

Testimony RE: City of Salem Bargaining with ASCME Local 2067 and the 2018-2019 Proposed Budget

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Good evening. My name is Kathy Knock. I am a member of the Union Bargaining team. I work in the City's Information Technology Department supporting the Community Development Department. I started working at the City in 2015 following 25 years at the Oregon School Boards Association. I spent most of my first two years at the City revising the content on the City's website. This experience allowed me to work with a variety of staff in every department in the City. It also gave me a front row seat to the development of the City's efforts to improve communications and align messaging with objectives.

It is from this perspective that I want to bring to your attention the disconnect I see between the messaging in the City's strategic plan and the messaging in the City's bargaining proposals.

- You say you value being proactive while bargaining proposals made on your behalf eliminate employee discretion and discourage initiative.
- You say you value compassion while bargaining proposals made on your behalf double the number of times employees are told they can be fired.
- You say you value responsiveness while bargaining proposals made on your behalf specifically penalize continuous operation employees so they receive less pay and less time with their families.

There is a disconnect here.

We came to the bargaining table ready to quickly settle a fair and equitable contract. We came prepared with data on how we compare to similar cities. The City's team came to the table to "get less". The City's team came without data. There is a disconnect here.

You spent thousands of dollars to develop a strategic plan that says Salem is a great place to live and work. You also spent thousands of dollars on a Portland attorney to tell employees they are overpaid, they get too much paid time off and they can be replaced. There is a disconnect here.

If you truly want to fulfill your vision of making Salem a safe and livable city open to all, you need to change the message you are sending employees.

Those quality services you want to provide – you need employees to do that. You need employees whose personal experience of Salem's government matches the vision to create a fair, equitable and safe city. I'm urging you to send your bargaining team to the table with a mandate to settle the contract using data-based decisions that respect and value the people serving our community.