

Wanting to keep our members updated about negotiations presentation to the Board of Directors, the E-Board approved the printing and distribution of an additional

newsletter. This newsletter contains copies of speeches that have been presented to the Board during the month of April. Please continue to support the union and the ne-

gotiations team by observing negotiationn Wednesdays and by being prepared to attend Board meetings when an action is called for.

Statements to the Board, April 4, 2017

By Mark Pearson, 2428 President

President Lane, members of the Board, Mark Pearson, President of AFSCME local 2428.

I am here today to speak about the contact negotiations between AFSCME Local 2428 and the East Bay Regional Park District.

We've had 8 meetings to date and everyone has remained at the table and, other than the caucusing requested by both sides, everyone stays present all day. No one is walking away and we are talking and this has been a refreshing change.

Having witnessed past negotiations, I find that current negotiation's is being conducted in a more restrained, respectful manner that I hope will be the precursor for negotiations in the future. I think for many on both sides

this civil approach is still an experiment that must prove itself. I believe that the majority of 2428 members have a nervous hopefulness about this change.

I have received many emails and phone calls from union members as well as heard from members in the special meetings. Front and center for the bargaining unit is the take home pay.

The workers need to know that they are being heard. Many of them are struggling. Based on my request for their personal stories I have learned that we have at least 16 members struggling to hang on to their homes. I have heard from 68 members who cannot purchase a home and we have nearly 55 members whose partner or

spouse is without work or under-employed. We also have many members that are starting families.

The District states that it wants to be the premier employer and pay top wages and benefits in our industry. This goal has been achieved on Management's part and needs to become inclusive for all employees.

Before I leave in four years I would like to again see the District I first met 23 years ago as a temporary ranger. It seemed to me there was more laughter around me as we worked. I'd like to see us get back to that place. I have found that the people who make up 2428 believe in the mission of the District as much as any member of Management. Support the working foundation of this District and give them more reason to laugh while working. Recognize that words of thanks are not enough. Please – pay us what we are worth.

By Meadow D'Arcy, 2428 Sergeant-at-Arms

Good morning President Lane and the members of the Board. My name is Meadow D'Arcy, and I am the Sergeant of Arms and a member of the negotiating team for AFSCME Local 2428.

I am here today to speak on behalf of our members. At the last negotiations session, as we discussed wage proposals, a statement was made by the District: "The Board is not interested in catch up." That statement hit our members hard. One member said to

me "the Board was interested in catch up for managers, why not for us?" I didn't have an answer.

In front of you is a chart showing the effect of the management restructuring or "catch up" our member was referring to. It is a significant document because it shows just how the deletion of the lowest three steps and an addition of three higher steps has allowed management and confidential employees the opportunity to move forward in

their wages. Meanwhile, our members are at the bargaining table, 18 months later, negotiating to move forward in theirs.

Members have brought to us their belief that this restructuring allowed for a 15% increase in wages for management and confidentials. There has been much debate on whether it had or had not. Yet, as we look at the chart, you can see where each classification started – marked with an "X" – and at what date each classification

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Statement to the Board, April 18, 2017

By Eri Suzuki, 2428 Vice-President

Dear Board Directors, General Manager Doyle, Deputy General Manager Alvarez,

My name is Eri Suzuki, and I am the Vice President of AFSCME Local 2428, and a member of the negotiations team. I am here speaking on behalf of our union members regarding the current negotiations for a new contract.

First, we understand and appreciate that the District is on sound financial footing. And we appreciate that the Board is supportive of having a full Classification and Compensation study completed during this contract, which will allow us to see where we stand, and what sort of equity adjustments may be warranted.

At the same time, we are cognizant that this study will not have any impact until the next negotiation. For now, we are looking forward to a fair contract that we can all live with; for now, and for the next 4 years. The cost of living is high and keeps rising.

The cost of housing is high. Our members are worried about our ability to continue to make mortgage payments. Members have had

to move further out, increasing commute times and time away from their families, as well as increasing childcare costs to pay for longer hours.

Our members struggle to save enough to buy their own home, leaving us vulnerable to spikes in rental prices, which moves the dream of home ownership even further out of reach and muddies our plans for a secure retirement.

Our members are worried about our children; whether we can afford to start a family, and pay for their education. We are worried about our aging parents. We want to be able to take care of them when they require more care, and it pains us to know we do not have the resources to do so. We are worried about our own old age, with concerns about how we will live in our retirement.

These are dreams and fears that I'm sure you understand. I know that Board members want to have a world-class workforce that keeps the District operating at a level that makes us a leader in the field. So do we. I know that you are dedicated to making sure that we continue to maintain that level of quality experience for the park users, that keeps pace as we continue to grow. So are we.

We have held 9 negotiation sessions so far. During our last session on April 5, we received the District's latest counter offer at 11 am, and the Union submitted our counter at 3 pm. We were disappointed to hear that there would be no counter from the District that day, and we would need to wait until April 19 after Eddie Kreisberg returned from his vacation and met with the Board again today.

Our members are feeling anxious and frustrated by what they see as slow, small movements by the District. They have been cautioning the negotiation team that the Union is moving too fast, and that they would like us to slow down or even stand firm where we are now.

We are still in productive talks, we do not see any need to drag things out. Taking longer than necessary fuels the anger that some of our members already feel, and anger often grows and spreads in an atmosphere of uncertainty.

We stand here before you today, with our collective hopes and fears. We ask that you consider authorizing a new counter that will allow us to move forward. Meaningful movement will indicate to our members that you understand where we are now, and are looking to our future.

Meadow's from front page

moved into the next step. By adding three more steps, managers and confidentials at top step moved into what was once a merit step - automatically, without the previous requirement of 2-3 years of higher performance reviews. The following year, at their performance appraisal date - another automatic step increase. And the following year, they will earn another. In the end, each classification gained 3 additional steps - each with a 5% increase. Our members only average 2% between their steps, and they have less of them. We believe this shows

how managers received a significant wage increase - between contracts - in addition to the increases we bargained hard for each contract. We are falling further and further behind.

I am before you today, to push forward the question I could not answer. Is it true that the Board is not interested in catch up for our members?

If the restructuring was completed to attract the best and brightest managers and confidentials, I would ask that the Board equally invest in the

best and brightest Park Rangers, Office Assistants and tradespersons. They are already here. And they have been patiently waiting. They waited through a long economic recovery, through pension reform and through wages that fell behind other agencies. And they waited many, many years for a compensation study that finally came. But not for them.

President Lane and members of the Board - I ask you to consider: Your best and brightest are already here. They are at the bargaining table.