

CONTRACT UPDATE

Your Executive Board and I had a contract meeting on Friday, May 19, 2006. This meeting was done in the presence of the mediator. I would have to term the meeting productive simply because for the first time in months, the City negotiators at least gave us numbers to review. I believe fully this was only done because we had been appointed a mediator to oversee all future meetings. As I reported to you previously via the web page, by requesting impasse and having a mediator appointed to us, it compelled the city to meet with us productively. If they fall back into their ways of bad faith bargaining, the mediator will see right through it.

While many givebacks were discussed, I do not believe at this time I should list them because first and foremost, we have to have the values they placed on these givebacks verified by an actuary. We have requested and are going to receive the costings for each of the givebacks being contemplated and we will hand those over to our actuary. The 48-Hour Overtime Bank and the Wittenberg Stipulation have been taken off the table at this time and I believe that too was due to our insistence upon declaring impasse. The City has been made aware we are not interested in giving back either the Wittenberg Agreement or the 48-Hour Overtime Bank. That meeting lasted over 3 hours (previous meetings lasted less than 1 hour).

I believe we are on the right track and will continue to negotiate with the City as long as they continue to bargain in good faith. I still do not rule out binding arbitration if the City negotiators become foolish again.

We asked them to cost out additional items for review. We will be having what is called as a Technical Meeting today (5-24-06). At this meeting, we will receive the costings we requested and we will go over their numbers as well.

Once again, your Executive Board and I appreciate your patience and understanding during this very stressful process. Keep in mind, we will always be opposed to this type of bargaining. It is unfortunate that the PBA agreed to that horrendous arbitrators decision and was also disheartening that many uniformed unions decided against the coalition and preferred to fall prey to the City's demands by selling our their future to get a contract. Regardless of anything, this round of bargaining clearly has every union in some fashion, shape or form paying for their own raises. HAS ANYONE READ RECENTLY THAT THE CITY HAS PROCLAIMED A 5 BILLION DOLLAR SURPLUS? I would be willing to bet when the next round of bargaining comes around that the 5 Billion Dollar Surplus will have disappeared and the City will be crying poverty again.

Your Executive Board and I remain committed to do whatever we have to do to attain for you the same raises everyone else have received.