

TO: Selectboard
FROM: Jennifer Kennelly
SUBJECT: Police Union Contract
DATE: June 13, 2017

On May 17, 2017, the Town Manager and staff, with the support of legal counsel and Union representative, came to a tentative agreement with the New England Police Benevolent Association Local #409 for a contract beginning July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020.

Research on other municipalities was done prior to the start of negotiations and both teams shared a mutual goal of providing a salary and benefit package to Williston Officers and Sergeants that was comparable to other Towns, but also recognized the uniqueness of Williston. One area where Williston was falling behind other towns is wages. The annual wage adjustment for many other towns used a percentage that was determined at the time of contract approval and was not based on actual cost of living increases. This caused our officers and sergeants to receive increases that were less than their peers. We have increased officer wages 2% and sergeant wages 3% at each step. This wage scale adjustment will bring our officer wages in line with other towns. We have also agreed to a minimum cost of living adjustment of 1% and a maximum of 3% to hopefully prevent large scale adjustments in future years. The language in **Section 7** and the table in **Appendix A** have been updated to reflect the new pay rates. The shift differential, in **Section 14**, for those officers that work after 5pm and before 7am was increased to \$1.35.

Another area where Williston Officers and Sergeants were falling behind their peers is retirement benefits. Many municipalities offer their officers the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement plan C or D. In both of these plans, the retirement age is earlier than our current plan B. Due to the nature of the work in Public Safety departments, an earlier retirement age is preferable. The Town has agreed to allow Williston officers to join plan C on July 1, 2018. To offset a portion of this increased expense to the taxpayers, the officers will increase their contributions to medical insurance based on the number of people covered on the plan. The language in **Section 22** has been updated to reflect these changes.

The majority of the other language in the current contract stayed intact. In a few cases, language was updated to provide clarity for staff and reflect current practice. Those language changes are:

- **Section 3:** Grievance Procedures – correct typos and remove “unknown error” link
- **Section 4:** Working Conditions – Add language to clarify shift bidding. No current employees are affected by this change. This would allow shift bidding seniority to be based on consecutive years in that position.
- **Section 11:** Compensatory Time – update language to reflect current practice
- **Section 12:** Call-In Pay - correct typos
- **Section 34:** Duration of Agreement – updated to reflect current dates

I have attached a copy of the agreed upon union contract for your review. The next step is for the Selectboard to authorize the Manager to sign the agreement.