

President Message December 1, 2021

I want to reiterate as well as give some updates to the letter I put out to all of you earlier this month regarding contract negotiations and where we are in relation to working with the county on the successor MOU. I am pasting below the original letter as a reminder:

I want to thank you all again for your participation in the ratification process held at the FDSA. As always, your professionalism was top notch, and that means a lot.

Based on your vote, I notified the County of Fresno Labor Relations on Wednesday morning to let them know that the DSA voted down the proposed contract. Where we will end up is somewhat uncertain, but the County has acknowledged that they will come back to the bargaining table to try to work out a deal.

And that's exactly what we will do – go back to the bargaining table with the message that I and your FDSA Board of Directors heard at the ratification meeting. Over the last few days, your FDSA Board and I have discussed these issues at length, and we've had the chance to speak with many of you. We have heard your interests and concerns. And, while we cannot promise a certain outcome, we can promise that we will continue to fight for all of us and will move forward with negotiating a successor MOU. At some point we will either reach an agreement that we can take back to the members, or we will reach impasse with the County. Either way, we will bring that result back to you and let you decide how we will move forward. If we reach a tentative agreement, then we will schedule another ratification meeting. If the County ultimately does not move off of the last offer that you just rejected, then we will be at impasse and we will discuss those next steps with you at that time.

Although our contract has expired with the County of Fresno, we still operate under the same terms and conditions that are in the last MOU. Nothing changes on that front.

The goal of both County and FDSA is to get a contract for the FDSA, and we will work toward that goal.

Updates to Bargaining

We have been continuing to meet and work out the details of another contract proposal with Fresno County Labor relations. Literally, the day following ratification, this was already in motion. Your board of directors, as always, will be the ones to vote yes or no to take any proposed agreements back to the membership. We greatly appreciate those of you who have reached out directly to me or other FDSA Board members to voice your thoughts on these issues. The reason why this organization is successful is because of the open dialogue our members have with the FDSA Board.

Within days of the initial proposed agreement being voted down by the FDSA Members, the Fresno County Board of Supervisors individually reached out to me looking for answers as to why it was voted down. I explained to them the problems with their proposal overall and the thought process behind these one and two year “flash-type” contracts. Basically - pay and benefits only. My message back to each of the five Board of Supervisors – This type of contract isn't going to work for FDSA. I continued to reemphasize our position that a longer term, fully loaded contract, is what our members want.

I reiterated this to all five of them, and this is the same message that has been conveyed by the FDSA to Labor Relations during all of 2021.

Their message back to me, which has been conveyed back to your FDSA Board of Directors is that they're ready to get that done.

The Board of Supervisors doesn't want there to be a misconstrued message to our rank and file that there is no support for them. They felt, collectively, taking a more conservative approach was the right approach, but obviously now they see, for FDSA, this type of contract is not acceptable to the FDSA Members.

This is by no means a "one-man show", as some have incorrectly implied. Your negotiation team consists of counsel Gary Messing, along with myself and your FDSA Board of Directors. All of us have been working towards building that longer-term loaded contract. Our group has been working daily, on weekends and through the different holidays to come up with a successor MOU. This is not something that is taken lightly or something we don't have answers for. Our ultimate goal is to reach a deal for this membership. We are not concerned with the other 22 labor groups within Fresno County. And while we undoubtedly have the best and most productive relationship with Fresno County, this is why we are focused steadfastly on all of you, and what we need out of our next MOU.

I want there to be no misunderstanding of the relationship we have with the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, County Administrative Office and Fresno County Human Resources (Labor Relations). Collaboratively, we are all working together to get this done. With an outgoing CAO Jean Rousseau, this allows even more transparent communication between FDSA, Labor Relations, CAO's office and the Board of Supervisors. Rest assured, your voices were heard loud and clear, and the County of Fresno is moving in the right direction.

I commend our membership for being vocal about this, as it reaffirms what I tell the Board of Supervisors, as your representative. Sometimes they need to hear the message loud and clear from the members and just not the continuous message from me and the FDSA Board.

There are some language issues in the current contract Sheriff Mims wishes to discuss as well. If these discussions end up being changes to the current MOU, they will be part of the proposals to a successor MOU.

As always, I make myself available to each and every one of you who have questions, comments, concerns or want to have discussions regarding negotiations or any other business. I appreciate many of you reaching out to all of us on the FDSA Board of Directors expressing and sharing your thoughts, opinions, and overall frustration. That is truly how your voice is heard and the message carried to the County.

Together as one association we will continue to carry that message in solidarity for the rank and file of this agency.

Respectfully,

Eric