



EDGEWOOD POLICE CBA NEGOTIATION MEETING

City Hall – Council Chamber
405 Bagshaw Way, Edgewood, Florida
Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at 1:00 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

A. Attendance

Mayor/Staff Attendees

John Dowless, Mayor
Dean DeSchryver, Police Chief
Sandra Riffle, City Clerk
Drew Smith, City Attorney

Union Representation

Nick Marolda, PBA
Jeff Stull, PBA
George Corwine
Jeff Stull
Christopher Meade
Abe Class

B. Review of the minutes of 3/17/2026

1. Meeting Minutes from March 17, 2026 Meeting

The meeting minutes from March 17, 2026, were reviewed. No changes were made to the minutes as presented by City Clerk Sandra Riffle.

C. Negotiation Meeting Highlights

Please note these are not verbatim notes. A recording of the meeting will be provided upon request. The following are highlights of the meeting.

Mr. Corwine reviewed the changes from the previous meeting.

Budget and Compensation Discussions

Mayor Dowless provided a detailed critique of the PBA's financial proposal, noting that it would result in a \$430,000 increase to the budget and a 21% increase in the Police Department's payroll. He highlighted that the proposal would initially raise base pay by approximately 30–40%, eventually reaching a 50% increase over three years. The Mayor stated that the City could not accommodate these figures without a significant tax increase, especially since Edgewood already has the third-highest tax rate in Orange County.

The Mayor contrasted the current request with historical data, noting that three years ago, The introduction of the step program resulted in raises ranging from 13–19%, and 18–36% at the three-year mark. He reminded the Committee that previous raises had typically been in the 3–5% range.

Attorney Smith added that while retention is a priority, the current request would bankrupt the City and suggested aiming for a middle ground that remains competitive with agencies like Belle Isle.

George Corwine responded that the proposal is not unrealistic; it may just be financially infeasible, and it reflects the market competition necessary to prevent officers from leaving for higher-paying agencies.

Mr. Corwine said that they cannot control the City's FRS. Attorney Smith responded that FRS is ultimately a benefit to the officers. Mr. Corwine said he can't shift that money anywhere. In response to Mayor Dowless, Mr. Corwine assured that the officers understand that the pension is more valuable than a 401(k).

Corwine said the City is correct about the large change three years ago, and that the reason for that was that when the governor signed the FHP 150000 (Law Enforcement Recruitment and Retention Act), there was increased market competition.

Attorney Smith said that all agree that hiring and retention is critical, but the request would bankrupt the city within the life of the project. No annexations are coming, and the City is almost completely developed.

Break/off the record from 1:34 pm to 1:57 pm.

Proposed Policy Revisions

Chief DeSchryver presented non-economic policy changes to clarify department procedures. The primary revisions discussed include:

- **Article 8 (Seniority):** Section 8.6 clarifies that seniority begins only after the successful completion of a one-year probationary period. It also specifies that probationary employees may be terminated without recourse to grievance or arbitration. Mr. Corwine expressed concern that these requirements might create a "moving target" for lateral hires who may remain on probation longer than anticipated.
- **Article 21 (Equipment):** Section 21.1 introduces a standard issue list for tracking equipment, including modern safety items such as body cameras and Narcan. Section 21.5 increases the maximum reimbursement for personal items damaged on duty to \$500.00.
- **Article 22 (Promotions):** Revisions to Section 22.2 establish that probationary officers must complete the Field Training Officer (FTO) program and six months of solo patrol to achieve permanent status. Section 22.4 requires four years of service for Sergeant exam eligibility. Section 22.13 grants the Union the right to appoint an observer to witness the written

examination review. In response to Mr. Corwine, Chief DeSchryver said that the City Council certifies that everything was done right. He said he wants everything to be transparent and concise.

Chief DeSchryver explained that the Police Chief refers the top three candidates to the Mayor, who decides on whom to promote. Mr. Marolda argued against the selection process, stating that involving the Mayor in final promotional decisions could lead to administrative friction or lawsuits. Attorney Smith clarified that as a "Strong Mayor" government, the Mayor is the City's true executive authority.

- **Article 41 (Career Development):** This new article proposes an incentive program where officers can earn a \$1,500 annual bonus for proactive training and community involvement. Section 41.7 clarifies that these career levels do not grant supervisory authority.

Mr. Corwine discussed the fiscal impact, suggesting that the net cost would be lower than the Chief's estimate of \$11,000 if it replaced current specialty pay. Additionally, the Union noted that points for community involvement are earned through off-duty activities.

In response to Mr. Corwine's question about off-duty hours, Chief DeSchryver responded that the points for officers' community involvement are outside of work hours. Mr. Marolda noted that they are not paid to do that.

Break/off the record from 3:00 PM to 3:22 PM.

Discussion on Administrative Procedures

- Chief DeSchryver briefly reviewed the spreadsheet that compared Belle Isle, Eatonville, Oakland, and Windermere police department budgets with Edgewood's, as they are small cities located in Orange County. The spreadsheet covered first-year, 10-year, and 20+ year officers' expenses. Mr. Corwine said that he needed to see the current salary on the spreadsheet.
- Regarding the updated probationary requirements, Attorney Smith suggested a sixty-day window if the bargaining unit desired to adjust non-probationary bargaining language.
- The PBA expressed concerns regarding the involvement of the Mayor in the final selection of promotions and the potential for legal complications. Attorney Smith clarified that Edgewood operates under a "Strong Mayor" form of government, meaning the Mayor serves as the City's true executive authority. Additionally, he summarized that to reach the City's financial goals, adjustments to the career development incentive amounts might be necessary to ensure the plan remains functional and sustainable.

Administrative Oversight

Regarding the promotional process, Chief DeSchryver explained that the City Council's role is to certify that all procedures were followed correctly. Attorney Smith summarized that to meet the City's financial goals, the parties may need to adjust the career development incentive amounts to keep the plan sustainable.

D. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:31 pm. **The next meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2026, from 10:30 am to 3:00 pm.**

Sandra Riffle, City Clerk