

Police chief and assistant city manager to make \$187,000, plus another 12 percent raise over 5 years

By Amy Sylvestri

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The City Council approved new five-year contracts with sizable raises for police Chief Sandra Spagnoli and Assistant City Manager Lianne Marshall at Monday night's meeting.

The new contracts will go into effect at the first of the year, with Spagnoli and Marshall each getting a pay hike of \$10,000 per year – for an annual salary of \$187,000.

The raises will be partially offset by City Manager Chris Zapata, who volunteered to reduce his

\$223,000 annual salary by \$20,000.

Over the course of the five-year contracts, Spagnoli will receive annual raises totaling 12.5 percent and Marshall will get an 11.5 percent raise. At the end of the five years, Spagnoli will be receiving a salary of \$210,375 and Marshall \$208,505.

The contract also dictates that both Spagnoli and Marshall will pay their employee share into their pension plans, 9 percent for Spagnoli and 8 percent for Marshall.

The contract also gives each woman 25 vacation days per year, which they can “sell” back to the city for cash if they don’t use.

The contracts were approved by a vote of 5-2, with council members Pauline Cutter and Jim Prola voting against approval.

Both Cutter and Prola stressed that they weren’t voting against the employees themselves, but

they were uncomfortable with the terms of the contract – specifically the amount of the annual raises and the selling back of sick days.

“I’m voting against the contract, not the people,” Prola said, going on to call the amount of the raises over the next five years “absolutely incredible.”

Prola went on to say that “executives” shouldn’t be getting raises at a time when other employees are being asked to cut back.

Also under the contract, the city will pay \$1,400 to \$1,500 a month for each woman’s health insurance and Spagnoli will receive \$1,500 a year for a uniform allowance.

Both women will be subject to annual performance reviews by the city manager.

Over the past four years, San Leandro has had three different police chiefs and two city managers, and there have been vacancies in the finance and library departments, so Zapata

told the City Council that he wanted the longer five-year contracts to encourage stability in the city's government.

"Change isn't always bad, but uncertainty can be bad," Zapata said

Zapata said he recommended the contracts to the City Council and agreed to take a pay cut because of Spagnoli and Marshall's skill at their jobs and value to the city.

"Unequivocally, they rank right up there with the best I've worked with in my 25 year career," Zapata said.