

## **M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Howard Tipton, Town Manager

**FROM:** Carolyn Brown, Support Services Director  
Lisa Silvertooth, Human Resources Manager

**REPORT DATE:** May 22, 2023

**MEETING DATE:** June 5, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Ratification of Contract and MOU Between the Town of Longboat Key and the Southwest Florida Police Benevolent Association (PBA)

### **Recommended Action**

Ratify Contract and MOU between the Town and PBA.

### **Background**

The Town of Longboat Key has a long commitment to public safety and providing a high level of service provided by the Police Department. As evidenced in past budget allocations, the Town's strategic priorities and community expectations, and high scores of extraordinary service on the annual Citizen's Satisfaction Survey, residents of the Town value and appreciate knowing they are safe and protected by professional, respectful, and trustworthy public servants.

Police departments across the nation are raising concerns about the availability to recruit and retain qualified employees. This is very true here on Longboat Key with three current F/T vacancies and two P/T vacancies. It is also true that the Town's Police Department values experienced officers and the competition for that experience is the toughest in recent memory.

A confluence of multiple forces has made it extremely difficult for the Town to recruit, hire, and retain positions in the Police Department. Competition is fierce between the surrounding municipalities who all pay substantially more than the Town for these same positions within their organizations. Despite continual recruiting efforts and attempts to attract highly trained staff to join our team, efforts have continually failed due to the disparity in salaries and other benefits, such as take-home vehicles, compared to other agencies. To put it simply, the Town was behind in keeping up with the market. This led to an analysis of comparators in the region, negotiations for a new contract and MOU with the PBA, which will allow salary adjustments to occur at the end of June 2023. The information below outlines the changes.

### **PBA Contract and MOU**

The current PBA Contract will terminate on September 30, 2023. Negotiations took place over the past two months with the Town's Labor Attorney, Town staff, and the PBA.

The Town and the PBA reached a tentative agreement on the terms of a new 3-year contract. The PBA conducted a ratification vote that was completed on May 26, 2023. Ratification of the contract passed with a vote of 9 in favor, 0 against and 2 abstaining.

The current contract has 20 articles with wage adjustments. Changes include:

- Wage proposal (29.7% increase for Officers; 30.1% average increase for Sergeants)
- 2% increase each year (except for year 1)
- Reduction of steps in the plan (from 12 – 9 for Officers, from 9 – 6 for Sergeants)
- Addition of the allowance for PBA to participate in the Town's 401K with the same match as non-union employees
- Maintain current union contract with MOU for wage adjustments as outlined above through September 30, 2023.

The Finance Department participated in the negotiations. The cost of the changes is \$97,750 for the remainder of FY23 and \$396,400 for FY24.

Funding is available in the FY23 budget and proposed FY24 budget to support the implementation of the new Contract and MOU.

Although take-home vehicles are not a part of the Contract, the Town will move forward with ordering and purchasing additional police vehicles to add to the Town's fleet to allow for a take-home vehicle program.

### **Staff Recommendation**

The new PBA contract and MOU addresses the Town's goals of:

- Protecting Management Rights
- Addressing operational issues
- Ability to recruit and retain
- Considers peer police department compensation plans (with the market).

Staff recommends ratifying the Contract and MOU between the Town and PBA.

### **Attachments**

- A. Proposed PBA Contract (Available in Town Clerk's Office)
- B. Strikethrough and Underlined Version of Contract (Available in Town Clerk's Office)
- C. Proposed PBA MOU (Available in Town Clerk's Office)

**End of Agenda Item**