



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: City Manager

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: October 16, 2023

Re: Voluntary recognition of specific positions in the Water Distribution Division of the Utilities Department as an additional work unit of the LiUNA Local 955 bargaining unit.

Executive Summary

Pursuant to section 19-25(a) the City Manager has the authority to recommend to the City Council (following certified elections or other assurances of interest deemed appropriate by the city manager and not inconsistent with state law) recognition of appropriate representative units of employees with a mutually acceptable community of interest for the purpose of collective bargaining over salaries, terms and conditions of employment and other subjects mutually agreed upon as proper subjects for such discussions. This recommendation is made following submission of cards signed by 22 of 27 employees in the Water Distribution Division of the Utilities Department. These employees are assigned to the following classifications: Utility Service Worker I, Water Distribution Operator I, Water Distribution Operator II, Water Distribution Crew Leader, and Water Distribution Technician.

Discussion

In July 2023 employees of the Utilities Department in the Water Distribution Division signed a letter and signed cards requesting voluntary recognition to affiliate as an additional department of the LiUNA Local 955 bargaining unit.

The Water Distribution employees are currently represented by the Water & Light Association. City management contacted the Missouri State Board of Mediation for guidance and the Chair advised that in order for these employees to change representation, the Water & Light Association would either need to decertify or disclaim this group of employees. On August 29, 2023 the Human Resource Director received an email thread that included an email from the Water & Light Association spokesperson indicating the Water & Light Association was ok with disclaiming the Water Distribution employees.

On September 11, 2023 members of city management met with Local 955 and water distribution employees to discuss their request. As a result of this meeting, City staff recommends voluntary recognition of the employees in identified water distribution classifications as an additional work unit of the LiUNA Local 955 bargaining unit. Upon approval of voluntary recognition, the water distribution employees maintain all rights previously bargained and will be part of future LiUNA Local 955 collective bargaining including the annual wage reopener and proposal to address compression. Placement of these employees into the LiUNA Local 955 step plan will be subject to future negotiations. Water distribution employees have previously received wage adjustments that were negotiated by the Water & Light Association including a 4% increase on June 11, 2023 and a move to new pay range minimum (if needed), plus an additional 2% increase on October 1,



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2023. If voluntary recognition is approved, staff will introduce amendments to the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the classification and pay plan to reflect the change in bargaining unit at a future council meeting.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Unknown, fiscal impact will be based on future negotiations.

Long-Term Impact: Unknown, fiscal impact will be based on future negotiations.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Organizational Excellence, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Primary, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Legislative History

Date	Action
09.18.23	B221-23 – City Council approved CBA with LiUNA Local 955.
06.05.23	R93-23 – Authorizing a memorandum of agreement with the Water and Light Association.

Suggested Council Action

Adoption of this resolution.