



Dear Sisters & Brothers,

You may have read or heard that a very small group of our members has protested the lack of a new contract with the City.

We agree that this situation is very frustrating. And, that the frustration has been growing the entire time Michael Nutter has been Mayor.

To date, the only contracts that he has settled in three and a half years have been the result of PA Act 111 arbitration for workers (Police, Fire Fighters and Deputy Sherriffs) who, by law, are not allowed to strike.

Only the FOP has a contract and it was awarded through arbitration, not through negotiations.

Nutter appealed the contract awarded to Fire Fighters to court even though it was "Binding Arbitration." Fire Fighters still have no new contract.

There is no contract with AFSCME District Council 33.

The City remains firm in its demand for givebacks and concessions. Your Union remains firm in our rejection of those demands.

We have a stand off. And, while we would all prefer a contract, taking Nutter's scraps, by giving in to his demands just to get any contract, is not something to which we will agree.

Let us list some of the Nutter demands:

1. NO wage increase for the life of the contract.
2. 30 UNPAID furlough days. That's a twelve and one-half(12 1/2%) percent pay CUT.
3. The elimination of three paid holidays.
4. The combination of increased member contributions AND lesser benefits in our Pension Plan.
5. A reduction in Sick Time.
6. Continued freeze of step increments and longevity raises.
7. A reduction in the City's Health & Welfare contribution from \$976/member/month to \$900/member/month. That would require the H&W Fund to lessen benefits more drastically.
8. Changes which drastically reduce overtime opportunities and OT payments.

The reality of this status quo situation is that, as much as he wants to, legally Nutter cannot impose his demands on us.

That legal protection would disappear if we were to strike.

Then, legally, Nutter could impose all of his demands.

And, while on strike, no one would be paid. The City's failure to fund your health care properly could endanger those benefits. And, because any strike (as opposed to lockout) is voluntary, members could not collect unemployment payments.

In our discussions with members, every member detests this standoff. It is stressful and we are not receiving any increases.

But, every single member has agreed that the alternative is much more painful and possibly fatal than maintaining the status quo.

Frustration is understandable. Momentary lashing out is understandable.

What is not understandable is to harm the bond of Solidarity we have with each other. The song says, "the Union makes us strong."

But lashing out at the union is misusing energy. We need to redirect that energy at Nutter. He is the one demanding cuts from members.

Make no mistake, Nutter's priorities are NOT acceptable.

Members need to support the union. Supporting our union will lead to the solution.