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Minutes from the City Council Special Meeting on Tuesday June 27, 2023, at 7:15 pm in the Auditorium are as follows:

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2023 JUL -3 AM 9:23

Laflamme, Frank N., President	At-Large Councilor	Present
Roy, Gerard (Jerry) A.	At-Large Councilor	Present
Tillotson, James K.	At-Large Councilor	Present via Zoom
Zygarowski, Robert J.	At-Large Councilor	Present
McAuliffe, Joel D.	Ward 1 Councilor	Present
Brooks, Shane D.	Ward 2 Councilor	Present via Zoom
Lopez, Delmarina	Ward 3 Councilor	Present
Balakier, George A.	Ward 4 Councilor	Present
Krampits, Fred T.	Ward 5 Councilor	Present
Dobosz, Derek Gregory	Ward 6 Councilor	Present
Courchesne, William C.	Ward 7 Councilor	Present
Labrie, Gary R.	Ward 8 Councilor	Present
Pniak-Costello, Mary Elizabeth	Ward 9 Councilor	Present

MO-1 Be it Ordered that the sum of Seven thousand nine hundred eighty-nine and 15/100 dollars (\$7,989.15) be and hereby is appropriated to the following named salary accounts:

accountant	(acct # 11350001-514035)	\$4,784.39
sick buy back	(acct # 11350001-519605)	<u>\$3,204.76</u>
	total	\$7,989.15

said amount is to be taken from available funds in the undesignated fund balance "Free Cash" account

--Motion made by Councilor Dobosz to receive and pass. Councilor Dobosz stated standard sick buy back. Motion passed through all stages by a unanimous roll call vote.

--Motion made by Councilor Labrie to return to the regular order of business. Motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

Fiscal 2024 Budget Reconciliation and Budget Approval

--Motion made by Councilor McAuliffe to approve the FY2024 budget as read. Councilor McAuliffe stated happy to offer to approve the budget. Best budget in more than a decade. Professionally organized budget, thrilled to be part of it. Nothing close east, west, north, or south. Went through a global pandemic, don't miss a beat. As prepared as we have ever been. Pleased to offer the motion to approve. Councilor Dobosz stated thank all department heads. Won't vote for the budget, deeply concerned about the HR budget. Rich Merchant said they aren't paying insurance. Council never updated on insurance, do think the overall budget besides HR is good. Conservative budget. Councilor Lopez stated follow up to Councilor Dobosz, urge on the side of caution to even call it an HR issue. Was not able to answer because it's not under his department. Issue about the department. Should not live in that department if not paying the bills. Rest of the budget, commend the department heads. Showing up. Thank all department heads for all they do and showing up. Councilor Pniak-Costello asked about the \$15 million with health insurance, have to change. This cannot continue. Advocates of change. Not a good situation, the city is in. Feel bad can't vote for this, commend all other department heads, make sure city services are given to

the taxpayer. We have to do better, be an advocate for change. Audit every two years, reconciliation every two years. Apologize to other department heads but have to change the way we were doing business. Taxpayer deserves better. Councilor Courchesne stated confusing how a line item sits in someone's budget if they have no control over it. Kind of concerning, Would be nice to know why it sits there. Makes no sense. Councilor McAuliffe stated address some concerns, have voted against the budget before for underfunding school. Controversy on medical insurance. Longest serving HR director in years. Pandemic, people were out every day for a long time. Solid financial shape as a city. Our team found the mistake. Every year the outside auditor commends us. Not the right thing to do not place blame, do our job. Councilor Pniak-Costello stated re: health insurance, asked the council to review the ordinance in regards to health insurance. Researched the ordinance/law. Husband was asked as the city solicitor, gave a written opinion was HR. Agree with Councilor McAuliffe in regards to penalizing other departments. Don't know who's administering health insurance. Hopefully with dialogue and corrective action. Lost too many people in the HR department. Apologize to all the wonderful department heads. Great city here. Sooner than later need to address this. Appreciate Councilor McAuliffe having passion, good on many issues. Councilor Courchesne stated no one is pointing fingers or blaming anyone. Mr. Merchant should have known who gets that money. Just want answers, has nothing to do with anyone in particular. Who ever is in charge of HR should have had the answer. Should have historical knowledge. Councilor Dobosz stated not blaming anyone. Just have a lack of answers. In a way it is a statement/way it is not. If they could vote without that item, would vote in a minute. Paul Winspear resigned. Learned from MassLive there was an insurance issue. No hearings, haven't been told anything. Defend my vote, don't need a moral lesson. Councilor Lopez stated don't need a moral lesson from anyone. Particularly by someone who just made a political move. No councilor has the right to tell another how to vote. Lack of leadership. We got the budget at the very last second. We shouldn't have the budget at the very last second. Mayor who has appointed himself acting director of HR didn't answer. Doing our job is discussing each line. Whoever's prerogative to vote how they want. Councilor McAuliffe stated motion to cut the HR budget, don't want to make the cut. Makes no sense how anyone couldn't vote this budget. We have to vote the budget. Councilor Lopez stated atrocious to say we aren't doing our job by asking for transparency. Council doesn't have control over the budget. Viewpoint is to pay bills. Councilor Roy stated can't see not passing this budget because of one line item. In lieu of one item. Councilor Pniak-Costello asked is it possible to take one line item out? Attorney Riley stated only can cut line items, not a whole department. Councilor Tillotson stated listen to compromise on HR. Tired of having it in the news, need to fix it so it works. If we have to do something drastic to make it work. Don't penalize the whole city. Don't want to see anyone lose their pay. Because of one issue, people would get penalized. Good workers in good departments. Councilor Brooks stated if we zeroed out this line item are we now putting our health insurance at risk? Whatever version we withhold money, we will lose insurance. People are going to have health benefits delayed. Want to take money out of the budget. Councilor Costello can teach in ordinance. Need health insurance. Limit talk around budget to two times each. Can look at after the fact. Councilor Balakier stated requirement of medical insurance. Won't be paying bills, people rely on insurance. If you don't have insurance, you are in trouble. Sharyn Riley stated I don't want to lose my insurance. If the line item comes out, bills don't get paid.

--Motion made by Councilor McAuliffe to allow Councilor Laflamme to speak. Motion passed by a roll call vote of 12 yes, 1 abstained. Councilor Laflamme abstained. Councilor Laflamme stated have to mention meeting of the HR department, took time to call and ask questions. Had eight hours today to try to understand what is going on. Approve tonight and find the answers. Motion passed by a roll call vote of 9 yes, 4 no. Councilors Lopez, Dobosz, Courchesne, and Pniak-Costello voting no.

MO-2 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Law department (group 1)

City solicitor	\$70,227.00
Assistant city solicitor	\$63,464.40
Associate city solicitor (2)	\$63,464.40 (each)
Council – legal counsel	\$63,464.40
Chief of litigation/labor relations	\$66,585.60

--Motion made by Councilor McAuliffe to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor McAuliffe stated self-explanatory. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

MO-3 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Office of the city council (group 2)

A. Administrative assistant	\$55,801.20 (grade 6)
B. Clerk	\$37,874.20 (grade 3)

--Motion made by Councilor Pniak-Costello to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Pniak-Costello stated self-explanatory. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

MO-4 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Office of the Mayor (group 2)

A. Chief of staff	\$72,155.20 (grade 8)
B. Staff assistant	\$58,260.80 (grade 5)
C. Special projects manager	\$57,116.80 (grade 5)
D. Pt community & constituent liaison	\$31,980.61 (grade 5)

--Motion made by Councilor Krampits to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Krampits stated to comply with the budget. Councilor McAuliffe stated hope colleagues look at this and can change in committee. Motion to refer passed by a roll call vote of 12 yes, 1 no. Councilor Dobosz voting no.

MO-5 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Auditing department (group 2)

A. Senior accountant	\$79,331.20 (grade 8)
B. Budget analyst	\$79,331.20 (grade 8)

--Motion made by Councilor Roy to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Roy stated self-explanatory. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-6 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Office of the Treasurer (group 2)

A. Assistant Treasurer	\$78,915.20 (grade 8)
B. Special projects manager	\$50,731.20 (grade 5)

--Motion made by Councilor Labrie to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Labrie stated will discuss in committee. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-7 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Law department (group 2)

A. Paralegal (1)	\$65,041.60 (grade 6)
B. Paralegal (1)	\$60,569.60 (grade 6)

--Motion made by Councilor Tillotson to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Tillotson stated look at in a public hearing. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-8 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Human resources (group 2)

A. Assistant director	\$62,254.40 (grade 8)
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B. Benefits coordinator	\$60,694.40 (grade 8)
C. Senior generalist	\$56,555.20 (grade 7)
D. Administrative assistant	\$38,438.40 (grade 4)
E. Generalist	\$46,886.40 (grade 6)

--Motion made by Councilor Balakier to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Balakier stated contractual raises. Councilor McAuliffe stated nice to know the benefits coordinator resides in HR. Councilor Lopez stated snide remark is uncalled for. The back and forth needs to stop. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-9 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

<u>Human resources (group 2)</u>	
F. Occupational safety manager	\$57,064.80 (grade 8)
G. HR business partner	\$57,064.80 (grade 8)

--Motion made by Councilor Zygarowski to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Zygarowski stated self-explanatory. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-10 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

<u>Office of the City Clerk (group 2)</u>	
A. Compliance officer	\$24,976.64 (grade 4)

--Motion made by Councilor Courchesne to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Courchesne stated as all others. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-11 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

<u>Planning department (group 2)</u>	
A. Development manager	\$74,380.80 (grade 8)

--Motion made by Councilor Lopez to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-12 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Planning department (group 3)
A. Environmental stipend \$ 0.00

--Motion made by Councilor Brooks to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Brooks stated take up in committee. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-13 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Council on Aging (group 3)
A. Sub. Transportation coordinator \$4,686.00 (grade 1)

--Motion made by Councilor McAuliffe to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor McAuliffe stated take up in committee. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-14 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

DPW administration (group 3)
a. city safety program stipend \$0.00

--Motion made by Councilor Pniak-Costello to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Pniak-Costello stated take up in committee. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-15 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

City hall maintenance (group 3)
A. City messenger stipend \$0.00

--Motion made by Councilor Krampits to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Krampits stated take up in committee. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

MO-16 Be it Ordained that Chapter 7 of the ordinances for the City of Chicopee as amended be and is hereby further amended by striking out salaries as they pertain to the following named accounts and inserting in place thereof the following:

To be operative July 1, 2023

Human resources (group 3)

A. Deputy chief HR stipend \$4,000.00

--Motion made by Councilor Roy to receive, 1st reading and refer to the Ordinance Committee. Councilor Roy stated take up in committee. Motion to refer passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

--Motion made by Councilor McAuliffe to allow Councilor Laflamme to speak. Councilor Laflamme stated during public input a while back was stated how not having transparency because Ch. 7 was always a lump sum. Had meeting to decide how to do this, how to be transparent. Public can see now.

Adjournment:

--Motion made by Councilor Lopez to adjourn at 8:15. Motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Dobosz absent.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Lopez", written in a cursive style.