

FOP/Pinellas County Schools
Minutes
June 20, 23
PCS Administration Building

Present: Paula Texel, Laurie Dart, Kevin Smith, Dena Collins, Ken Afienko, Dan Churchill, Officer Dean Humphries, Officer Cal Gordon, Officer Webb

Attachments provided by FOP

Meeting started at 1:01 pm

Mr. Humphries begins his presentation- copies provided to the group. Communications department has not been represented in the past. Did not have plans or requests brought up in the past. Items are not money related but more language considerations. Items that have been brought up previously are in reference to bereavement leave. Communications are looking for some compensation leave for bereavement and serious illness because comms is not home on the weekends and holidays. Shift differential needs some additional clarification. Requests for changes in shift differential for comms- as shifts are different than other employees. When working duties for hurricanes and emergencies- comms team would like to be fully compensated for all time at the duty. Finally, a request to submit overtime and after time when time off has been previously requested within the pay period. There have been times when overtime has been requested within the same day.

Ms. Dart asks for some clarification- in this bargaining unit we have mostly law enforcement and some non-law enforcement. As the comm center grows, treating civilian employees is different than law enforcement. With the growing number of civilian employees in this unit, we may be building argument that this group may or may not be appropriate in this bargaining unit. This is not a suggestion that we need to, it's an argument that roles are different.

Mr. Humphries continues with sharing in our current work calendar holidays are not recognized on the holidays. Because of the way we identify holidays, those that work on the holiday are not receiving the overtime compensation. Identify the holiday as different is from district- comms team works that actual holiday- don't get the overtime and may not receive on the days that are the paid holiday if they are off on that day. Asking for recognition of the actual holiday time and ability to move the holiday time to another date. Our dispatchers are currently pay grade D11- transportation dispatch went to D13. Asking for this group to also become a D13- equal to transportation dispatch. We are asking to be able to move a level- up to the 12 years- then after 12 years- move to % if a raise is provided. Asking to rectify an employee with previous experience. Asking to allow previous experience not previously awarded- in this overall increase. The goal is to have longevity- a career path for this group of employees. This is an ask prior to regular raises provided by the school board. The ask is for a total of \$139,316 for the comms team.

Officer Cal Gordon represents school officers; he begins by sharing about experience and training that a regular law enforcement officer needs and what our school officers need- same certifications as well. Their role helps regular law enforcement, most guys now are previous law enforcement- go through the same training. Currently assigned to an alternative school, we bring in vast experience. Officer Gordon is a retired officer and provides additional training.

Officer Dan Churchill shares a packet with the group. We are required to attend additional training at St. Pete College. Shares the average salary to join the academy is \$63,070. Tampa Bay Area median salary is 56,300. In the packet, minimum qualifications are provided- to include a polygraph this is part of the employment. There is a 200- question exam- 84% or higher to become certifiable. Background check is extensive. Every 4 years FDLE requires an additional 40 hours to maintain certification. Every year, all law enforcement goes to the gun range and other events to maintain certifications. Officer Churchill brings up wage compression, ours is lower than 7 other agencies. Provides information on the figures- minimum salary. Many are asked to go to another agency with 5 years- experience- will make more money. USF starting salary is 56,000. The reason for the meeting, was a need was felt- to get a contract that is fair for everyone. They represent 22 officers, 5 sergeants and 1 civilian. A major position will become available, this will cause a shift from patrol. There is a budget of 30 officers, leaving possibly 9 open positions. Need to retain people and get people here. Difficult to get here on 10 months- for \$30,000. Time off and schedule are great, but numbers are not there. When Officer Churchill was hired, it was 10 years' experience to apply. It is down now, it hard to get people to come in. We are asking for a fair rate. Bring up the salary, put everyone in the correct level- maintain the people as the current officers are being recruited. We don't want to leave. Need to negotiate for the sergeants- as well.

This group is looking at the max for 12 and bring to 13- same cap for an Officer that has been here 12 years. We don't want to drop our standards of hiring. Asking to raise the bottom up- fix the wage compression- and put us more comparable. A cover letter has been provided with a breakdown of the salary. This proposal will fix the salary compression issue.

Officer Churchill continues, 4 of the top 6 salaries are within striking distance of retirement. There are 14- 10-month positions, anyone hired forward is a 10-month employee. 8 open positions- these are budgeted. We would rather have quality applicants over quantity- don't have an issue with less FTE budgeted- to make the increases happen. 5 sergeants are filled and of those 2 are brand new. They were on paygrade 14- move from G to J. People under their supervision make more money than them. If we move them to J and cap at 9 years- level R. Trish is a civilian position, works with the district since 1997- she is background investigations- she is paygrade 9. Trish stated no one ever speak about her pay. Asking to move her paygrade up by 1 paygrade. When a group was brought in, experience was not offered. The compression is based on some getting previous experience and others that have not. Another issue, on experience, were told no experience pay- a more recent hire in December did receive experience pay. Something that needs to be investigated and corrected. This does not seem fair. This is how it can be addressed- two newest hires. Don't want to ask for retro pay or file grievance- we just need to make this right. If you look at our experience and college experience- many have at least an AA degree.

Information from Miami Dade schools' SRO unit- some areas that were highlighted- the main thing that is happening in the schools- we are 24/7 in mental health. This group is very specialized in what we do- we work with the special need schools. We see it all- used to work road patrol in Pasco, always wanted to be an SRO. Felt so much busier in the schools then when he was on the road- you are a resource there and called upon a lot. Currently 8 officers don't take insurance through schools. By not taking insurance this would be approx. 112K. What we are asking for is reasonable and a solid investment in the police force- we are here because we care.

Officer Webb introduces himself- went into the academy at age 57- working as SSO in the school. Leave there and drive to Pasco county to Palmetto- and caring for elderly relative- this was something that I wanted to do- wanted to keep students off the street. Background is ministry- and now a floater with school police.

Paula Texel provided next steps- we appreciate all the information and the presentation- there are many things and take back. We need to look at the financial- this is new for many, EWBS kicks off our bargaining season. Things are looking favorable; however, it is early, and we will look at budget- this is being presented to the school board for workshop and then public hearing.

Kevin Smith continued; we are funded differently- we are at a disadvantage- property values go up as a result of the municipality. Legislator sets this for taxes- this puts this at a disadvantage. When you look at the funding formula- the funding was good. You have peel back in comparison, we are going up- however there is scholarship dollars Family Empowerment fund- that can go to any family- taken away from our funding. Florida Retirement System - there is an increased in cost- DROP has been increased from 5 to 8 years. DROP dollars interest will go up to 4%- therefore about additional \$9 million from us to provide for retirement. We are looking about \$14 million at this time. The proposal will be handed over to our payroll to look at the actual dollar amount. Add to this is our shrinking amount of student population that impacts funding. We use incremental budgeting- if we have not had positions budgeted- this does impact the budget- therefore not a savings. We are also paying other agencies to cover for the vacancies as well.

Paula and Kevin share a right sizing of the district. Laurie shares this group is small and sometimes allow for flexibility. We don't diminish the importance.

Ken Afienko shares he has negotiated- every time pay compression has been brought up- this is one-time fix- once we fix this- we work off of this for future. Pay compression gets worth every year- experience based salary incentives- this is a concern that is needs to be addressed. This pay compression is a priority- this why we lose employees. There are other ways to massage this- look at longevity.

Paula closes with we value all of you- we have to work together as a team. Laurie Dart shares that the board is very supportive of the school police.

Asking for a meeting in July- Ken Afienko will be absent- but, would be good with the meeting.

Meeting adjourned 2:11 pm