

## CHILLICOTHE REVIEWS PAY ISSUES



The Human Resources committee in the city of Chillicothe is currently working on a new ordinance for both pay and benefits of the police staff and fire command staff. The general idea of the ordinance is to ensure that staff is earning the appropriate pay depending upon their rankings and to also make sure that they are not earning less money than other staff members whom happen to be of a lower ranking than them. All of the members of the command staff are considered non-union employees. These particular staff includes police captains and chief as well as fire chiefs. Ever since 2009, these particular positions have been part of a different ordinance. At that point in time, they had never been added to an ordinance that was created for the non-bargaining unit employees. Two police captains, Larry Bamfield and Keith Washburn, as well as an Assistant Fire Chief, Jeff Creed, made it clear to the committee that this was an issue earlier on in the week. Creed said that he felt their contracts should be much like the police and fire union contracts because that would ensure that the amount of pay they earn, as well as the benefits they receive, are on the same level as their colleagues. Creed said, "With steps (in the fire union contract), within one year, a captain will be making more than an assistant chief." The Mayor for the city, Jack Everson, said that once police employees and fire employees receive a promotion to command staff positions, they end up losing out on a week worth of vacation time. They could also lose sick time too. Everson said, "There are circumstances where a (police) sergeant could actually out earn their superior." He also said, "A captain shouldn't be handing out paychecks bigger than his own." Creed says that the command staff members have had to deal with a specific contract that is similar to the AFSCME contract, which is something he says, has been happening for the past twenty years. Creed said, "In the past, the reason we ended up with a little bit of fire (union benefits), a little bit of police and a little bit of AFSCME is because people were picking what they liked from each one. ... It's been cherry-picked for the past 20 years." Creed also said that the benefits they receive are not fantastic or significant at all. One council member, Alicia Gray, chimed in on the conversation, stating that the benefits are a mess instead. In the meantime, Mayor Everson says that the city needs to review this issue thoroughly to figure out what kind of effects it would have on the economy.