

Bargaining
2010-2011

Thursday, November 4, 2010

The meeting began at 4:41 p.m.

Present were:

Jim Drake-SSC	Jenni Gilray –BRHS
Darcy Hopko- SSC	Alan Ramos-SEHS
Sharon Scarbrough- Sugg	Helen King- Sea Breeze
Pat Barber- MEA	James Horner – Abel
Rachel Bailey – Oneco	Bruce Proud- MEA
Joe Stokes – SSC	Melanie Newhall- Orange Ridge
David Underhill - BHS	

Also present were Forrest Branscomb and Nancy Paradise.

The minutes of October 20, 2010 were reviewed. After the words “Management has no other issues” insert “at this time.” There were no other corrections to the minutes.

Management distributed rationale for management changes to MEA contract language and went through each item.

Management distributed health insurance language. There was discussion about the board’s share and the employees’ share of the premium in management’s proposal. The board’s share reflects a 12% increase in premium, and the employees’ share reflects a 44% increase in premium. Total dollars in to the fund is an 18% increase from the previous fiscal year annualized. Management indicated that MEA’s plan does not change plan value or how the plan is set up.

Management 8 – Management’s intent is to move in a direction in which both teams bargain in Health Insurance Committee (HIC). Management referenced Lee County’s HIC as a model for Manatee. The proposal is for HIC to make recommendations to the superintendent by March 1st. The committee’s purposes are listed in the proposal. Management stated that bargaining outside of HIC puts risk management and employees in a bind. The risk manager was given a charge by the superintendent and the board to make up the \$8.4 million deficit, to do so without having family premiums over \$600 and to have a premium proposal. To accomplish this, management contracted with Mercer to determine if each plan is funding itself properly. Mercer’s recommendation and management’s desire is for HIC to look at plan design changes each year to eliminate \$8.4 million deficit. Management expressed frustration with ability to reach deadlines to make plan changes. Consequently, management would like more representatives from non-bargaining on HIC. Management acknowledged that their proposal does not really differentiate much among the plans with respect to cost and premiums, and there is little choice among the plans as proposed. Management’s desire is to raise premiums this year and then use the next couple of months to do something different within HIC. It’s not possible to do plan design changes for next year at this point. Management suggested that if both teams are moving closer that a group take a hard look at this issue.

MEA responded that the language management proposed is not close to Lee County's HIC language. The district has changed premiums 12% for the board and 44% for employees (annualized) – 17% overall. MEA stated that until we get closer on what management's numbers actually say it's going to be harder to get closer. MEA is having difficulty figuring out what management's numbers are. The information given to the board was just premiums. MEA questioned what Management 8 really says, specifically what the changes are to the board and to employees. It appears that management has moved total premium for the first 3 months of 2011 and generated new 3 month board premium. None of BCBS' reports match finance's reports. MEA is not disputing that the calculations are right; they're just coming from different directions.

Management stated that the difference may be because of employees on leaves of absence (LOA) in which the employees pay their share, and the district pays a share. Management acknowledged that they need to account for difference and that meetings have been set to look for that. Management did not know if it was adjusted in financial reports.

MEA questioned if the 3% difference is because of employees on LOA.

Management responded that research would have to be done to answer that question.

MEA did not view LOA as all that significant.

Management replied that because employees come and go the numbers are never going to match up.

MEA stated that the intent in asking for BCBS data was to figure out how many people are in the plan.

MEA hopes that risk management and finance can come up with something that will help HIC do its work.

MEA indicated that the auditor general's report showed that Manatee was noted for at least 2 years.

Manatee hadn't filed a report for 4 years.

Management explained that to become actuarially certified the district has to have enough funds to pay sixty days of claims. The district did not think it was prudent to pay someone to file a report knowing that the district had a deficit, and the end result would be Tallahassee telling the district what they already knew. Management stated that if this district had a HIC like Lee's HIC both parties could get working on eliminating the deficit. Management indicated that there have been improvements in knowing what the revenues and expenses are, but better reporting is needed. The district hasn't dealt with the deficit properly. It needs to be dealt with year to year.

MEA responded that the real difference is between who pays and how much. That is what's bargainable, and that's a big issue. MEA stated that the district is offering step and nothing more. MEA stated that management wants employees to increase out of pocket health insurance expenses without any additional compensation to make up the deficit. MEA stated that HIC will not work as long as the board makes decisions and mandates assumptions going in to the committee. There needs to be trust for the committee to make a recommendation to the superintendent.

Management indicated that the intent of this proposal was to provide a way to work together.

Management welcomes any proposal MEA has and feels that one is needed.

Management 9 – The rationale is to reduce risk of potentially misinterpreting IRS rules.

Management 10 – The rationale is for paraprofessionals to conform with other support employees. The proposal is to extend the probationary period to three years and potentially extend to a fourth year (similar to annual contract teachers).

MEA stated that there are statutes that pertain to teachers and asked if there are issues surrounding para reappointment.

Management responded that the idea of having consistency has come up. The intent is for paraprofessionals to not have property right for that year.

MEA distributed proposals and counter proposals and associate teacher (AT) negotiations questions. The list of questions may not be all that there are but they are questions to consider in terms of creating a new classification of employees. There are probably more questions that need to be answered before both parties get to a point of agreeing. MEA is concerned about turnover. With each vacancy that becomes available ATs will probably want to transfer. MEA wouldn't necessarily want to restrict ATs from doing so. MEA believes that the AT concept is a flawed idea but did not want to reject it outright understanding that management may have viewpoints that MEA has missed. MEA is also concerned about the cost of implementing ATs, specifically how it would affect human resources and work sites. MEA believes that it may not be worth it to save money. Time and effort may be better spent addressing the legislature to fund what they are supposed to fund instead of dumbing down the profession by making a position of quasi-teacher.

Other proposals:

1. Waivers – MEA's belief is that there are ways of solving problems without waiving contract language. MEA is not opposed to using the waiver process to allow schools to implement innovative initiatives. The percentage in current contract language has a purpose. The intent is to have buy-in at school for things that are going to impact people. MEA will consider management's rationale. The change to contract language may not be relevant if management and MEA could work together to fix problems. If a waiver doesn't have broad-based support it is not going to work. MEA is not proposing to change any language to waivers at this point.
2. Conference days – MEA stated that teachers do things other than report cards on record days. There is also paperwork that has to be done on those days. Management proposed this language change under language affecting the elementary level only. Consequently, MEA is not sure if this is a middle or high school issue. MEA is not aware of any elementary schools on electronic grading systems at this point. MEA stated that we may not need to address an issue that doesn't exist.
3. Re-appointment – MEA is not sure June 1st is the right fix. MEA has concerns related to evaluations and test results. MEA believes that we may be able to work this issue through IPAT. MEA is not convinced this language needs to change at this time.
4. Counter-proposal for senior high additional duty period. There are a small number of teachers working an 8 and ½ hour day.
5. Management asked if people would actually use meritorious attendance incentive pay if they can use it for sick leave payout for pension purposes. MEA responded that it's a way of reducing long-term liability. Management would see a difference for current employees, and this would reduce the liability faster. Employees would be paid their daily rate at the time they turned days in.
6. No change to salary language. Errors have been corrected.

Future meeting date – December 2, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in the PSC. Management will make the room arrangements and MEA will make the food arrangements.

Adjourned at 5:52 p.m.