



Lori K. Hamann
At Large Council Member

FROM: COUNCILMEMBER LORI K. HAMANN
SUBJECT: **PRESS RELEASE:** STATEMENT FROM COUNCILMEMBER HAMANN
DATE: MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021
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I wish to thank the Mayor and Mr. Dan Parker for listening to my concerns, offering changes to the hourly wage rate for full-time City employees and a \$1000 incentive for these workers to live within the city limits. My continued concerns are not an expression of a lack of gratitude. However, I do still have significant concerns. First (1st), full-time hourly employees in the City must work two point five (2.5) additional hours per week or 130 extra hours per year to earn the same amount of money as a full-time county employee at their new base wage under their 2022 salary budget. Secondly, hourly employees, earning just thirty-two percent (32%) of the average salaried employee, must work 2774 additional hours per year (or 53 additional hours per week) to earn what the average salary employee in the city earns. Finally, earning just twelve (12%) of that of the Department Heads, City hourly employees must work an additional 5677 hours on average annually (or an additional 109 hours per week) to match the salaries of select Department Heads.

Our nation is facing an epidemic of wage inequality. Economic injustice often means racial injustice. I believe the city has the opportunity and a responsibility to act as a leader in countering this problem. Unfortunately, I believe the current proposed salary budget does little to address this injustice. Furthermore, the Second (2nd) Substitute Salary Proposal offered most recently by the administration offers to decrease the salary cap proposal for only one (1) individual. This is perplexing and in no way addresses the whole of my concerns, concerns that I have been voicing since the beginning of the salary budget debate. The administration continues to counter the argument of their “inability to pay” higher wages to hourly workers while offering significant salary cap increases to select salaried employees and department heads. At the same time, the other employees are only receiving a two point five percent (2.5%) increase.

I strongly urge my council colleagues to stand firm in their commitment to what is equitable and just. Workable solutions are possible if we are willing to do the hard work necessary. If we hope to continue running this City efficiently, we must have workers willing to work for the wages we are offering. The private sector is offering massive signing bonuses and wages that are significantly above what the City is currently proposing.

Respectfully!

Councilwoman, Lori K. Hamann

At Large, City of South Bend, Indiana

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