

1 Riverside County Bargaining Update (March 15, 2017)

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3 Yesterday your Bargaining Team met with the County for the first time since
... late December. I wish I could report that the past two months had seen a
... change in the willingness of the County to engage in real bargaining, but
... that has not been the case.

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5 The County is unwilling to back off of their proposal to take away the cash
... back received from your unused flex benefit, as well as their proposal to
... eliminate the two step merit increase in favor of a one step merit
... increase. They have offered nothing that is even close to proportionate in
... exchange. The only conclusion the Bargaining Team can draw is that the
... County never intended to reach an agreement with us. They are very much
... intent on going to impasse, where they can impose these paycheck gutting
... terms of employment on us.

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7 I expect that the County will declare impasse in the near future. When that
... happens, there are a number of steps available to us, the first of which
... will be to challenge any declaration of impasse with PERB. Impasse is what
... occurs when two sides, after negotiating in good faith, reach the
... conclusion that no agreement can be reached. The County has not by any
... measure bargained with us in good faith.

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9 It is becoming increasingly clear that the County's budget problems are not
... caused by the plane, but rather the pilots. The Board of Supervisors
... elected to spend over 20 million dollars for consultants to find
... "efficiencies." The insane cost is not the only problem with this. First,
... isn't this the sort of thing that the members of the Board of Supervisors
... are elected and paid to do? Dumping their job duties on consultants, at the
... cost of 20 million dollars is not a mistake for which we should be on the
... hook. At this point, they need to make cuts just to pay for the
... consultants! Like I said, it's the pilots, not the plane.

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11 I've said all along, that we are not going to agree to concessions without
... receiving something of comparable value in return. That position has not
... changed. Nor will we bring you any proposed deal that your Bargaining Team
... members themselves would not vote to ratify. Admittedly, there is no sunny
... way to spin our situation at the moment. However, I truly believe that if
... we all show the grit and resolve which I know reside in the heart of our
... membership, that we will come out of this with something that makes sense.

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13 At our membership meetings this month we will be discussing in detail what

13... comes next. I would encourage you to attend if at all possible. We need
... your input, because what lies ahead will require all of us to be involved
... on one level or another. Also, note that we are strictly enforcing our
... members only rule at these meetings, with minor children being the only
... exception.