



CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA – City Manager

DATE OF MEETING: May 11, 2026

ITEM TITLE: Police Department Union Contract (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2028)

BACKGROUND:

We have successfully completed negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement with Teamsters Local 238, covering employees of the Independence Police Department. This new agreement will be in effect for a two-year term, beginning July 1, 2026, and running through June 30, 2028. This contract builds upon our previous agreement (which expires on June 30, 2026) and formally updates the language to align with our overall City policies and the Employee Personnel Policy Handbook.

DISCUSSION:

To ensure our elected officials and the public clearly understand the updates, a thorough analysis of the changes from the previous contract and subsequent Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to this new version is provided below:

- **Wages (Exhibit A):** The new contract includes a 3% wage increase for both Patrolmen and Sergeants for each year of the contract. We have retained the provision that if the City chooses to increase salaries for other City employees by more than 3% in a given year, the Police Department will receive that same increased amount.
- **Alignment with Employee Handbook:** We have simplified several sections of the contract by referencing the City of Independence Employee Personnel Policy Handbook directly, rather than maintaining separate schedules within the contract itself.
 - **Longevity (Article 24):** The contract now refers directly to the Handbook for longevity rates. This formally incorporates the August 2024 MOU, which successfully transitioned longevity pay from a flat monthly rate to an hourly rate.
 - **Sick Leave (Article 17):** Sick leave accrual has been updated to follow the Handbook guidelines rather than listing the specific maximums in the contract.
 - **Vacation (Article 15):** Vacation continues to be outlined by the Handbook, but we added language ensuring that any modifications to the schedule created by Resolution 2024-07 will require Union review and approval.
- **Holidays (Article 14):** Paid holiday leave has been increased from 88 hours to 92 hours per year. Additionally, language was added to state that an employee required to work on a recognized holiday will be paid double (2x) their straight time hourly rate for all hours worked in excess of their scheduled shift.

- **Leave Usage Flexibility:** For Holidays, Vacation, and Personal Days, we have added flexible language to assist employees with low leave balances. If an employee has less than 10 hours of a specific leave type remaining, they may now request to use those hours in any hour increments, bypassing the standard minimum block requirements.
- **Personal Days (Article 16):** The allocation of personal days was changed from "two (2) personal days" to "sixteen (16) hours," clarifying the exact time value awarded.
- **Contract Amendments (Article 26):** We introduced a new article to streamline administrative processes. If language changes in the Employee Handbook affect union employees, those changes can be granted to the union members upon agreement by the Chief, the Union, and the City Manager, without needing to reopen negotiations for the current contract.
- **Uniforms (Article 21):** The uniform allowance language was updated to reflect a flat \$600 per year reimbursement for both officers and detectives, removing the outdated phased approach from the previous contract.

RESULTS:

The City has established priorities during strategic planning sessions. This item supports the Vision from that session of **efficient and effective planning and prioritizing of all available resources**. This item helps achieve that vision by ensuring we maintain a highly qualified and competitive police force. By updating our contract to closely mirror the Employee Personnel Policy Handbook, we are standardizing our administrative practices and fostering a supportive, equitable environment for our workforce.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

The financial impacts of this agreement, including the 3% annual wage increases and the minor adjustment to holiday hours, have been anticipated and incorporated into our overall budget planning for the upcoming fiscal years. Funds will be allocated from the General Fund under the Police Department budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Independence and Teamsters Local 238 for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028.