

Fertile City Council Minutes
Special Meeting
April 13, 2023

The Fertile City Council held a special meeting on Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Daniel Wilkens and Council members Mary Kiefert, Amanda Bosman, and Matthew Massmann. Also present were Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, City Administrator Lisa Liden and Michelle Cote. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss incentives to offer to Pioneer Nursing Home employees given the fact that Pioneer Nursing Home in Erskine was closing.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wilkens at 6:30 p.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Discussion began regarding the closure of Pioneer Nursing Home in Erskine and the timelines for the closing. Fair Meadow Administrator noted that the home would be closing in 60 days to allow for finding placement of the residents living there. Leiting reported also that the Pioneer Assisted Living and Crossroads facilities would not be closing. She reported further that they had received referrals on five Pioneer residents and Fair Meadow had accepted three of them. She noted also that she had spoken with Pioneer's Administrator and he had stated that four or five nursing home residents could be transferred to assisted living. Leiting said that those residents would be assessed to determine whether a transfer to assisted living would be appropriate.

Leiting stated that Fair Meadow had current openings for cooks, dietary aides, housekeeping, and maintenance in addition to nursing staff, primarily CNA's. She would like to offer some incentives to attract employees from Pioneer to come to Fair Meadow. She was asking for the Council to approve allowing those transfer employees to be able to bring some of their accrued vacation hours to Fair Meadow since it was unclear whether or not they would be able to be paid by Pioneer for those accrued hours.

Discussion was held on whether or not Pioneer would be legally obligated to pay employees for those accrued hours and whether or not they had the financial resources to do so. A lengthy discussion was held on how many hours employees should be allowed to transfer and what restrictions, if any, should be placed on the use of those hours.

Council member Massmann suggested that Fair Meadow allow the transfer of up to 80 hours vacation but no transfer of sick time. He also recommended that those hours not be eligible for use until after six months of service at Fair Meadow. Massmann also recommended that those transferred hours not be eligible for cashing out at any point. Discussion was also held on the timing of employees leaving Pioneer to come to Fair Meadow. It was agreed that Fair Meadow would stipulate that transferring employees needed to remain at Pioneer until their services were no longer required there.

After a lengthy discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Massmann that for staff transferring to Fair Meadow from a long-term care facility that is closing, that those

staff are allowed to transfer up to 80 PTO or vacation hours to Fair Meadow. Those transferred hours will be eligible to be used at a rate of 50% after 6 months' service to Fair Meadow and the other 50% at the end of the first year of service. The transferred hours are not eligible for cashing out at any point during employment at Fair Meadow. Administrator Leiting will verify the number of hours available with the previous employer. The motion was seconded by Council member Bosman and was carried.

Administrator Leiting then explained that she would also like to be able to have transferred employees able to start at the vacation earning level they were currently on at Pioneer. Some of the Pioneer staff had been employed there for several years and it was going to be difficult for them to have to start over on how many vacation hours they would earn in a year. Leiting felt that allowing those employees to stay at their current level would make Fair Meadow an attractive option for them. Discussion was then held on the different levels for earning vacation and while Administrator Leiting didn't know the exact levels for Fair Meadow, it was felt that Pioneer's levels were likely close to the same.

After discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Kiefert that for staff transferring to Fair Meadow from a long-term care facility that is closing, that those staff retain their years of service and seniority in regard to wage placement and placement on the vacation accrual schedule. Administrator Leiting will verify the years of service and vacation accrual level with the previous employer. The motion was seconded by Council member Bosman and was carried.

Discussion then moved to whether or not to offer rental discounts at the Assisted Living for Pioneer residents who would be able to transfer to an assisted living facility. Leiting said that they currently had two studio apartments available and one one-bedroom unit. Discussion was held on the matter and it was determined that the Council would reassess the situation when they met in special session on April 20th.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. on a motion by Council member Bosman.



Daniel Wilkens, Mayor



Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator