



OFFICE OF THE SULLIVAN COUNTY MANAGER
SULLIVAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
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February 8, 2019

Memo to Teamsters Employees

The County of Sullivan, through myself, Human Resources Director Lynda Levine, our labor counsel James Roemer and the Legislature, has negotiated in good faith on a new labor contract with the representatives of Teamsters Local 445 for the past 22 months. I would rather this memo have relayed to you the good news that we have successfully concluded negotiations, but even after mediation, we remain at an impasse and are now in the midst of the fact-finding process.

As valued employees of this County, I want you to understand exactly what we most recently offered and what will happen next. It is important for you to hear more than one side of this situation.

On December 18, 2018, the County made the following offer to all Teamsters employees:

- Any employees not currently at \$15 per hour would have their pay raised to \$15/hour effective January 1, 2019, instead of December 31, 2019
- Each employee would receive \$1,500 permanently added to their base pay, effective January 1, 2018
- Each employee would receive an additional \$1,500 permanently added to their base pay, effective January 1, 2019
- 122 positions would receive a 5% raise on top of the above, targeted primarily to the lowest-paid employees

The County also offered the following concessions:

- Effective January 1, 2019, any employee who worked on an actual defined holiday or a County-recognized holiday would receive time-and-a-half pay
- Effective January 1, 2019, the shift differential would increase from \$1.05 an hour to \$1.50 an hour
- Effective January 1, 2019, employees at the Care Center at Sunset Lake who worked double shifts would be allowed an extra meal, and an employee who was held over from a full shift for a full half of an additional shift would be entitled to an extra meal to eat during their break
- Effective January 1, 2019, bereavement leave would be expanded to include step-parents and stepchildren, two days per occurrence

- Employees required to work in the field would be provided GPS devices within calendar year 2019
- Effective January 1, 2019, the uniform allowance would be increased by \$75 per employee
- Effective January 1, 2019, a DMV supervisor not represented by the Teamsters unit would be expected to be present during the end-of-day closing of the DMV Office (unless a reasonable unplanned circumstance prevented such), and in the absence of that supervisor, one would be appointed from the Teamsters unit at an additional compensation of \$1.50 an hour
- The County would complete printing of the contract settlement within 4 months of ratification

The impact of the foregoing is that **every member of the bargaining unit would receive no less than a \$3,000 increase in base pay over the two-year term of the agreement.** Many members would receive substantially more. In some cases, Teamsters members would receive increases totaling as much as \$6,716 apiece.

The County had one stipulation in return for the above:

- Employees hired after January 1, 2019 must enroll in the NYSHIP Excelsior Plan and contribute 20% of the annual premium – \$2,264.88 for an individual plan (the County's share would be \$9,059.52) or \$5,276.93 for a family plan (the County's share being \$21,107.71)

This offer was rejected by your representatives, following complaints from negotiating members who felt it was not generous enough. They sought additional upgrades and a step system. Those representatives can discuss their full reasoning with you directly. But all of the demands from the union cannot be funded in a two-year contract.

The offer the County made represented \$1.6 million that the County budget would have to appropriate. I conveyed this information to the Legislature, which felt the offer to be generous and worthwhile. However, it is entirely possible they will decide upon a 0% raise once the factfinder's report and recommendation are in hand.

My sincere and keen hope is to come to an agreement that is fair and valuable to you, along with our taxpayers. I am not happy at this state of affairs, but the County has offered as much as it can within a fiscally responsible framework. I would encourage you to speak with your representatives about this situation – an equitable resolution remains in their hands.



Joshua A. Potosek
Sullivan County Manager

Cc: Sullivan County Legislature
Sullivan County Attorney's Office
Sullivan County Dept. of Human Resources
Teamsters 445 Business Agent Jerry Ebert