

**CLEARWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING  
NOVEMBER 27, 2023**

**1. Call to Order: 6:00 p.m. at City Hall**

- Mayor Lawrence called the Clearwater City Council to order Monday, November 27, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Members present were Mayor Lawrence, Council Members Vazquez and Winkelman. Council Members Schwinghammer and Luhmann were absent. Also present was City Administrator Smythe and Public Works Supervisor Schmidt.

**2. Personnel Policy**

**a. Earned Sick and Safe Leave (ESSL)**

- Smythe explained the basics of the new ESSL law and how the city’s current PTO policy does not comply. Staff are seeking direction on how to draft this section of the personnel policy for the new law changes.
- Members discussed the impact of the front-loading and accrual methods to the city’s costs and administration. There was significant discussion about the impact to firefighters who do not currently submit bi-weekly timecards and how to manage the program overall. Members were concerned about the costs of paying out unused hours since the 2024 budget does not account for this option. There was also discussion about having different options for regular staff, firefighters, and seasonal workers.
- After discussion, Members’ consensus was as follows:
  - use the ESSL accrual method for all employees;
  - implement a timecard process for firefighters to submit bi-weekly timecards;
  - have no payout of unused time and leave the accrual cap of 80 hours;
  - revisit the use and accrual of hours next summer during budget season to reconsider adding a payout option for unused hours into the 2025 budget.

**b. PTO**

- Members discussed whether to amend the existing PTO policy to account for the new ESSL.
- Members’ consensus was to leave the existing PTO intact with no changes and revisit during the 2025 budget season when a decision is made on the ESSL payout provisions.

**c. FMLA**

- Smythe explained that the FMLA section simply refers employees to the city administrator. The League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) has a model policy that could be inserted here.
- Members’ consensus was to keep the current language, reasoning that even if a policy was inserted, most employees would need to consult with the administrator and likely LMC as well to determine eligibility/applicability.

**3. Adjournment**

- **MOTION** to adjourn by Winkelman, seconded by Vazquez, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
- Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

ATTEST

APPROVED

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Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

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Andrea Lawrence Wheeler, Mayor