

On Tuesday, September 19, 2017, Steve Mokrohisky sent an email to all Lane County employees an email about the AFSCME-Lane County negotiations.

This is his email with AFSCME's response in **bold red**.

Hello Lane County Employees,

You may be hearing discussions and media reports about current labor negotiations between Lane County and two employee labor organizations that represent a large number of our employees, and we want to provide factual information for you to assist in better understanding these important issues.

First, Lane County employees provide valuable services for our community and we hold all of our employees in high esteem. We appreciate and respect the work each employee does to make Lane County a safe, healthy and vibrant community for our residents and taxpayers.

Second, we work with all seven of our employee labor organizations to balance the need for competitive wages and benefits, while also ensuring responsible stewardship of limited taxpayer resources. We have a standardized process that uses objective market data to determine appropriate compensation adjustments.

Over the past year, we have successfully negotiated labor contracts with five of our seven employee labor organizations. All five of these employee labor organizations have agreed to the same health insurance changes. We have been working with the two remaining organizations, AFSCME General and AFSCME Nurses, since March 1, 2017 to come to an agreement on updated terms for a three-year contract (2017-2020). After pursuing mediation for several weeks, final offers were made by both the County and AFSCME, and are now posted online at www.lanecounty.org/contractupdates.

We encourage you to review the facts in order to be well informed.

The Union also encourages all its members to look at the facts.

The fact is you will make less money tomorrow than you do today under the County's proposal.

The Fact is that Union members making the least amount of money in the County will be required to pay the same amount for insurance as someone making \$192, 000 dollars with a \$43,000 dollar benefit package.

The Fact is that the County will save budgeted money because of your hard work and sacrifice. Just facts!

The County's September 15th final offer includes:

- *a two-percent cost of living increase each year for three years for all AFSCME-represented classifications;*
- *market adjustments for 55 percent of the AFSCME-represented classifications based on market data from the same comparable counties used for all other represented employee groups;*
- **Market adjustment for the County totals 1,831,749 dollars in a 3 year agreement. That's what the County thinks is fair. The Union chose the comparables that were used in the past but apparently the County changed the goal post in the game and now want something different. Sound familiar. When it is their turn for more money it's one thing and when it's yours it's different. No surprise to the working people of Lane County.**

- and joining all other 475 represented employees within the other five bargaining units who have already agreed to contribute from \$20 to \$70 per month for health insurance. The County also provides a credit that reduces the monthly cost by \$20 if the employee completes a free annual health screening. In order to ensure no AFSCME employee experiences a net loss in compensation for the first year of the County's proposed contract, the County has included a one-time payment to offset the health insurance contribution costs for the 21 employees who may have otherwise seen a reduction in the first year (assuming they chose the highest-cost health plan and did not participate in the health screening to receive the \$20 monthly credit).
- The total cost of the County's final offer is an estimated **\$8 million increase** over three years.

AFSCME's September 15th final offer includes:

- a two-percent cost of living increase each year for three years;
 - market adjustments for 85 percent of AFSCME-represented classifications based on varying market data that is not consistent with that used for all other represented employee groups; and
 - **The Unions market adjustment for all three years for its members is around \$16,408,572. That's fair and remember that is 575 people that have been giving up increases for years to help the County's budget.**
 - no changes to current health insurance plans, including no monthly employee premiums.
- The total cost of AFSCME's final offer based on AFSCME's calculations is an estimated **\$43 million increase** over three years. **The Unions offer is not 43 million additional dollars. IF the County were to catch up its employees to a market that itself once used then it would be around 18 million to do that. The Cost of living adjustments for each year are the same for either side**

The County's final offer is consistent with health insurance changes and compensation adjustments reached over the past year with all five other employee labor organizations, totaling approximately 475 Lane County employees.

AFSCME has approximately 700 members in two separate bargaining units. Both AFSCME bargaining units have for years sacrificed wages for insurance. Other groups bargain for themselves often times reducing benefits and restricting access to insurance plans for newer employees.

Finally, we have worked hard over the past several years to create long-term financial stability by eliminating the structural budget deficit. We have done this by focusing on innovative solutions and internal cost reductions, without layoffs or reductions in services to the community.

AFSCME would not expect reductions since the majority of our bargaining unit provide services to the Community that taxpayers have paid for. Hard working AFSCME members provide and bill services every day that support the Community and Lane County. Administration has shifted the costs of insurance to employees over the past few years in these other groups, how innovative is that?

We are committed to continuing to work with both of the AFSCME units to reach agreements that balance the needs of our employees with those of our taxpayers. The parties have a mediation session scheduled next Wednesday, September 27, to continue discussions. We are equally committed to continuing to provide the critical services our community expects without reductions in those services.

The Union looks forward to continuing bargaining with the County but we will bargain, NOT BEG, it is the hard working front line staff that provide the services not some administrative bureaucrat that

figures out how to save more money at your expense. I wonder if the community know just where those savings go, they sure don't go to employees.

We will continue to provide updates to both employees and the community.

Thank you for the great work you do.

Steve

Steve Mokrohisky

County Administrator

Lane County, Oregon

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