactively, immediately, or prospectively. Commissioner Broderick questioned if the increase will be in effect until the contract with Teamsters is up for re-negotiation, Mr. Keller confirmed. Commissioner Dzadovsky questioned why benefits are being included in the discussion. Mr. Keller and Ms. Morris clarified that the benefits that are being included in the budget estimations are the benefits directly tied to wages such as social security, retirement, and worker compensation.

Mayor Hudson indicated now was the time for the Teamsters Rebuttal.

Mr. Myers acknowledged the hard work the City of Fort Pierce faces balancing the interest of the taxpayers of the City and caring for City employees. However, Teamsters believes it is an easy choice to do the right thing for the lowest paid employees. Mr. Myers stated the increase presented by the union is reasonable and not meant to gouge the City's budget, but to ensure the lowest paid employees can afford to live in the City of Fort Pierce.

Mayor Hudson opened the Public Hearing. Seeing no one, she closed the Public Hearing and indicated now was the time for final comments.

Mr. Myers had no final comments. Mr. Keller had no final comments.

Commissioner Curtis Johnson Jr. wants to find a solution to ensure employees are paid at a comparable level of compensation while maintaining funds for emergency situations. Commissioner Arnold Gaines stated the employees deserve to get paid without crippling the City's budget. Commissioner Michael Broderick expressed concern that the negotiations put the City \$34,000 over budget and stated the City can only provide an increase that is within the City's budget without pulling from emergency reserves. Mayor Linda Hudson expressed concern about Tallahassee's decision on whether local government funds are going to be minimized. However, Mayor Hudson wants to do the best that the City can do for its employees. Mayor Hudson stated the negotiations leave too much of a question mark of what is allowed in the City's budget and what the taxpayers are willing to pay. City Attorney Sara

Hedges provided clarification of the Commissions' three questions: the straight salary, the date the increase would be implemented, and what will be done with the pay ranges. Ms. Hedges stated the Commission has the control to make any decision regarding the proposals presented. Commissioner Broderick requested clarification of where the \$34,000 would come from based on Johnna Morris', Finance Director, presentation. Ms. Morris provided the funding would come from the fund reserve balance and possibility from vacant positions existing in the City's budget. City Manager Richard Chess stated the negotiations were done in good faith and that the raise is set at a 5% increase. However, the negotiation team added an offer of the \$34,000 overage as a counter-negotiation to try and reach an agreement with Teamsters.

Motion was made by Commissioner Chris Dzadovsky, to approve the 5% or \$1.45, whichever is greater, pay increase. Motion died with no Second.

Motion was made by Commissioner Michael Broderick, to approve a 5% or \$1.20, whichever is greater, pay increase with payment retroactive to October 1, 2025. Motion died with no Second.

Motion was made by Commissioner Chris Dzadovsky, seconded by Commissioner Michael Broderick to approve a 5% or \$1.20, whichever is greater, pay increase with payment retroactive to October 1, 2025.

AYE: Commissioner Michael Broderick, Commissioner Chris Dzadovsky, Commissioner Curtis Johnson, Jr., Mayor Linda Hudson

NAY: Commissioner Arnold Gaines

Passed

Motion was made by Commissioner Chris Dzadovsky, seconded by Commissioner Curtis Johnson, Jr. to increase the pay ranges by 5%.

AYE: Commissioner Michael Broderick, Commissioner Chris Dzadovsky, Commissioner Curtis Johnson, Jr., Mayor Linda Hudson

NAY: Commissioner Arnold Gaines

Passed

6. **Adjournment**

Immediately following adjournment, please move toward the doors and exit the chambers. This allows for the safe and courteous exit of all persons, and those on the dais. Conversations after the meeting should be held outside of chambers, in the foyer or elsewhere, but not in the commission chambers where lights will be out as soon as the chambers are empty.

Mayor Hudson adjourned this meeting at 10:55am.

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

MAYOR COMMISSIONER