

Councilman Kennedy & Councilman Gookin discuss separation agreements – 12.4.12

Councilman Kennedy stated that he wanted to clarify some information regarding the separation incentives recently approved by the City Council. For many years the City Council has had a policy regarding the allowance of a separation incentive that provide a cost savings to the City. Since it is a City Council policy, it can be revoked if the City Council did not think they were needed. This incentive provides department heads an opportunity to review positions, reorganize duties, and/or leave positions vacant. This year the city has negotiated 15 separation incentives. Most recently, the City negotiated with five department heads, which was unique and it garnered a lot of attention. All separation agreement proposed this year have been approved unanimously by the City Council. The city saved \$145,000 over first two-year period and in the next period the City saved approximately \$333,000. The recently newspaper article confused some items that are normal separation items such as payment of unused sick/vacation time, due the employee without a separation agreement. Councilman Gookin stated that he had made comments at the weekly radio show regarding the incentive agreements. He clarified that he did state that the details released in the newspaper were a bit excessive, and that he was surprised by the details, as he did not read the details of those contracts prior to voting on them. He also clarified that he was not mislead, just failed to read the documents, and apologized for it.