By SABRINA GARRETT
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A resolution to amend a hiring freeze implemented in June 2011 died for lack of support at the Lebanon City Council meeting Tuesday night.

Mayor Philip Craighead spoke in defense of the resolution, which would give more authority to city department heads, saying that the city has “saved and cut and kept the budget in the black” and that the time has come to “give department heads the opportunity to run this city.”

If passed, the resolution would have allowed city department heads the authority to “hire any personnel required for the operation of their departments for which funds have been approved in the annual budget without prior city council approval as long as the vacant position has been vacant for less than 60 days” – meaning that if a city employee quit or retired, the department head could fill the job immediately without going before council. However, it would not allow them to create new positions without council’s approval.

The resolution was supported by Ward 5 Councilor Tick Bryan, who said during the meeting that the council needed to have faith in the department heads that they put in place and not “micromanage” them.

Bryan voted “yes” along with Ward 3 Councilor Rob Cesternino and Ward 4 Councilor Joe Hayes. Ward 1 Councilor Lanny Jewell voted “no” and Ward 2 Councilor Fred Burton and Ward 6 Councilor Kathy Warmath passed by being “present, not voting.”