

Your Local 21 News

International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE) - Local 21



L21 seeks fair & competitive wages

Major Bargaining Objectives

1. To promote the highest standards for quality of service, public accountability, and professional excellence for the City and the people it serves, *Local 21 shall ask that the City of Hayward commit itself to the development and maintenance of a highly skilled and well-trained staff at the appropriate staffing levels that will meet service needs.*

2. To seek economic redress for salaries that remained stagnant during the last two fiscal years, *Local 21 shall negotiate for more realistic cost-of-living adjustments to salaries and benefits reflective of area costs, including housing.*

3. To recognize professional excellence of engineers, architects, surveyors, inspectors, investigators, planners, specialists, scientists, librarians, technicians, programmers, analysts, operators, program coordinators, counselors and other technical employees in the City, *Local 21 shall advance proposals that ---*

- *Protect and strengthen professional standards for technical employees;*
- *Encourage professional development through educational and professional incentives;*
- *Recognize and reward professional registration and certification; and*
- *Establish fair and competitive compensation for professional service that allows the City to recruit and retain the highest quality staff.*

Membership survey generates contract negotiation proposals

To prepare for the now ongoing contract negotiation with the City, a survey of the general membership of Local 21 Hayward Chapter conducted in May 2007 saw 83 out of 108 members responding; a very good response that approached a "census." This rate of response was unexpected considering that the survey was lengthy. It consisted of 35 questions on a variety of workplace issues, some very general, others specific.

"Wage increase" came out as the most important issue to union members. It was ranked "extremely important" or "very important" by 94% of respondents. After "wage increase," the four other issues that respondents ranked high in importance were (in descending order) employee rights, cash-out of unused time off upon retirement, training and professional development, and health and safety. A related, open-ended question on what would be considered a fair general wage increase, expressed as a percentage of current base rate, gave a wide range of values, the median being "5%" while the weighted average was "7%." The range? 2% to 18%!

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Negotiation 2007 applies new method to comparing salaries

During the ongoing contract negotiation, Local 21 will have the opportunity to apply, for the first time, a Survey Methodology to compare salaries of members to comparable positions in different jurisdictions in order to effect labor market adjustments to as many of its represented classifications as possible. Variably known as "banding" or "benchmarking," the method was negotiated with the City in 2002 to address certain "stranded" or unique, single-position classifications within the professional and technical bargaining unit. Implementation of the agreement in 2005 was postponed to 2007 when Local 21 agreed to extend the 3-year 2002 MOU for 2 more years with no salary

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New method to study salaries ...

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increases for both years. The agreement, reached and signed in December 2003, was reached after numerous meet-and-confer sessions held between the City and Local 21 from October 2002 to October 2003. The signed agreement noted, "The City and IFPTE Local 21 exercised good faith and diligence throughout this effort."

Local 21 is comprised of some 110 members in 52 classifications. A number of these classifications cover 1 or 2 individuals and have few, if any, comparable classification in those cities that constitute the City's salary survey sample. Without benefit of reliable survey data to determine an objective market placement, the City has been reluctant to make market adjustments to these classifications. Hence, they became known as "stranded classifications."

The new survey methodology assigns each classification under Local 21 into one of 5 functional groupings. Each group then has a designated "benchmark" classification which is determined to be the most appropriate measure of the group's function, based on essential service roles and family of interests. Survey data is collected for each of these benchmark classifications and a special adjustment is determined to place the classification at the average of the survey field. A special adjustment for a benchmark classification is then applied to all classifications in the group.

The agreement established the following benchmark classifications: Assistant Civil Engineer; Economic Development Specialist; Building Inspector; Network/Microcomputer Specialist; and Librarian I. One classification that has remained stranded is the Collections Officer which has become the 6th group by itself. The City has established a list of ten comparable benchmark cities which are used when comparing salaries of employees by all bargaining units. These cities are: Alameda; Berkeley; Daly City; Fremont; Palo Alto; Richmond; San Leandro; San Mateo; Santa Clara; and Vallejo. .

The survey methodology agreement also provides for the evaluation and salary adjustment of any individual classification without affecting the rest of the classifications in its group. This is specially important when "special" adjustments become necessary for a job classification for reasons of recruitment, retention or job reclassification. The agreement also provides that salary survey components will be limited to the following: top-step monthly salary; deferred compensation contributions; and employer-paid member contribution to CalPERS. By its incorporation into Local 21's MOU, this agreement is subject to the grievance process.

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Transitions

PUBLIC WORKS. Ray Chan, Associate Civil Engineer, and Thomas Lam, Assistant Civil Engineer, and Keith Nofield, Licensed Surveyor, resigned to work for other public agencies. Sammy Lo, new Assistant Civil Engineer came on board very recently... from BKF Engineers, builders of Santana Row in San Jose. "Welcome" as well to Bashir Sarwary, Engineering Technician—Surveying

LIBRARY. Recent resignations at the library: Amy Martin, Sarah Stone, Sarah Fowlie, Sandy Fouts, Patty Horn, and Julie Cornett. Pat Louie retired. Newly hired librarians: Cheryl Pennick, Sally Thomas, Shawna Sherman, and Serenity Dean.

BUILDING. Plan Checkers, Building Inspectors and Fire Prevention/Hazmat Inspectors have been attending weekly classes on the 2007 California Building Code (CBC), courtesy of WC3, one of the Building Division's (outside) contractors for plan checking. The new CBC based on the International Building Code will take effect in Hayward January 1, 2008. Prior to this, the CBC has been based on the Uniform Building Code. Fire and Building personnel attending the classes are receiving great training! In October, the same employees will be attending Code Classes for the new California Building Codes, offered by the California Building Officials Association. And "welcome" to new Building Inspector Omar Noorzad. "Congratulations" to Mr. & Mrs. Stan Morris who are celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary on September 21.

TECHNOLOGY SERVICES. Joe Ochiner's wife had Cassandra early this year. Then Maritza Vargas just got back from her maternity leave. New daughter Tatiana is doing very well. Now, it is Shilpi Dwivedi's turn. She is expecting her second child in December. What's in the water up there?

CITY MANAGER. New City Manager Greg Jones will be feted in a welcome reception with a "light lunch" on Tuesday, October 2nd. Local 21 members are enjoined to come and meet the new City Manager. It will beheld at the rotunda.

NEGOTIATIONS. Negotiations for a new MOU are ongoing. Local 21 has met with the City thrice and are scheduled to meet again on 9/19, 9/27, and 10/9. The Union's current MOU expires on September 30, 2007.

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360° Performance Evaluation

Excerpted from an article authored by: Rick Sparks, Business and Industry Specialist, University of Missouri Extension; Originally published in: [Creating Quality Newsletter](#), Volume 11, Number 9, September 2002; Downloaded from <http://www.missouribusiness.net>

... The 360-degree evaluation is a common tool in human resource management. Simply put, it is a mechanism for evaluating someone's performance based on feedback from everyone with whom the individual comes in contact – supervisors, coworkers, partners, subordinates, the general public. It is a method of collecting input from many sources in an employee's environment. This can be a powerful tool. Each of us wants to know how we're doing in our work. This method of collecting evaluative input is an excellent source of motivation for employees because it provides a truly honest assessment of how the employee and the employee's performance are viewed by a variety of constituents.

In the more traditional method of performance appraisal, supervisors meet with employees one-to-one to discuss performance. By contrast, the 360-degree method uses confidential input from many people who can truly respond to how an employee performs on the job. The supervisor and employee meet to discuss the feedback received. This type of feedback helps employees see themselves as others see them and allows them to seriously examine their behavior. It can reveal areas in which employees are performing particularly well and those areas in which there is room for improvement. It provides information of which neither the employee nor the supervisor may be aware. Specific input allows employees to adjust their performance.

The most challenging aspect of the 360-degree evaluation is the evaluators' concern about confidentiality. When implementing this type of evaluation, it's best to assure other employees that what they share will remain strictly confidential. Likewise, explain to each employee that he will be evaluated by many people, including those who know his work best. Typically, employees will find this methodology to be more fair. When they consider this process as opposed to being evaluated by an individual supervisor who has limited knowledge of what they do, they will begin to see the value in this type of evaluation. They will conclude that the 360-degree feedback is more accurate and equitable than other traditional approaches and puts all employees on a level playing field.

This review process is also helpful for the supervisor. It can provide a more accurate assessment of an employee's performance and help eliminate accusations of favoritism. The 360-degree process provides greater objectivity. And because the feedback is submitted anonymously, it provides a supervisor with the most unbiased and accurate information from which to draw performance conclusions.

Most people are not able to see clearly how their performance is either enhancing the work situation for others or detracting from it. This performance evaluation method can help reveal these areas and allow us to improve the way we do our job, thereby creating greater harmony and better productivity in the workplace. The 360-degree evaluation will help employees identify their strengths so they can build on them at the same time it addresses their skill gaps. It is a process that leads to continuous learning, team building, growing self-confidence and improved productivity.

Sounds like a winning system, right? It can be, but your organization must be ready to accept the change from the traditional method of employee evaluation. Your formal and informal leaders must buy in to this idea and see the value of its adoption. Some questions you should ask yourself include the following:

- Is your organization committed to continuous learning?
- Does your organization see the value of developing leaders in-house?
- Are you willing to make the changes necessary to do this?
- What is the level of trust in your organization? Will your culture support honest feedback?
- Is upper level management willing to lead the way and volunteer for 360-degree evaluation?

**International Federation of
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Engineers (IFPTE), Local 21
— Hayward Chapter—**

President – Danny Galang, Environmental Specialist, Fire Department; Vice President– Jodi Pascual, Associate Civil Engineer, Public Works; Secretary – Sally Porfido, Economic Development Specialist, Community & Economic Development Department (CED); Treasurer – RuthAnn Crawford, Senior Property Rehabilitation Specialist, CED; Stewards: Jim Lear, Associate Civil Engineer, Public Works; Jody Snyder, Librarian I, Library; Jaime Rosenberg, Source Control Inspector, Public Works; Miles Perez, Hazardous Materials Investigator, Fire; Ramona Portillo, Community Preservation Inspector, CED; Maritza Vargas, Network Microcomputer Specialist, Technology Services; Ed Pilling, Plan Checker, CED.

Who are we? Survey says...

... while 36 % of Local 21 Hayward members have been with the City less than 5 years, 22% have been here between 10 and 20 years and 14% have been here more than 20 years! That means 28% are between 5 and 10 years.

... 31 % of us have post graduate degrees (master's or doctorate) ; 46% have bachelor's degrees; and 12% have associate degrees!

... 17% are planning to retire within 5 years; 31% within 10 years; and 51% are planning to stay 10 years more or longer!

... 93% of us live in Alameda County; including 13% who live in Hayward!

Membership survey ...

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Many respondents noted that Local 21 has just been through a two-year salary freeze which started in September 2005.

On Benefits, respondents chose "PERS Retirement at 2.7% @ 55 formula" as their most important concern. This was followed, in order of importance, by medical, retiree medical, dental, and deferred compensation with employer match to complete a top-five list.

Respondents were asked how they their wages and benefits compare to those in the private sector and to those in other public agencies. Sixty-nine percent (69%) thought their wages and benefits are lower than the private sector, with 40% saying much lower and 29% saying slightly lower. Compared to other public agencies, 84% thought their wages and benefits are lower, with 43% saying much lower and 41% saying slightly lower. This sentiment was reflected in the responses to the question on special salary adjustments, separate from the general wage increase: 71% of respondents believed their job classifications need to be studied for special salary adjustments for the additional duties and responsibilities they have been assigned over the years.

Workload vis-à-vis staffing was mentioned by a number of respondents who felt that employees cannot seem to cope with increased workload. This is specially true in areas where there are unfilled or frozen positions and work for these positions was distributed to other employees. Also of concern to members, as expressed in a question on job security, are the general economic climate, the hiring of contractual employees, and contracting out of jobs normally done by employees, in-house.

Local 21 members would like to be able to evaluate their supervisor's job performance. A solid 92% of respondents thought this to be important. This can perhaps be done as part of a "360-degree evaluation" of all employees, not only of supervisors. (See article on "360-degree performance evaluation" on Page 3.) Open-ended questions included in the survey engendered interesting issues and ideas in how to deal with them. Members question the reasoning behind the list of ten benchmark cities used by Hayward as "comparable" jurisdictions for salary surveys. They suggested that current positions be studied for reclassification because most of them still refer to very old job descriptions, in effect at the time they were hired. A major rewrite of job descriptions with corresponding reclassification in terms of base salary should be done, members commented. They also suggested revisiting the list of benchmark cities and the list of benchmark classifications to ensure as many comparable positions as possible.

Members also suggested that the City should encourage and reward professional development through an incentive program; that the City should help employees find career paths to advance within the City organization; that the 5-step salary scale should be expanded to provide incentives for meritorious performance and longevity; that salaries and benefits should catch up with inflation; that the City should provide the same benefits to all employees; that employees should be given the option to work part-time, between 20 and 40 hours per week, with prorated benefits; that the City encourage use of public transportation, etc. **L21**