



LIUNA Local 777



RIVERSIDE COUNTY/LIUNA, LOCAL 777 LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 14, 2007, 11:00 a.m.
LIUNA Offices
4000 10th Street
Riverside, CA 92501

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT (*Chair)

Ron Komers, Human Resources
Barbara Olivier, Human Resources
John Mooney, Human Resources

*Fred Lowe, LIUNA
Sandra Brown, LIUNA
Sala Ponnoch, LIUNA
Kathie Delgado, LIUNA
Tom Carnes, LIUNA
Linda Jefferson, LIUNA
Luana Ball, LIUNA
Linda Gonse, LIUNA
Stephen Switzer, LIUNA

ABSENCES

Jack Mosqueda, LIUNA

IN ATTENDANCE

Kris Sloman, Human Resources
Gail Smith, Human Resources
Sarah Franco, Human Resources
Fernando Vizcarra, RCRMC
Tiffany Mendez, Human Resources
Vivian Nunez, Human Resources
Andi Huey, Human Resources
Mark Carleson, Human Resources
Denise Walker, Human Resources
Michael Fields, Human Resources
Tom Prescott, Human Resources
Gloria Arellano, Probation
Marilyn Barker, Human Resources

David Stone, Flood Control
Jennifer Griffin, Human Resources
Robin Downs, Human Resources
Sylvia Deporto, Human Resources
Roger Uminski, Community Health
Kris Sloman, Human Resources
Brande Schaefer, Human Resources
Shondi Lee, Human Resources
Lisa Pina, Human Resources
Nancy Taylor, Human Resources
Dave Williams, M.D., Human Resources
Shawn Atin, Human Resources

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Members and guests introduced themselves.

Fred Lowe announced that on June 9 LIUNA 777 will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the election to represent County of Riverside employees. An event will take place on Friday, June 8 from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. Fred invited Human Resources staff to attend.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 8, 2006 meeting were reviewed and approved.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Building and Safety Issues

Ron Komers said there has been a substantial slowdown in building activity, and he wanted to explain what is occurring in Building and Safety. This department is supported totally by building fees. When individuals build their own home, they make a deposit to cover the costs for building permits, processing reviews, inspections, etc. The deposits are based on anticipated steps necessary to complete the project. Fees are currently down 40% and going further down. Thus a source of revenue for the department has been exhausted. In addition, there are a number of individuals who placed deposits who have given up on their projects, so the County must refund their deposits. Some large developers who were preparing to develop tracts have given up their plans. The consequence is that the department is having an immediate significant budget shortfall. This means the department cannot support the 300 employees who make up the department. While the County had hoped this would be a short-term situation, it has not proven to be the case. The department is challenged with decreased revenue while expenses are escalating.

Another concern for the department is that Building and Safety needs to maintain a certain level of qualified personnel. If employees leave the department, it would be difficult to replace staff with specialized training and experience. The department is concerned, and they would like to begin to meet and confer. We would like to set up a meeting to discuss the problem and determine ways we can work cooperatively to cope with the situation.

Ron Komers said there are two areas we need to explore: One is the best way to work together cooperatively to attempt to reduce the impact on individuals, and then what we might do system wide to facilitate saving people so that more drastic action can be avoided. The dilemma is that there is a high sense of urgency, so we need to take action quickly. Recent events in the sub-prime financing market could make the situation

more serious. At this point it is uncertain whether Riverside County would be affected to a greater or lesser degree than other areas of the country.

The slowdown in construction has ramifications for the rest of the County, because a number of agencies depend upon the fuel from growth. Human Resources, for example, charges the Department of Building and Safety a per capita amount, so Human Resources' revenues could also be impacted by a reduced number of employees. Ron said it is his hope that by working together we can make the best of a bad situation.

Fred Lowe stated public agencies faced a similar challenge in the early nineties, and a number of creative solutions were developed. In the City of Pasadena language was included in their MOU to allow job sharing (primarily for clerical workers) and reduced work schedules. When the crisis was over the MOU language was retained, and a practice developed where female employees returning from maternity leave would work reduced schedules for a certain period of time. Job sharing and reduced work schedules also benefited employees who had child care issues. Modified work schedules would benefit all employees if this could be expanded countywide.

Ron Komers agreed we need to discuss this. This situation is different because it is a 40% reduction in revenue in a single department. Other departments are growing in direct proportion to the current population, and they are struggling to keep up with the workload.

Fred Lowe suggested we could freeze hiring in other departments, and see where we might be able to transfer employees to different departments where openings exist. Ron Komers said these are the types of things we should discuss; however, in this situation there is a sense of urgency. Fred Lowe suggested we set up a subcommittee and schedule a meeting. Fred Lowe said he met with a developer who is planning to build 100,000 housing units in the Greater Coachella Valley to Imperial, so if we can get through this crisis, future construction is in the offing. Ron Komers noted that it is important for the department to retain in-house depth of expertise that is consistent and knowledgeable. Ron said the purpose of bringing this subject up is because of the relationship between the County and LIUNA and his desire to enter into labor-management discussions about this important issue.

Fred Lowe said while working on a similar situation at DPSS, a concept was developed where employees voluntarily transferred to other departments. As a result of the action taken at DPSS, 40 jobs were saved. Ron Komers said we would look forward to learning from this experience. Ron added that Building and Safety wants to avoid layoffs, as it causes disruption for employees as well as the County. Ron said he foresees the department is open to creative solutions. The clear requirement is that we have to save enough money to ensure the department can live within its

means. Ron Komers said he would invite Tony Carstens and/or Jim Miller of the Building and Safety Department to attend the next LIUNA Labor-Management meeting.

B. Classification and Compensation Benchmark Studies

Kathie Delgado said she had questions about the benchmarking process and how the benchmarks are arrived at. Kathie said she was very disturbed about the results of the last occupational group study. Kathie explained that Probation Assistants support sworn Probation Officers. Community Service Officers support a sworn sheriff deputy. After the study was completed it was discovered that Probation Assistants were benchmarked with the Probation Officers. Thus Probation Assistants and Community Service Officers were not fairly assessed.

Doris Lackey responded that there are two different issues: One is benchmarking in the sense of reviewing our County's job titles among other public agencies. This is to determine relationships so they can be combined in a job family, based on a commonality of duties.

As far as benchmarking in general, there are job families, and of those positions are categorized according to the commonality of duties which can be compared against similar job families across the market or other counties. After those positions have been selected, job descriptions are identified that are unique to the County of Riverside but possibly available in other public agencies.

Sandy Brown said it is her understanding that probations officers were not underpaid, thus the probation assistants could not be underpaid. However, when the occupational group study was done, the Classification and Compensation Division found in other counties and cities in like areas that they all did the same type of work, and the pay difference was huge.

Ron Komers noted that a study was just conducted for investigative technicians where we reviewed the complexity of the job duties themselves, regardless of the reporting relationship. We probably need to do the same thing for Probation Assistants. Ron noted that a new Probation Officer has been hired, and Ron speculated that the new director would want to review the way the entire department is functioning. The Board is supportive of the new probation officer. As he was formerly the probation officer for San Diego County and Santa Barbara County before that, it is likely that the Board will look carefully at recommendations that he may have. The issues that have been articulated are more about the relationship between the probation assistant and the probation officer in terms of complexity of duties and how much weight to give that, rather than benchmarks. Benchmarks are primarily used to study outside agencies and to categorize them by job family. This is more of an internal situation. It is more of a classification

study than a benchmark study. Ron said the new probation officer would probably review group counselors and the number of temporary employees. Ron said he is willing to commit that over the next several months we will review these issues, either on Human Resources' initiative based on today's input or with the arrival of the new probation officer.

Upon inquiry by Fred Lowe, Doris Lackey reported that we are almost midway through the administrative occupational group study. The estimated completion date is September 2007. After that the cycle begins again. Kathie inquired whether the group studies would be conducted in the same order as before. Doris Lackey said it may not be in the same order because the IT classes would be next in line to be studied. Kathie Delgado requested a calendar or schedule of projected dates for each of the group studies. Doris said she would provide this to Kathie by the end of this month.

C. The Center for Government Excellence

Denise Walker, Human Resources Division Manager, distributed copies of a PowerPoint presentation about the Center for Government Excellence (CGE). Denise first explained that the division has changed its name from Career Development to the Center for Government Excellence. The name was changed because we are examining employee development from a different angle and wanted to present an enhanced, carefully planned approach. Denise reported that the CGE provided training for 9,000 employees in the last year. All of the current training was reviewed, and new academies were developed. The bulk of classes included management harassment prevention, employee harassment prevention, disciplinary process, and other County-mandated courses for supervisors.

Denise said that the CGE has expanded their capacity and increased participation in mandated training. New staff has been hired, and internal processes and procedures have been streamlined.

Denise explained that the CGE implemented a new performance management model. This is designed to ensure that all employees have a clear expectation and clear path to develop, either in their current jobs or to prepare for advancement in the future. The CGE has focused on start-up of the Leadership Initiative, then began a pilot for the management group. Denise stated she is piloting a supervisory academy and will start a professional assistant academy in the spring of 2007. Upon Fred's inquiry, Denise explained that the professional assistant academy is designed for clerical employees. The concept is that through a planned approach and competency-based government, employees will always know where they stand in their current assignment, and how to prepare for advancement.

In addition to the aforementioned academies, the CGE offers an individual development course. There is also a new performance management tool that has been implemented in Human Resources, the Community Health Agency, and the County hospital. The performance management tool is designed around employee performance evaluations. The tool permits managers to clearly define their expectations of employees and to hold employees accountable.

Denise explained that Professional Development includes quarterly speakers which are held in the Board chambers. The next speaker, Rich Brandon, will take place on April 11 with the topic "Survival of the Savvy." Ron Komers invited Fred Lowe and his staff to attend this event. Ron Komers explained that with every public employer (as well as any organization of any size) there are politics which can be used for mutual benefit, enlightenment and development. Politics are not necessarily a negative term, but this is a way to understand, appreciate and use politics for the benefit of our organization and individuals within that organization.

Denise explained that the Professional Development Network will facilitate sharing updates on training to a large group of employees.

Denise then discussed the Management Excellence Academy. The Profession of Management course is a strategic look at management, including planning, leading, organizing and controlling. Crucial Conversations involves conversational skills when the stakes are high. Kathie Delgado stated Sheriff Andrews highly recommends Crucial Conversations, and he would like to have all of the sheriff dispatchers attend this course. Denise described other courses included in the Management Excellence Academy.

Denise said the Supervisory Excellence Academy focuses on day-to-day matters such as supervision, Human Resources survival skills, conducting hiring interviews, and coaching. The academy helps supervisors to focus their work around developing their staff so they will serve their organization well. Denise has been working with Employee Relations staff to determine the types of courses that are needed.

The Professional Assistant Academy is geared for clerical staff. Many individuals in this group are women, and the academy includes assertive communication and negotiation skills, particularly when they are working with men. Other topics covered are organization, project management, boss management, and dealing with difficult people.

(Lunch)

Denise Walker noted that the courses offered in the academies are also offered as stand-alone classes. Additionally, CGE staff is also available to bring courses to department locations. Classes can be tailored to a given

group, such as sheriff dispatchers where they can describe the situations they deal with.

Fred Lowe inquired about the possibility of offering courses online. Denise said her division does have the capability to do that at some point in the future. Ron Komers said we are encouraging supervisors and employees to use online resources to make it easy to follow procedures. All of the necessary information can easily be accessed. Tom Prescott said Employee Relations developed a Skelly Officer training course as a refresher. Kris Sloman said this is utilized at DPSS, and it has been well received.

Denise said that, in addition to the new academies, there are new individual development courses including Survival Spanish. The feedback on this course has been very positive. Individuals have stated they learned more in two hours than they did in four years of high school Spanish. Fernando Vizcarra said he was amazed at the enthusiasm of his workers after taking Survival Spanish. Employees placed Post-It notes on many items within the office with the Spanish translation of the item. Participants are challenged to address individuals on the street or in their building who are non-English speakers. Employees are better able to deal with the public after taking this course.

Denise discussed upcoming projects, including implementation of a learning management system, redesign of the CGE website and online enrollment systems. Denise said it is her goal to have a learning management system that is enterprise-wide, which would permit the County to track employees' courses in one location. The CGE will also update the employee orientation process.

Ron Komers discussed the reason for the focus on the Center for Government Excellence. Many people believe that training and development is just for an individual's career, rather than seeing it as a benefit to the organization as a whole. This is why we are focusing on government excellence, in an attempt to improve the quality of service and the quality of our employees serving the public, as well as the ability to deal with the public through these opportunities. They are opportunities to improve one's skills in pursuit of excellence. We seek to improve the service that we provide through our employees. The way to obtain good government is by hiring good people and developing them so they can be excellent.

Ron Komers said he read a study conducted by the Institute for Good Government. It compared what Gen Y'ers want and expect out of their job in contrast to the objectives of the Baby Boomer generation. The principle thing for Gen Y'ers is the opportunity to advance. There are half as many Gen Y'ers than there are Baby Boomers, which means there will be tremendous competition to attract and retain good employees in the

future. This is a strategic movement on behalf of Human Resources trying to meet the needs of the organization now and in the future.

Another thing Human Resources has done along this line is to develop a new employment brand for the County. It is called "Beyond Your Expectations." Our experience is that the general public does not understand the opportunities for growth, development and satisfaction of contributing to the community that working for county government provides. Our efforts are part of a strategic move to position us in image and in reality so that we can be effective in attracting and keeping good people.

Fred Lowe said county workers are perceived as being privileged, which is not to our advantage. However, to the degree we can withstand it, the County will become a magnet as an employer. Ron agreed and said county employees will be under attack for the good benefits we have if the public has a poor perception of county workers. So there is vested interest for all of us in relaying the truth, that we do very important work which is complicated and difficult. We have the ability to save people's lives every day.

Fred Lowe inquired about the status of the new IT plan. Ron Komers replied that the program is in the final stages of development. Ron said an Unfair Labor Practice has been filed against the County which will slow the process immensely and cause problems. It is unclear when the new plan will be implemented.

D. Identifying Difficult to Recruit Locations and Classifications

Robin Downs said this topic arose from a discussion about the Educational Support Program (ESP) during a previous labor-management meeting and a request to form a subcommittee to identify Difficult to Recruit (DTR) locations and classifications that qualify for ESP. Robin said Shondi met and consulted with County departments about the positions they identified as difficult-to-recruit related to ESP.

Shondi Lee said she met with department heads regarding identifying difficult to recruit positions (which can be identified in a number of ways) in relation to education. Shondi explained that the ESP's focus is on positions that are difficult to recruit positions which require a certain level of education. Robin Downs explained that there may be employees who aspire to advance their careers, and we invite LIUNA's feedback on this in terms of identifying specific individuals who wish to make a change and are willing to obtain the necessary education. Ron Komers added that we seek to invest in County employees for positions that are difficult to recruit or retain that require an education. Fred Lowe said his experience is that once employees become aware of the program, we would probably have an overwhelming response.

Fred inquired about employees' awareness of the ESP. Shondi Lee replied that there is a section in Workforceexchange.net about the Educational Support Program, and she met with management from each department to make them aware of the ESP Program. Another payroll insert is planned during April.

Linda Jefferson inquired about the procedure for an employee to participate in the ESP. Shondi explained the application is on workforceexchange.net on the Educational Support Program page. The application requires a department head or their designee to sign the enrollment form. The initial signature is only for verification that the employee is in good standing. Linda Jefferson said union staff typically becomes involved in situations where supervisors are not supportive of the program, stating they are short staffed and for other reasons.

Ron said he is aware of this problem. In Shondi's meetings with department heads there were cases where there was great interest, and in other departments there was some resistance. We are hopeful that department heads realize there is no long-term benefit in holding employees back. Rather, there is a long-term benefit to supporting and encouraging people in their development. We would appreciate having information published in the union newsletter and placed on the union website. There was further discussion about incentives.

Ron Komers said the County has an educational loan reimbursement program where employees working in a DTR position who have a student loan can be reimbursed for the amount of their student loan payments. Fred Lowe said the County and LIUNA negotiated a floater program, which is another creative concept. There are employees who are still participating in the floater program. Kathie Delgado said she knows of one employee who is still working through this program, and it appears the department that she is working for will transition her to a permanent position. As a result, the employee will achieve a long-term career goal.

E. Other Issues

Ron Komers stated Exclusive Care has built a medical clinic in Rubidoux. It is approximately 2600 square feet. An endocrinologist and a pharmacist have been hired, in addition to nurses and office assistants. These positions are funded by Exclusive Care, best described as an in-house medical clinic, but the physicians are world-class physicians. The focus will be on diabetes, and we hope to be affiliated with Harvard's Joslin Center for Diabetics, providing specialty care for the 14% of County employees that have diabetes. The clinic will provide treatment that diabetics cannot obtain anywhere else. There will also be primary care physicians and specialists available for Exclusive Care members at the Rubidoux Clinic. The over-arching idea is that we can provide high quality medical care for County employees without any profit or involvement of

insurance companies, and produce better outcomes ourselves by applying state-of-the-art methodologies and knowledge that many private physicians are not in a position to pursue. The clinic should be opening sometime in May. We are excited about the possibilities.

Part of the reason for establishing our own medical clinic is that there was a study conducted that compared the care currently given to diabetics against state-of-the-art standards. The results showed that for chronic lifestyle diseases like diabetes patients were receiving less than half of the quality care that they should be receiving. The County as an employer will benefit by ensuring that our employees have the best outcome.

Dr. Williams noted that the challenge in primary care is that the amount of time available for each patient is limited. Physicians see 40 to 50 patients a day, and their productivity is measured by the number of patients seen. This does not allow doctors the flexibility to spend the time needed for educating and monitoring test results. With the Rubidoux Clinic we are developing a new paradigm where doctors are not under the same type of pressure.

Fred Lowe said he knows of a company that saved health plans a lot of money by taking a holistic approach in which the patient's overall health is studied, where there may be connections from one ailment to another. We want to avoid the situation where individuals see a doctor for a problem and then see a specialist for the same illness, where there could be adverse drug interaction.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on County's Participation in Health and Safety Fund

Mark Carleson reported 175 Mental Health employees were trained on dealing with difficult people. A Fund representative also came out in November 2006 to meet with LIUNA shop stewards. Mark said Kathie Delgado is working on some training issues with the Sheriffs Department and the Flood District. Mark said he would set a block of time to meet with representatives from the Health and Safety Fund in order to make the best use of their time.

Kathie Delgado said she received a commitment from David Stone from the Flood district for training their surveyors, maintenance and construction workers in outdoor safety. Kathie will work with Jamie from the Fund to develop the course.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The LIUNA Labor-Management Committee is scheduled to meet again on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 at the LIUNA offices at 4000 10th Street, Riverside.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Barker

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS FROM THE MARCH 14, 2007 MEETING

1. Fred Lowe suggested forming a subcommittee to address possible layoffs
2. Invite Tony Carstens and/or Jim Miller to May 9 LIUNA Committee meeting
3. Doris Lackey will provide Kathie Delgado with a calendar schedule of upcoming group studies by March 31
4. Denise Walker to obtain Fred Lowe's input on HR survival skills and coaching
5. Follow up with Tiffany Mendez regarding the number of TAP employees in Building and Safety