



# SPECIAL COMMON COUNCIL MEETING

Date: 04-29-2020  
Time: 6:00 PM  
Location: Pursuant to NYS  
Executive Order 202.1 this  
meeting will be conducted via  
Zoom and will be live  
streamed on the [City of Ithaca  
Public Meetings YouTube  
Channel](#)

## AGENDA ITEMS

Item	Voting Item	Presenter(s)	Time Allotted
Call to Order	No	Mayor Svante Myrick	5 Mins
Public Comment		*Note: Public Comments can be submitted here: <a href="https://www.cityofithaca.org/FormCenter/Common-Council-16/Public-Comment-Form-95">https://www.cityofithaca.org/FormCenter/Common-Council-16/Public-Comment-Form-95</a>	
1.1 Resolution Authorizing Mayor and City Controller to Close Proposed Budget Deficit via Emergency Unpaid Furloughs, and Authorization for Furlough MOU	Yes	Mayor Myrick	45 Mins
1.2 Resolution Amending Available Health Insurance Plans for Managerial and Confidential Employees	Yes	Mayor Myrick	30 Mins
1.3 Resolution Repealing 2020 Increase in Managerial Compensation Plan and Eliminating 2020 Managerial Employee Cash-In of Annual Leave	No	Mayor Myrick	15 Mins
1.4 Adjournment			

If you have a disability that requires special arrangements for you to fully participate in the meeting, please contact the City Clerk at 274-6570 at least 48 hours before the meeting. Out of consideration for the health of other individuals, please refrain from using perfume/cologne and other scented personal care products at City of Ithaca meetings.

## **1.1 Resolution Authorizing Mayor and City Controller to Close Proposed Budget Deficit via Emergency Unpaid Furloughs, and Authorization for Furlough MOU**

WHEREAS, the shutdown of the economy in response to the COVID-19 crisis has seriously impacted City revenues, resulting in a projected budget deficit for 2020 of between \$4 million and \$13 million due to decreased sales tax collections, decreased parking revenues, decreased trash tag revenues, likely reductions in state aid, and reductions in other revenue sources; and

WHEREAS, a federal stimulus package to provide aid to state and local governments is essential for preventing significant long term cuts to City payroll and services; yet the prospect of such a stimulus package is uncertain, the amount of the stimulus is unknown, and the successful passing of a stimulus bill in Washington is unlikely until the end of May at the earliest; and

WHEREAS, the sooner City expenses are reduced through cuts, the quicker the City will be able to reduce the budget deficit for 2020, and the sooner such cuts can be restored, especially if federal stimulus money is awarded; and

WHEREAS, current City of Ithaca payroll is approximately \$560,000 per week, with that number typically being even higher during summer months once seasonal employees were hired; and

WHEREAS, there are City services that cannot currently be provided due to the Governor's executive order to put New York on Pause; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Controller, with cooperation from senior management, has analyzed current City operations and has identified possible cuts that would result in savings of approximately \$4.8 million if extended through the end of 2020; and

WHEREAS, these cuts involve the furloughing of approximately 87 City employees, cuts to seasonal staff, adjustments to staff benefits, and various other reductions; and

WHEREAS, Common Council wishes to authorize the Mayor and City Controller to take the steps necessary to implement these cuts; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Common Council of the City of Ithaca hereby authorizes the Mayor and the City Controller to take the steps necessary to cut City expenses by \$5.4 million, including through the furloughing of up to 90 City employees, and to make appropriate modifications to any fund in the City budget to account for these changes, resulting in the defunding of numerous rostered positions across all departments of the City; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That the Common Council authorizes the Mayor to enter into agreements structuring employee furloughs in a manner substantially similar to the included MOU, providing City financial support for health insurance during furlough, permitting the cash-out of up to two weeks of accrued leave time at the start of the furlough, and preserving all other accrued leave time in tact; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That Common Council directs the Mayor to review the roster of furloughed employees on a weekly basis and authorizes the Mayor, in consultation with the City Controller, to recall furloughed employees to the City payroll as needs arise and the economic picture improves, by making appropriate modifications to the City budget to account for these changes, resulting in the restoration of funding for the associated rostered positions recalled, provided, however, that such recalls shall not in the aggregate in any one month exceed an increase in City expenditures of \$200,000 per month without additional authorization of the Common Council; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That Common Council directs the Mayor to report monthly to Common Council the number of employees by department who are furloughed and the number recalled and to recommend to Common Council appropriate amendments to the City budget to account for subsequent changes to City revenues and expenses.

## **1.2 Resolution Amending Available Health Insurance Plans for the Mayor, the Common Council, and Managerial and Confidential Employees**

WHEREAS, On July 6, 2016 Common Council adopted a resolution that all employees not covered by a formal labor contract, excluding positions designated as management, be granted salary increases and fringe benefits in accordance with the provisions of the CSEA Administrative Unit contract, and

WHEREAS, the nation is faced with unprecedented times due to the Coronavirus pandemic, which has resulted in devastating financial implications on the City's ability to generate revenue, and

WHEREAS, without Federal assistance for local government, the City is forced to seek solutions to mitigate the potential estimated loss of as much as \$13 million, and

WHEREAS, the City is also making painful cuts resulting in the furlough of approximately 85 employees; and

WHEREAS, the sooner and more effectively the City makes difficult, cost-saving choices, the fewer outright furloughs will be required, the sooner those furloughed employees can be recalled to active work, the sooner the City will be able to reduce the budget deficit for 2020, and the more likely the City will be able to stabilize the 2021 budget without yet deeper cuts at that time; and

WHEREAS, health insurance is a major expense that may be reduced significantly by transitioning employees to the Platinum Metal Plan, which offers comparable coverage at a much lower cost, and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has determined that this is a measure to pursue immediately for Management and Confidential staff, as well as for the Mayor and members of the Common Council; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That Confidential staff shall, effective June 1, not be granted health insurance benefits in accordance with the provisions of the CSEA Administrative Unit contract, which currently offers the Indemnity Plan option, and shall instead receive health insurance benefits as follows, and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That Management and Confidential employees and the Mayor and members of the Common Council shall be offered a Special Enrollment period as soon as feasible, at which they may select between the Platinum Metal Plan and the Indemnity Plan, with the City contributing towards either of those plans eighty percent (80%) of the cost of coverage under the Platinum Plan, the remaining amount to be paid by the insured participant, and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That Management and Confidential employees, shall, within no more than twelve months of retirement, be provided the opportunity to choose among any plan option offered by the City to other retirees whose date of retirement occurs in the same year, procedures and timing subject to the Municipal Health Insurance Consortium rules; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That any furloughed employee who elects a retirement date occurring during the period of their Emergency Unpaid Furlough shall, within no more than twelve months of retirement and subject to the procedures and timing of the Municipal Health Insurance Consortium, be provided the opportunity to choose among any plan option and terms for the purchase thereof that would have been available to that employee on the actual date of their retirement had they retired direct from City employment (in their most recently-held position) rather than from furlough.

### **1.3 Resolution Repealing 2020 Increase in Managerial Compensation Plan and Eliminating 2020 Managerial Employee Cash-In of Annual Leave**

WHEREAS, the shutdown of the economy in response to the COVID-19 crisis has seriously impacted City revenues, resulting in a projected budget deficit for 2020 of between \$4 million and \$13 million due to decreased sales tax collections, decreased parking revenues, decreased trash tag revenues, likely reductions in state aid, and reductions in other revenue sources; and

WHEREAS, a federal stimulus package to provide aid to state and local governments is essential for preventing significant long term cuts to City payroll and services; yet the prospect of such a stimulus package is uncertain, the amount of the stimulus is unknown, and the successful passing of a stimulus bill in Washington is unlikely until the end of May at the earliest; and

WHEREAS, the City is also making painful cuts resulting in the furlough of approximately 85 employees; and

WHEREAS, the sooner and more effectively the City makes difficult, cost-saving choices, the fewer outright furloughs will be required, the sooner those furloughed employees can be recalled to active work, the sooner the City will be able to reduce the budget deficit for 2020, and the more likely the City will be able to stabilize the 2021 budget without yet deeper cuts at that time; and

WHEREAS, managerial employees were budgeted and scheduled to receive an increase in compensation on December 31, 2020, per item 8.14 of the December 4, 2019 Common Council agenda, entitled Adjustment of the Managerial Compensation Plan; and

WHEREAS, managerial employee cash-in of annual leave costs the City \$75,000 - \$90,000 per year; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the resolution at item 8.14 of the December 4, 2019 Common Council agenda is hereby repealed, thus eliminating any authorized adjustment of the managerial compensation plan in 2020; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That the option to cash in unused annual leave shall be suspended for managerial employees in 2020.