

## PFF Negotiations Update

5/09/2007

### **“Meet the new boss, same as the old boss”**

P. Townsend

**District claims 5.92% COLA was understood final salary improvement for '06-'07**

President Deegan and the District's negotiating team representatives, have, since early fall, expressed their desire to see a fair and equitable compensation package for all faculty members at Palomar College. During the first, early rounds of these negotiations the two sides jointly laid out a plan to first, identify the position of Palomar full-time faculty compensation relative to 14 other benchmark schools and part-time faculty compensation based on 6 geographically proximal schools. We agreed to a point in time analysis done by a neutral agency. We agreed that once the analyses were completed we would determine the changes that were needed, the fiscal feasibility of making those changes, and the subsequent steps needed to reach a fair and equitable package based on those analyses.

Well the PFF kept its part of that bargain and after the completion of the full-time and part-time salary studies presented its' Article 15: Compensation proposal at the 4/23/2007 negotiations meeting. The proposal called for a salary matrix move to the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile (relative to the benchmark school analysis) for all full-time faculty members (some of us were at as low as the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile) and a truncation of the current matrix (from 40-25 steps assuring we get paid the salary of 40 years at 25). It also proposed a preparation pay formula for all part-time and full-time overload instructional faculty members. The total cost of the PFF compensation proposal was 2.6 million dollars – a value that we think is quite affordable given the equalization money (\$2.68 million), the bond (\$694+ million), and the budgeted 2006-2007 ending fund balance (\$18 million; from adopted 2006-2007 Budget - General Fund 10) to name just a few positive budgetary forecasting factors.

Actions by the Districts' negotiating team at the subsequent meeting on 4/30/2007 demonstrated that the District no longer wished to keep up its end of the bargain. At that meeting, under the guise of presenting a District funded benefits study, an “update” of the initial salary study was presented which was neither on the agenda nor agreed upon by the PFF to be conducted, nor used in any way during these negotiations. Even though the presenters could not answer basic questions about adequate controls in the study they

none-the-less concluded that most, if not all, Palomar full-time faculty were currently at or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile.

When we balked at this inappropriate and convenient presentation the District countered that it was their impression that when we signed the MOU for the early release of COLA, that would be all the salary augmentation that the PFF would be requesting for this fiscal year. This flagrant misrepresentation of the truth and the process by which all negotiations are conducted was astounding. Agreements made in a single specific MOU are never equated to a Tentative Agreement on an entire article.

Based on this change in District behavior we have launched an informational request into all communications between the District and any and all salary study agents. Another negotiations meeting will not be scheduled until we have received that information, have reviewed it, and determined that the District has not violated the Educational Employment Relations Act for bargaining in less than good faith.

In addition, some of you may have heard the stereotypical “sky is falling” rhetoric from the VP of Finance during one of her recent presentations. To put this in proper perspective, the same claims were made last May during our final weeks of negotiations. Back then we were asking for compensation improvements of less than \$500,000 (out of a \$100 million dollar budget). At that time, all the District would say was “We just don’t have the money”. When the actual monetary values came in, the District showed an ending fund balance for 2005-2006 of \$12.5 million dollars (from adopted 2006-2007 Budget - General Fund 10). Based on these consistent errors in budgeting the PFF will also be launching an intensive informational request into the means by which much of the budget is calculated. We will share all of the information with you as soon as we have time to review and assess it.

I am sorry to say that negotiations have taken a turn for the worse but those of you who have been here awhile should not be surprised by the Districts’ behavior of , once again, failing to make good on a promise.

The PFF will continue to fight to improve the working conditions of both full and part-time faculty members at Palomar College. Please support us by joining the union if you haven’t already and volunteering to serve on committees, workgroups, and taskforces. If

you have any questions about the contract or negotiations, please don't hesitate to contact me at [rmorrissette@palomar.edu](mailto:rmorrissette@palomar.edu).

Respectfully submitted,

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