

Professional & Technical Engineers, Local 21



AN ORGANIZATION FOR PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL & ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES

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Remember to Vote on November 6!!

Although it's been a low-key election season, don't forget to vote next Tuesday, November 6, 2007. We have endorsed Mayor Gavin Newsom in his re-election bid, as well as District Attorney Kamala Harris and Sheriff Mike Hennessey. We are also supporting Proposition A, the Muni reform measure. Make our voices heard by voting for these labor backed candidates and issues!

Gulf with City Widens over Healthcare, Pension Issues

Local 21 is taking part in a coalition of city labor unions, led by San Francisco Labor Council Executive Director Tim Paulson, to jointly address developments in the retiree healthcare and pension debates with the City. The coalition recently met with newly appointed DHR Director Micki Callahan after a meeting earlier this month where the City made public a report that projected a \$3.9 billion unfunded liability over thirty years for City employees' retiree health care costs. Callahan spoke openly of the City's plan to move forward with a June 2008 ballot measure that would increase the current five-year retiree healthcare vesting requirement and implement other reductions in benefits.

There is already growing dissatisfaction amongst city employees over the City's pension benefit, which is one of the lowest in the Bay Area. City employees have made two previous unsuccessful attempts to pass initiatives that would improve the current pension formula, and have little willingness to accommodate the City's new interest in further benefit reductions.

Unions in the coalition are creating a joint campaign fund approximating \$400,000 to block any unilateral attempts by the City to cut retiree healthcare benefits. A campaign fund would also be central in advancing the coalition's own initiative if an agreement can't be reached with the City. At their October meeting, Local 21's Executive Committee authorized up to \$50,000 for Local 21's campaign contribution. Dean Coate, Local 21 Vice President for Legislative and Political Action, said, "San Francisco members may decide to assess themselves up to \$2 per paycheck for a few months to raise campaign funds."

"The city is trying to force changes because of

GASB 45, a new accounting standard that requires public agencies to estimate and report unfunded costs for non-pension post-employment benefits (primarily retiree health care) for employees over the span of their career," said Local 21 President Lois Scott. She noted, "GASB 45 does not require agencies to currently have funds available to pay these future costs or earmark funds, only a reasonable plan to meet these estimated costs and fulfill their obligation for providing workers with promised benefits."

Local 21's pension and retiree health care team is being led by Local 21 activist Ed Walsh and VP Dean Coate (both MTA employees), and is being supported by Local 21 Executive Director Bob Muscat and staff members Kim Waldron, Michael Seville, Joe Brenner and Anjali Asrani. Local 21 has contracted with Rael & Letson actuary Jean Vergara, who is focusing on GASB technical issues and the related cutbacks proposed by the City.

Contract Implementation: Exemplary Pay, Extended Ranges and Flex

Local 21 staff and DHR have been meeting on an ongoing basis about the lag in implementation of several key contract provisions that were negotiated in June 2006. "We are concerned about the City's current approach to contract implementation," said Local 21 staff member Criss Romero. "The delays have potential costs for our members." One of several major issues Local 21 is addressing is the Exemplary Performance Pay contract provision, which requires names of qualified employees to be submitted to DHR by September 1, 2007, with payments made no later than November 30, 2007. Numerous departments, including DPW, have shown an absolute disregard for the negotiated agreement and have done nothing to implement the program. Although DHR is fully aware of this non-compliance, they have taken few steps to remedy the situation. "The City has confused the fact that while an individual denial of Exemplary Pay is not grievable, the union has a right to file a grievance when an entire department does not comply with the contract," noted Romero.

Local 21 filed a grievance against DPW and will file additional grievances against other departments that have acted in a similar fashion.

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Local 21 to host Fundraiser for Tom Ammiano on December 3rd

We invite our entire membership to our upcoming fundraiser for [Tom Ammiano](#) on Monday, December 3, at 5:30 p.m. at [Modern Tea](#) restaurant. While San Francisco members already know Tom as our strongest ally on the Board of Supervisors, we want to introduce him to all of our members as California's next labor advocate in the State Assembly.

Tom has been at the forefront of civil rights and issues which effect all San Franciscans. He authored legislation which brought Domestic Partner benefits to the City, passed Living Wage Ordinances, and was the first in the City to begin pushing for Universal Healthcare and ultimately saw it through. He has also supported our IT reform efforts and battled against contracting out of City work.

Please join us in sending a message to the Bay Area political community: a friend of Local 21 in one jurisdiction will be supported by Local 21 in all jurisdictions! Tom has played an extraordinary role on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and has been described as "Local 21's greatest political friend and supporter." Now its our turn to illustrate how well we support those who stand by us! A \$25.00 donation per person is required, but support of Tom's campaign in any amount will be welcome. For those unable to attend but still interested in supporting Tom, checks can be sent to Local 21 at: 1182 Market Street, Room #425, San Francisco, CA (94102), made payable to "Tom Ammiano for Assembly."

Modern Tea is located at [602 Hayes Street at Laguna](#) in the Hayes Valley neighborhood.

SF Advisory Committee Meets on Monday

The next Local 21 San Francisco Advisory Committee meeting will be on Monday, November 5. The group, composed of Local 21 San Francisco Chapter Presidents, San Francisco Executive Committee members, and staff, has been meeting twice a month to make strategic decisions regarding the union's work in San Francisco.

In October, the Committee interviewed [Mayor Gavin Newsom](#) and voted unanimously to recommend that Local 21 formally endorse him in his re-election campaign for Mayor, which the Executive Committee did. Some of the issues discussed with the Mayor included the City budget, pension improvements, the Union/City Partnership Program, and improving the bargaining process. On Monday, the Committee will

continue its ongoing discussion of contractual implementation issues, pension and health care developments, and the development of a Professional Rights Advisor (steward) Program. For more information on the work of the San Francisco Advisory Committee, link to the questions that the Committee asked the Mayor, or take a look at the attendance sheet to see which chapters were represented at the endorsement meeting.

At-Large Chapter Launches Membership Drive

San Francisco's At-Large chapter has historically been one of Local 21's largest chapters, but with a low level of union membership. With a membership rate lower than 60%, several At-Large leaders, including Chapter Delegate Marshia Herring, have spearheaded an organizing campaign to build strength within the chapter and address existing barriers to building a stronger membership base. The At-Large chapter represents over 600 City employees in more than 70 classifications and almost 40 departments, some of which are single person classifications and are located in worksites far from Civic Center where most chapter meetings are held. Initial strategies At-Large members have identified to attract more members include making meetings more accessible and better addressing the diversity of issues its members face.

Chapter leaders are in the process of recruiting interested parties to join a membership campaign subcommittee. The subcommittee will identify membership campaign strategies, and will be meeting with Union staff and leadership to identify next steps. If you are an At-Large Chapter member and are interested in joining the campaign subcommittee, contact subha@ifpte21.org.

SAVE THE DATE: LOCAL 21 HOLIDAY PARTY IS COMING!!!!!!

Mark your calendars: the Local 21 holiday party is set for Wednesday, December 12 at the Moonstar Restaurant in San Francisco's Civic Center. More information will follow including new membership cards for the coming year. Moved recently? Make sure the Local 21 office has your new address so your membership card doesn't go astray. See you all there!!



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