

PENSION WHAT ARE YOU FIGHTING FOR?

As I was listening to people at the last Union meeting it occurred to me that do the members know what they are fighting for. I wonder this because when I went to the pension meeting that the City had offered there was very few members in attendance so how do you know?

At the city meeting there was a representative from AON HEWITT that is the company that looks after our pension also in attendance was Bob Howe and Marno Maciness.

I asked them with all the changes to the pension plan will it be totally funded and would fix our pension shortfall for good. Each of these individuals answered yes. So then I asked the question if this fixes our pension plan why would there need to be a cap for how much the city contributes? There was no response by any of them and they refused to answer the question.

Pension plans have changed for many years so some things you may want to look into are when did the Federal Government make companies responsible for unfunded liabilities and why? When were undefined pension plans introduced and why? When were targeted pension plans introduced and why? You can look these questions up on the internet and get many different reasons from business, unions, leftwing and rightwing answers it is up to you to figure out the truth.

The reality is that these pension changes will affect everybody differently depending how long till you retire and how many years you have in the plan already. You can get this figured out by calling Wenona Kook 306-975-3285 and ask her to figure it out. They may send you a bunch of formulas to figure it out but I would say if nothing of wages changed from your pension statements what would you get for pension under the old plan and what would you get under the new plan, now you know what you are fighting for. Also remember that under the new plan we pay the wages of the benefits personnel so technically they work for us.

I was very fortunate to have the time to talk to Brother Len Theisen who spent many hours getting us the best pension plan allowed by law at the time. He did this and do to illness did not get to enjoy this for himself. What became very apparent is that the city will ALWAYS be trying to change the pension as this is what they are paid to do. They will change formulas and manipulate numbers to their advantage.

Do you think that if our pension gets a surplus there will be no fighting I say think again, who gets the money the city, use the money to buy back benefits or return to the money to the members. All these will be things you may be fighting about so bottom line is you will probably be fighting about your pension as long as you work for the city. Remember this is also dictated by the law that the governments at the time can and will change at anytime.

Do you wonder why your salary is low please remember in past contracts that we agreed to take 0% to keep our pension plan where it was are they going to give those years back if we have to change the plan. And by the way those 0% were supposed to fix the plan then. What changed?

It has been very apparent that a lot of members complain about the union and how it is handling the situation but please remember that the executive is your voice and deserve at the very least our respect and honest discussion. There is no possible way they can know how each person would be affected by a labour action. Also you yourself can run in the next elections if you feel you can do better. But remember you may have to give up on

overtime a birthday or anniversary or other things you may want to do because you have given a commitment to serve the membership. I have not always agreed with union decisions but I have always respected the work they do for us.

So now is the time that you the union find out what you personally are fighting for so you can pass this on to the public, as this is what it is personally going to cost me. Remember this affects everybody different. Then let the executive know how much you are willing to sacrifice to get what you want. At the last union meeting it was very apparent that the executive needs direction on how far we are willing to go.

The one point I would like everyone to remember that in past contracts we did well when the membership was strong, but not so good when we were divided and I believe this will be true in the future. So please remember when you attack another union member you are giving the City more power and in turn hurting yourself.

By the way I did get my number and it is \$87.00 a month but I can retire in 28 months.

Cal

Harrison