

IN THE MATTER OF FACTFINDING

STATE OF OHIO

STATE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS BOARD
(SERB)

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OHIO PATROLMEN'S BENEVOLENT ) CASE NO.-SERB-98-MED-09-0839
  ASSOCIATION                  ) HEARING - April 1, 1999
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                                )
AND                               )
                                )
TRUMBULL COUNTY 9-1-1          )
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APPEARANCES

UNION

Nicholas Codrea, Jr. - Economic Evaluation Group, Inc., Presenting
Cindy Rainey, OPA
Carolyn Weller, OPA
Dave Hayne, OPA

EMPLOYER

James W. Keating, Trumbull County Human Resources Director, Presenting
Tim Gladdis, 9-1-1 Director

BACKGROUND

The Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPA, Union or Association) became the exclusive Representative for Trumbull 911 Telecommunicators in 1996. There are currently twenty five (25) Full Time and two (2) Part Time Telecommunicators, who are referred to at times as Dispatchers.

Trumbull County has a population of about a hundred and ten thousand (110,000). The 9-1-1 Center serves twenty three Fire Departments and seventeen (17) Police Departments.

The current Labor Agreement expired December 31, 1998. The Undersigned was notified by SERB via a Letter from G. Thomas Worley, Administrator, Bureau of Mediation, dated December 1, 1998 that he had been selected as the Factfinder. The Parties were contacted and the Factfinder was advised they had agreed to extend bargaining. Subsequently the Hearing was scheduled for March 19, 1999 but the Parties agreed to a Postponement. It was moved to April 1, 1999 and it was held at the Trumbull County 9-1-1 Center.

The Parties submitted Preliminary Documents which were received a few days prior to the Hearing as agreed. Both the Union and Management advised that tentative agreement had been reached on all matters except Wages, Longevity, PERS Pickup and Shift Differential. Agreement was reached during the Hearing on Shift Differential, leaving Wages, Longevity and PERS Pickup.

UNION PROPOSALS

A. <u>WAGES</u>	<u>FULL TIME</u>	<u>PART TIME</u>
CURRENT	\$11.43	\$9.08
1-1-99	\$12.25 (7.17%)	\$9.80 (11.01%)
1-1-2000	\$13.00 (6.12%)	\$10.40 (5.77%)
1-1-2001	\$13.75 (5.77%)	\$11.00 (5.77%)

The Association entered Documents showing Wages from nearby localities, namely Girard, Warren, Lordstown, Hubbard, Niles and Newton Falls. Collectively they show for the first year of employment Trumbull is competitive for Wages; showing its starting rate to be a little over 100 per cent of the average for the localities. Trumbull drops drastically, dipping to about 85 per cent after five years. In annual dollars Trumbull is from \$3,600.00+ to almost \$4,700 below the market average for the cited localities.

B. LONGEVITY

In referring to the same Documents referred to above, Lordstown has no Longevity Pay but the Wages are significantly higher than Trumbull. Longevity at Girard goes to \$1,700.00+ at 25 years; Warren is at \$1,650.00+; Hubbard goes to \$900.00; Niles progresses to 1,800.00 and Newton Falls peaks at \$83.00. In summary, Trumbull is on the low end at \$600.00. The Union proposes effective Jan. 1, 1999 the bargaining unit move to \$3.00 per month after five full years of service for each full year of service. It proposes on Jan. 1, 2000 the Longevity Pay increase to \$4.00 per month and on Jan. 1, 2001 Longevity be upgraded to \$5.00 per month.

C. PERS Pickup

The Union proposes the following.

"During calendar year 1999, the employer will continue to 'pick up' 6 per cent (6%) of the employee's share of PERS retirement with the remaining amount treated as a shelter and paid by the employee."

Effective 1/1/2000

"The employer will 'pick up' seven per cent (7%) of the employee's share of PERS retirement with the remaining employee amount treated as a shelter and paid by the employee."

Effective 1/1/2001

"The employer will 'pick up' eight and one half per cent (8½%) of the employee's share of PERS retirement with the remaining employee amount treated as a shelter and paid by the employee."

EMPLOYER

A. WAGES

Management proposes a 3.5 per cent increase each year of the Contract. It submitted Documents in support of its position. Its Exhibit A is for Stark, Mahoning, Ashtabula and Tuscarawas Counties. Stark pays Full Time employees \$8.24 an hour but they are "call takers" and are not Dispatchers or Telecommunicators. Mahoning pays \$9.05 to \$10.94 for Full and Part Time. Ashtabula pays \$13.32 for Full Time employees. Management noted Ashtabula gave an increase of \$1.21 per hour,

and the employees gave back the full employer PERS pick up. Tuscarawas pays \$10.40 an hour for Full Time and \$8.00 for Part Time.

Employer Exhibit D is a Document showing some limited private sector data in the Trumbull general area. Management also noted employees have twelve (12) paid Holidays and the County pays the full premium for health insurance.

B. LONGEVITY

The County noted in its Exhibit B under the Contract with AFSCME Local 2493 Longevity Pay is \$2.00 per hour. It also mentioned that Lordstown employees have no Longevity Pay.

C. PERS

The County stressed it currently pays 6 per cent and bargaining unit members contribute 2½ per cent. It notes it also pays 6 per cent for employees in the Recorder's office. Management seeks to maintain the current language of Article 18, Section C. which states:

"The employer will continue to 'pick up' six percent (6%) of the employee's share of PERS retirement with the remaining employee amount treated as a shelter and paid by the employee."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. WAGES

It is apparent the bargaining unit's Full Time Employees will fall farther and farther behind competitors in the geographic area unless some significant movement is made. The Factfinder is aware historic data compiled by SERB shows wage increases in the public sector in Ohio generally fall between three (3) and four (4) per cent. There are exceptions. It is apparent overall the Telecommunicators have a good package, particularly considering this is only the second Labor Agreement. However, it is apparent increases of 3.5 per cent as proposed by the County will not alter the employees' position relative to comparable units. Management admitted the County is in a reasonably good financial position but it also stressed it must prudently manage the Funds.

FULL TIME EMPLOYEES

The Factfinder recommends a Wage increase of six (6) per cent effective Jan. 1, 1999; five (5) per cent effective Jan. 1, 2000; and four (4) per cent effective Jan. 1, 2001.

PART TIME EMPLOYEES

An increase of three-and-one-half (3½) per cent is recommend effective Jan. 1, 1999. The same per cent is recommended effective Jan. 1, 2000 and Jan. 1, 2001.

2. LONGEVITY

It is apparent from the information provided some movement is warranted. The following is recommended.

Effective Jan. 1, 1999, all employees shall receive a longevity payment after five (5) years of continuous Trumbull County service at the rate of three dollars (\$3.00) per month for each year of service.

Effective January 1, 2000 the amount will be increased to four dollars-\$4.00 per month and will remain at four dollars (\$4.00) per month for the remainder of the Contract.

Longevity payments shall be made in lump sum on the basis of the completion of a full year of service on December 1st of each year.

3. PERS

Defined contribution plans are common in the pub-

lic sector. It is quite uncommon to see them fully funded by the Employer. Based upon the information provided and in consideration of the Wage and Longevity recommendations the Factfinder recommends retaining the current language of Article 18, Section C.

Norman R. Harlan

Norman R. Harlan, Factfinder

Steubenville, Ohio

April 8, 1999