

FOP Negotiations

8.7.25

Admin Building

Present: Laurie Dart, Michael Vigue, Carly Spicer, Dena Collins, Stephanie Woodford, Gary Jeppesen, Dan Churchill, Alex Morton, Ken Afienko

The meeting began with introductions from all attendees. Ms. Woodford opened by presenting a counterproposal to the previous request from the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). Alex Morton asked for a comprehensive budget overview covering salaries and training. Ms. Woodford explained that the district was offering a 1.01% salary increase, which would be applied across all pay grades and steps. She emphasized that maintaining a police department represents a significant financial burden for the district.

Laurie Dart added that operating our own police department exposes the district to considerable risk. She noted that the district had lost 3,800 students this year, which further impacts the cost of staffing and operations. Officer Churchill spoke next, highlighting the difficulty in attracting younger, healthier candidates to the force. He explained that the role is more suitable for retirees and pointed out that eight current officers are physically unable to serve at certain locations, such as Sanders or Hunzinger.

Ms. Woodford questioned whether the district could continue to sustain its police force, especially as it undergoes right-sizing. She projected that the district would eventually serve around 60,000 students. Despite being similar in size to Pasco County, our district operates more buildings, which increases costs. She noted that the most effective strategy to date was including all employees in the recent referendum—a \$60 million risk that added support staff, including police officers. The district's current proposal includes referendum-based funding, a 1% salary increase, and a \$300 one-time bonus.

Mr. Vigue directed attention to the second page of the proposal, which outlines the combined impact of the referendum, the bonus, and the salary increase. He stated that the average total increase for this bargaining unit amounted to \$3,754 per employee. Mr. Afienko asked whether the 1% increase was fixed and if the referendum amount could fluctuate. The district responded that referendum funding is based on property tax rolls and is distributed according to the number of employees.

At 3:18 PM, the meeting broke for caucus and reconvened at 3:46 PM.

Upon returning, Officer Churchill explained that his group primarily focuses on base wages and does not typically factor in referendum funding. FOP returned with a proposal to eliminate one of two unfilled sergeant positions and reallocate those funds to Level 1 officers and referendum support. They requested a 3.25% salary increase.

Ms. Woodford responded that she could not negotiate organizational restructuring. She clarified that all positions are currently under review for potential hiring or elimination. She also noted that a 1% salary increase costs the district approximately \$8 million. The superintendent had initiated the referendum process, which involved over 50 evening meetings and one-on-one discussions with every board member. She emphasized that the district risked losing \$60 million if the referendum had not passed.

The meeting broke for a second caucus at 3:53 PM and resumed at 3:56 PM.

Following the brief break, Officer Churchill accepted the district's offer of a 1% salary increase. He added that FOP would request retroactive payment if the referendum amount increased. Gary Jepperson noted that final figures would be confirmed by July 1.

A third caucus began at 4:07 PM and ended at 4:15 PM.

After reconvening, the district stated that if the roll-forward calculation results in additional funding, they would provide a one-time stipend payment in mid-September to employees in active positions at that time. The union verbally agreed to this arrangement, and Laurie Dart committed to sending the finalized documents to Ken Afienko for review.

The meeting concluded at 4:20 PM.