

Bargaining
2010-2011

Thursday, December 2, 2010

The meeting began at 4:35 p.m.

Present were:

Jim Drake-SSC	Kathy Redmond –Palma Sola
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	Chuck Fradley - Wakeland
Kara Carney - Daughtrey	Dawn Walker - MEA

Also present were Forrest Branscomb and Nancy Paradise.

The minutes of November 4, 2010 were reviewed. No changes were made.

MEA expressed an interest in seeing more simple calculations to health insurance issue. What board approved for SAMP and retirees is going to complicate things. Premiums are going to change in January. Not sure what flexibility management has to negotiate. Management stated that MEA's plan dealt with first year but did not deal with deficit. MEA countered that MEA's proposal did do something with deficit. The real concern is that changing everything by premium complicates HIC's work in the future. There is an opportunity for lots of disruption. When people make decisions based solely on premium, frustration is going to increase. According to MEA's calculations the Board's share increases in January for three months and then decreases in April. Management stated that there are quite a few people on LOA. It doesn't take much to get to \$1 million. It's not static; people are constantly coming on and going off. MEA stated that LOAs should be part of actives; if not it would be part of a new category. It's unclear if it's changing the calculations. Management distributed Lee county language. Reviewed premium change under management's proposal and under MEA's proposal for PPO and HMO. MEA stated that Mercer did not consider out of pocket expenses of employees. They looked in to premium, not plan design. HMO was part of imposed plan put in to place. HMO participation – 20% of employees. Management asked what needed to be done to reach consensus. MEA asked that the district not create more disruption until HIC can re-evaluate the plans. There may be one plan that makes sense or there may be 2 or 3. Management asked why we went to 3 plans. Management answered that the three plans were introduced in 2009, and the reason was to save money. Management's concerned that if the HMO is kept with such a low premium that in this economy more people will move to the cheaper plan and the district will lose more money. MEA stated that data has not been provided to prove that. Management stated that if premium stays the same that we would be going in the wrong direction according to the actuary. That's the rationale for large increase in the HMO premium.

MEA asked if there is a need to talk about health insurance if management doesn't have the ability to change what's been passed by the board.

Management responded that if we can come up with the better mouse trap it was thought that we can. MEA stated that it's going to take time – a year – to make determinations about plan design – to address deficit as well as what will help employees.

Management asked if we could break down who is in the HMO by employee groups. Management stated that it could be done but it would take time.

Management distributed a comparison of what management believes to be management's proposals vs. MEA's proposals. Corrections/clarifications were made. #8 – MEA – follow system we have right now. Voluntary 6 period language.

#12 – Management asked if MEA would see it working as a 2-step process - local and superintendent.

MEA stated that there would also be a third party.

Management asked if it would go to arbitration.

MEA stated that would be an option, if needed. The hope would be to resolve at lowest level.

MEA pointed out to management that management also proposed non-reappointment language.

Management asked if MEA's response was current contract language (CCL).

Management stated that the associate teacher issue has gone to a committee so it is not on the list.

Management asked what will help us move forward.

MEA asked management what is really important. It's a lean year. There are not a lot of provisions that employees will see as positive.

Management asked MEA to explain more about the teacher rights section.

MEA responded that it's important so it can be grieved when rights are infringed upon. It is a response to the board's changed policy to use technology. It would provide a remedy should employee be treated unfairly. It is a less costly option to challenge in this way instead of filing a suit.

Management questioned whether we would have grievances whenever someone is reprimanded for something they said.

MEA stated that there wouldn't be because public employees are held to a higher standard.

Management asked how we move forward. Conversation turned back to the comparison sheet, #4 – could fall back to 75% of people voting would be acceptable. We may be close on some areas. We may be closer if we talk.

MEA stated willingness to talk. There is a trust issue. A change in this area when we've had a number of areas makes sense to address topics instead of changing waiver language. MEA doesn't see all proposals in every school – if they don't come forward – problems may have been worked out in schools. Is this really an issue? If there a lot of waivers for splitting supplements maybe there should be another supplement for that.

Management had a conversation on management's side about outcomes of waiver votes.

Management asked if both teams should get together on insurance.

MEA asked if both teams had the ability to change course at this point since the board has already make changes for other employees in the system.

Management stated that they have already done premium changes for retirees. Management is in favor of Lee's HIC language. These are things we want to discuss over time. Keep plan actuarially sound. If that's something we can agree on it would be good.

MEA stated that Lee's language took lots of work and intensity and participation is needed from both sides to make decisions. It's very challenging. A great deal of commitment is needed and the committee cannot be influenced by the board, superintendent or some consultant. The direction of consultant comes from committee in Lee, not the superintendent.

Management stated that 2 things are required – a contract for 2011 and then moving forward in the next couple of years to have a plan that is equitable. Need to train everyone in interest based process to do this.

MEA doesn't see that the HIC is unable to make decisions. The real issue is heavy-handed pressure from people outside the committee that make it hard to overcome trust issues about collaboration. Management will send out corrected comparison page to MEA and to management's team for distribution.

MEA asked where we're headed.

Management wants to talk about insurance.

MEA acknowledged that and asked if there are other issues. MEA has studied AFRs from comparable counties. Other districts reported as liabilities, too. What's the motivator here?

Management stated that the intent is to keep the integrity of the financial system. Management stated that the board makes comparisons between the private and public sectors.

MEA disagreed and pointed to contracts with vendors in the system. Those contracts include salary, paid time off, holidays, etc. Vendors follow same practices as school district. Terminal pay designed to keep teachers in classroom and allow them to retire. Teacher retirement isn't all that attractive, if teachers make it 30 years. Terminal pay language proposed by management is not sending a good message to employees. The board is not going to have to pay all of it out today. If that were to be true, we would have bigger issues. School board employees drive the local economy. Removing funds that would typically go to community does not seem productive. MEA is willing to have that conversation with the community. It's unclear why there is so much on table. Management's salary proposal doesn't meet CPI. The majority of those in the bargaining units don't get that. Those employees at top don't get anything at all.

Management proposed another issue - noticing of bargaining team meetings. Management advised MEA that they will make sure meetings are noticed.

MEA responded that bargaining sessions are public meetings and always have been.

MEA brought up another issue – supplements. MEA is not sure the MS supplement is the only place mistakes have been made with supplements if they have been made at all. Also, MEA is not certain that the test coordinator is the right person to give both jobs and whether it should be one supplement. MEA is open to having a conversation about having a new supplement.

Management asked about automatic step.

MEA stated that step is included in conversation with employees when we go to ratification.

Management asked when MEA wanted to meet again.

Management asked for clarification on MEA's 6 period day proposal. MEA responded that the proposal is to teach 5 out of 6. Teachers can volunteer to teach a 6th period as long as it doesn't exceed prep limitations.

MEA indicated that management's proposal to change modified days will be perceived as the district having more time.

There was some discussion about management's record day proposal. Management indicated that FOCUS will be the new Pinnacle, it will be implemented district-wide and will take training time in beginning of year.

MEA indicated that management proposal would make more sense after the district has FOCUS in place.

Management stated that the record day language proposal only applies to places where there is electronic grading.

MEA responded that the proposal is in language that only applies to elementary teachers.

Management responded that the only intent is to use it where there is electronic grading. Management will get the language.

Future meeting date – Wednesday, December 8, 2010.

Management will make the room arrangements and MEA will make the food arrangements.

Adjourned at 5:56 p.m.