



CITY OF HARRISONBURG  
**HUMAN  
RESOURCES**

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TO: Ande Banks, City Manager  
FROM: Angela K. Clem, Director of Human Resources  
DATE: September 18, 2023  
RE: **Agenda Item Addition (City Council Meeting of September 26, 2023) – Election of New City Holiday Schedule**

**Summary:** City Administration and Human Resources review the holiday schedule on an annual basis, publishing the schedule by October 1 of the previous calendar year. **Human Resources is recommending a modification to the holiday schedule to include 2.5 additional holidays, namely Indigenous Peoples’ Day, Election Day, and an additional half-day on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.**

The holiday schedule will include the following holidays beginning in 2024:

- New Year’s Day (observed)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents’ Day
- Spring Holiday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Indigenous Peoples’ Day
- Election Day
- Veterans Day
- Day Before Thanksgiving (half-day)
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

**Background:** As a result of the Classification & Compensation Study completed in early 2023, Human Resources included a benefits report in the scope of services for its consultant. In planning Fiscal Year

2024, Administration and Human Resources recommended the prioritization of the compensation portion to City Council in order to provide for equitable pay for City employees. As data suggests, compensation is not the only factor an employee considers as a part of job satisfaction. Human Resources has compiled a workgroup to review current employee benefits offerings for future recommendation to Administration. However, annually during the month of September, Human Resources compiles and finalizes the holiday schedule for publishing to City employees in the beginning of October for the following calendar year. This requires Human Resources to determine and recommend this benefit ahead of the Benefits Study work that will occur in the next couple of months.

Staff reviewed the holiday schedule of nearby localities and competitors for talent in the region. Many localities adopt the holiday schedule of the Commonwealth, which includes 14.5 holidays in 2024 compared to the 13 holidays that are offered by the City. In order to be more employee-focused, we recommend the addition of the following to our current schedule:

- *Indigenous Peoples' Day* – In 2021, President Biden officially made Indigenous Peoples' Day a Federal holiday, replacing Columbus Day and proclaiming the second Monday in October as a “day in honor of our diverse history and the Indigenous peoples who contribute to shaping the Nation.” More than 130 cities have adopted the holiday (NYT: 2022), as well as several states. Currently, the Commonwealth still has Columbus Day as an observed holiday on their holiday listing.
- *Election Day* – The Commonwealth currently has Election Day listed as a State Holiday. This provides the opportunity for employees to be off of work with their children as schools are typically closed to be utilized for voting activities.
- *Day Before Thanksgiving* – The Commonwealth currently has four hours of holiday leave on the day before Thanksgiving listed as a State Holiday. This provides the opportunity for some employees to travel or prepare for their holiday festivities/volunteer work.

Please note that several of our employees are committed to our regular 24/7 operation, including public safety departments and operators at the water treatment plant. These employees are provided the option of receiving additional pay for the day (essentially double-time) if they are working, or earning holiday leave hours that may be taken, with the prior approval of their supervisor, at another time during the year.

**Key Issues:** The Holiday Schedule is typically an administrative function. However, since closure of public buildings and modification of some services will occur, it is prudent to provide the recommendation to City Council. It should be noted that this action would make the City slightly more competitive than the number of holidays provided by the Commonwealth (organizations that adopt the Commonwealth's holidays – select localities, universities, VDOT, etc.). Harrisonburg City Schools employees receive 26 holidays.

**Environmental Impact:** None

**Fiscal Impact:** There will only be a slight fiscal impact to adding additional holiday leave time in the cases where 24/7 employees will need coverage by another employee on their respective shifts for 2.5 additional days per year. (*Requested information from Department of Finance.*)

**Prior Actions:** N/A

**Alternatives:** Maintain the existing Holiday Schedule (13 holidays).

**Community Engagement:** N/A

**Recommendation:** Staff recommendation is the approval of the amended holiday schedule as presented with 15.5 holidays.

**Attachments:** N/A

**Review:** N/A

*The initiating Department Director will place in Legistar, in sequence of transmittal, the names of each department that must initial their review in order for this item to be placed on the City Council agenda. The completion of review only addresses the readiness of the issue for Council consideration. This does not address the recommendation for approval or denial of the issue.*