

## **Portland Chapter Meeting Notes from Tuesday, October 1, 2019**

### **Officers and Representatives present:**

Paul Cone, President  
Sarah Spotts, Vice President  
Mary Edin, Secretary  
Rachel Whiteside, Union Representative

### **Agenda (for this meeting and meeting on October 29, 2019):**

PERS Lawsuit and Bargaining  
Strategic Planning for the Union  
Member Survey  
Labor Management Benefits Committee Q & A

### **Notes:**

- **Introductions** – The meeting began with introducing ourselves around the room.
  
- **PERS Lawsuit and Bargaining** – Rachel gave a brief summary of the current standing with PERS.
  - We filed a Demand to Bargain. Our contract states that the City will contribute 6% to our IAP account. Since the new legislation diverts some of this money away from our retirement, the City will no longer be meeting their contract obligation.
    - The amount diverted from the IAP will be 2.5% for Tier One & Tier Two and 0.75% for OPSRP. This amount will be diverted until the PERS bank reaches a specified level of funding. The state estimates that this will be ten to twelve years.
    - We would hope that the City would recognize our years of contributions and that the state's budget problems shouldn't fall on the backs of public sector unions. Thus they should agree that they will find a way to make us whole.
    - We are currently in a 'holding pattern' waiting for the City to respond to our Demand to Bargain. There are also multiple lawsuits in the works over the PERS changes, and we are also waiting to see what happens with these.
  - PROTEC17 is part of a coalition of unions which is funding the primary lawsuit contesting this legislation. Lawsuits have been filed, and are moving forward, but it can be a slow process.
  
- **Strategic Planning for the Union**
  - We are excited that PROTEC17 is going through its first strategic plan in recent memory.
  - The planning process has included sessions throughout the union. There were two earlier this month in the Portland area, and four more happening soon. Some really good things came out of the sessions and we are excited to see what develops
    - Sessions included a SWOT brainstorming session. (SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats).

- If you weren't able to participate we encourage you to send your strategic planning ideas and feedback to [future@protec17.org](mailto:future@protec17.org).
  - We will be continuing this process as we look to develop a plan and principles to guide our union.
  - There will likely be additional discussion at the REC (Regional Executive Committee) Meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup>.
- **Member Classification and Compensation Survey**
  - Our chapter sent out a survey to gather member's thoughts on their classification descriptions and their compensation. The main questions are:
    - How does your description need to be updated? And
    - Are your wages out of alignment with the job market?
  - We need market comparisons to be able to ask for adjustments in our compensation. The Local needs our help to get connected with the best information on current market rates. Members are asked to help with any information they can provide, possibly through their professional organizations.
  - The deadline for the survey has been extended to October 21.
  - We will be forming a committee to review the data we receive. Stay tuned for an opportunity to let us know if you want to be involved.
- **New Total Benefits Manager Kostas Giannopoulos**
  - This department is in charge of class-comp work, health care, and other benefits
- **Labor Management Benefits Committee (LMBC) Q & A**
  - This committee includes representatives from all unions. The benefits office needs committee decisions by March so that they are ready for open enrollment in June and new benefits on July 1. Rachel is our representative on the committee, and Paul and Elliott also sometimes attend the meetings.
  - Rachel led a discussion of the questions the benefits office is interested in knowing. She reviewed the current plan costs and possible options open for the City to explore.
  - The Benefits Office usually surveys employees at the end of open enrollment. Recommend if you see it, take it. They really do read the comments and LMBC uses to inform future decisions.
- **Open Q & A and Other Items** – The meeting concluded with additional questions and comments from participants.
  - Q: What is a Classification and Compensation Study and what does it entail?

A: Look at your job description. Does it match what you actually do? The study will use a long questionnaire on job duties and review results against existing class specifications. Current job descriptions are on the BHR website at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bhr/78223>. Compensation is then determined by a market analysis.

- Other - Rachel – The City will no longer pay in advance for training paid for by the Professional Development Fund (PDF). They have started denying requests for reimbursement if the bureau puts the training costs on their card. Members have to pay for training themselves before being reimbursed. This could be a hardship for members, and an equity issue that could prevent members from being able to take advantage of the PDF.

- Q: What is the timeline for negotiations for a new contract when our contract expires in 2021?

A: Contract negotiations will re-open in January of 2021. During the summer of 2020 we will be ramping up to prepare for negotiations and forming topical committees.

- Other – A member expressed the need to have more “opting in” benefits for members. The member suggested as an example the Oaks Park Labor Day event for members and their families.