



Baltimore Fire Officers Association

Local No. 964

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CHARTERED FEBRUARY 20, 1948



February 8, 2021

The Honorable Nick J. Mosby, City Council President
Baltimore City Council
100 Holliday Street
Suite 400
Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: City Council Hearing on Workday Issues

Council President Mosby,

I write to you in order to provide a written statement in advance of scheduled “City Council Hearing on Workday Issues” to occur on February 10, 2021 at 5:00 PM.¹ At the outset, I would like to thank you for shining light on this issue. To paraphrase the Baltimore Sun, City employees are in a ‘tizzy’ and they have every right to be because the City has ‘botched’ the rollout of Workday Baltimore.²

I am writing to you in my capacity as President of IAFF Local 964 Baltimore Fire Officers, which encompasses rank and file leadership in the Baltimore City Fire Department in the positions of Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief.

Since the advent of Workday last month, we have received complaints from a large percentage of our membership reporting shocking issues with their paychecks. Pay issues have ranged from employees being shorted by hundreds to thousands of dollars. Some employees have even received no pay at all. Together, union leadership has continued to report these problems up within the agency chain of command. In addition to receiving little to no communication in return, the

¹ See Broderick, Kelly. “Baltimore City Council to hold hearing on to investigate Workday payroll issues.” WMAR 2 News. February 1, 2021. <https://www.wmar2news.com/news/local-news/baltimore-city-council-to-hold-hearing-on-to-investigate-workday-payroll-issues>.

² See Baltimore Sun Editorial Board. “Weeks without a paycheck: Baltimore fiasco hurts workers, city’s reputation.” *The Baltimore Sun*. February 4, 2021. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/opinion/editorial/bs-ed-baltimore-pay-system-20210204-u33ylqgujbczxcry6egfy4vanm-story.html>.

majority of these issues remain outstanding. With each passing paycheck, the amount of money owed to employees compounds exponentially.

In the past week, a narrative has surfaced from the Workday Baltimore Executive Steering Committee that attributes these issues to “human error” and “employees making errors in how they entered their hours.”³ I’d like to make unequivocally clear – any “human error” that may or may not exist clearly rests at the very top levels of management and administration of Workday and very much not with individual employees.

The ranks of my union local compose nearly the entirety of timekeepers and payroll administrators for the Baltimore City Fire Department. For many years, they have dutifully insured that the close of a payroll period would guarantee that our workers were properly paid. With the advent of Workday, suddenly nearly all autonomy and authority to make corrections and proper payroll entries has been removed and rests at the highest possible levels. So-called “training” was rushed through several months ago and consisted of little more than a Powerpoint overview with some screenshots of Workday. No hands-on operation of the system was provided. With all the issues that have arisen since, our officers have identified where errors are occurring and what could be done to correct them. To date, I have received very little if any information on plans for correcting these systemic failures.

It is most unfortunate that this rollout was set at a time when the City has a new administration and many new elected officials, eager to turn their attention to pressing issues our great City faces. Regrettably, due to a lack of foresight on the part of City agency heads who found, recommended, purchased, programmed, and implemented the Workday system, this has become a pressing issue that the new administration has inherited.

I appreciate the quick response from Mayor Brandon Scott to address this situation and his recognition of just how serious a problem it is.⁴ Similarly, we wholeheartedly value your expression of interest in this issue as well.⁵ Moving forward, we hope that the concerns of our Union can effectively convey the redress of these issues found by noting the rollout of Workday was hastily implemented without sufficient planning, preparation, resources, or solicitation of feedback from the rank and file.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter. Please note that you can rely on our local union to provide any information you may require that may assist in my members receiving their proper compensation for time worked. In the spirit of a more cooperative partnership between

³ See Opilo, Emily. “Baltimore City unions report workers underpaid or unpaid, Council President Mosby calls for investigative hearing.” *The Baltimore Sun*. January 29, 2021. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/politics/bs-md-pol-baltimore-employees-not-paid-20210129-iyvg2api3jgo5mwyaxkiz4orka-story.html>.

⁴ See Opilo, Emily. “Baltimore municipal unions accuse city of breaching contracts with paycheck issues affecting thousands of city workers.” *The Baltimore Sun*. February 1, 2021. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/politics/bs-md-pol-baltimore-paychecks-employees-20210201-dgqwkdmanhmrpxihtiejrvei-story.html>.

⁵ *Id.*

management and labor in implementing broad sweeping policies, we can insure a smoother payroll system through the direct address of our grievances.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

Joshua L. Fannon

Joshua L. Fannon, President
IAFF Local 964 Baltimore Fire Officers

CC: The Honorable Brandon Scott, Mayor
The Honorable Sharon Green Middleton, Council Vice President, 6th District
The Honorable Zeke Cohen, 1st District
The Honorable Danielle McCray, 2nd District
The Honorable Ryan Dorsey, 3rd District
The Honorable Mark Conway, 4th District
The Honorable Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer, 5th District
The Honorable James Torrence, 7th District
The Honorable Kristerfer Burnett, 8th District
The Honorable John T. Bullock, 9th District
The Honorable Phylicia Porter, 10th District
The Honorable Eric Costello, 11th District
The Honorable Robert Stokes, Sr., 12th District
The Honorable Antonio Glover, 13th District
The Honorable Odette Ramos, 14th District
Mr. Michael Huber, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
Ms. Brittany N. Lewis, Chief of Government Affairs, Office of the City Council President