

Professional & Technical Engineers, Local 21



AN ORGANIZATION FOR PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL & ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES

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WHAT IS PLANNING'S PLAN?

The Department of City Planning is moving forward with a plan to de-professionalize planning managers. The department abused the early retirement incentive, most commonly referred to as 2003's Prop. F, whereby the City would offer early retirement to permanent civil service employees based on seniority. This measure was supposedly intended to be used only if early retirement by that employee would prevent another worker from losing his or her employment with the City through a layoff.

While we believe that saving jobs is important, a layoff is defined as lack of work or lack of funds. The Planning Department, an enterprise agency, has failed to show that either element was present in this budget cycle. Unfortunately, in the 11th hour of the budget process, we learned they would be laying off two Planner V's — the City's Environmental Review Officer as well as the Chief of Neighborhood Planning.

We were planning to challenge the layoffs when we found out that the department had subsequently offered early retirement to the two same individuals who were set to be laid off. After several days, we learned that the department then proposed to replace the Planner V positions with two new Manager IV positions that are outside of our bargaining unit. Prop F requires that there be a moratorium on filling vacant positions under early retirement for two years. According to the Controller, "...the City would save money when it cuts positions and does not replace them for approximately two years. Positions that were replaced before two years have passed would not generate a net savings."

We realized that the department was not moving to eliminate positions to achieve salary savings but was instead eliminating professional positions and replacing them with managerial

positions. This erosion of professionals in critical positions within City government is increasing and we are fighting this move by the City on every level possible. The Planning Department's attempt at this end run flies in the face of Prop. F's intent, our Memorandum of Understanding, and other legally agreed upon settlements. Unfortunately, the Board of Supervisors adopted the budget with little to say about the abuse of Prop. F taking place in Planning and several other departments. We will move to take this to arbitration. Stay tuned!

MTA CHARTER AMENDMENT

Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin has proposed a charter amendment which would change the way the Municipal Transportation Agency is structured and would grant it much more power. We responded by working with the Supervisor and City unions to negotiate over the details of the proposal to ensure that the proposal will not negatively impact our members to the greatest extent possible.

The amendment seeks to give the department greater control over its budget, human resource functions, and the ability to make decisions without having to conform with current City practice in areas like purchasing and bond issuance.

Working directly with Supervisor Peskin, Mayor Newsom, and MTA Director Nathaniel Ford, we have met numerous times over the past week to discuss strategy and to remove some of the proposed changes that would negatively effect our members.

Some of the original proposals included increasing the percentage of at-will employees in MTA from 1.5 percent to 10 percent; giving all contracting powers to MTA, taking them away from the Civil Service Commission and the Board of Supervisors; giving all human resource functions to MTA, taking them away from the

Department of Human Resources; eliminating funds from the City's General Fund which originate within the Department of Parking and Traffic; removing Board of Supervisor review and approval of Proposition J contracts; and several other changes.

On July 11, public employee unions met with Mayor Newsom, Board President Peskin, Director Ford, Controller Ed Harrington, and several other city officials to explain to them why labor could not support the measure.

The second meeting on July 13 ended after several unions decided that there was no possibility of reaching an agreement before the looming deadline for ballot measures at the end of July.

As the measure currently stands, the at-will exempt percentage has dropped from 10 percent to 3.5 percent, and contracting out oversight will remain with the Civil Service Commission. Outstanding issues include moving human resource functions out of DHR; the proposed two year budget cycle and how that would hurt our ability to monitor the budget for one of the largest departments in the city; moving Prop. J decisions away from the Board of Supervisors; and several others.

On July 16, union representatives and Board President Peskin met again to see if any compromise could be reached. After a morning caucus, Peskin and union members discussed what the reform measure meant to do and a decision was reached to see what could be produced in the little remaining time. A thorough list was presented to Peskin detailing some of the changes that labor would like to see in the amendment. The supervisor seemed receptive to many of the recommendations and said that by July 19 or 20, he would have a better idea if those ideas could be incorporated into the measure.

Local 21 members from MTA have participated in several teleconference calls to ensure that members' ideas and voices are considered in the negotiations.

There are several more Board meetings in which amendments can be made to the original proposal; however, no amendments can be made after the July 31 meeting. If there is to be an agreement, it will have to be reached soon.

Know Your Rights: General Rights to Remember

It's a new fiscal year. Remember...

The **Employee Development Fund (EDF)** is starting fresh on July 1. Put in your request for approval as early as possible in the fiscal year so funds are earmarked and available to cover your classes or materials later in the year. And don't forget, employees are each entitled to one day of job training or professional development of their choice. Information on the EDF, reimbursement for licensure and certification fees, professional organization memberships and meetings, and specific classification educational provisions are found in Sections 429-444 on pages 72-74 of the MOU.

It is important to remember that unused **floating holidays** can be carried over to the next year. Section 355 on page 59 of the MOU includes: "Floating Holidays received in one fiscal year but not used shall be carried forward to the next succeeding fiscal year. The maximum number of floating holidays carried forward to a succeeding fiscal year shall not exceed the total number of floating holidays received in the previous fiscal year, and at no time shall employees be able to accumulate more than 64 hours of floating holidays."

Section 455 of the MOU on page 76 provides that all employees covered by the Health Service System who work on video display equipment are entitled to an **annual VDT examination** and eyeglasses.

ALERT! CCSF MEMBERS

Are you the parent or the guardian of a child with a speech or learning disorder, autism or PDD or similar disability and have had assessment, occupational therapy, physical therapy or speech therapy services denied by your City health plan? We are collecting data in order to determine how these services are being handled. If you have had these difficulties, please email a summary to kwaldron@ifpte21.org.



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