

Report HRR-CS-10-15

To: Chair Pringle and Members of Corporate Services Committee
From: Grant McLevy, Director of Human Resources
Meeting Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2015
Subject: **Memorandum of Agreement – OPSEU Social Services**
Status: Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CS82-15; Endorsed by County Council August 4, 2015 per Resolution CC115-15;

Recommendation(s)

THAT in accordance with the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement, as outlined in Report HRR-CS-10-15, the Collective Agreement between the County of Grey and Social Services OPSEU Local 266 is hereby ratified.

Background

The County of Grey, during negotiations with OPSEU Local 266 representing employees in the Social Services department, have been meeting since spring 2015 to exchange proposals for the renewal of their Collective Agreement, which expired on December 31, 2014.

In preparation for negotiations, the Social Services Department worked to identify deficiencies in the current collective agreement, and focused on any areas where there were language deficiencies present and/or where union grievances had been filed in the past. Further, Human Resources researched the market trends, negotiated settlements and arbitrated awards from other municipalities in a variety of sectors. The current trend for Social Services wage settlements are reaching negotiated agreements with total compensation increases in the 1.9% to 2.4% range.

During these negotiations staff and the union collectively managed to change language in the collective agreement aimed at mirroring current practices and/or improving operations within the department in regards to the Seniority, Job Competitions, the Employee Relations Committee and Early Retiree Benefits. For the Early Retiree Benefits, there is no change in benefit coverage or premium costs, as the main change to the language is to reflect what is currently happening in practice, recognizing all years of service with the County of Grey for the purpose of enrolment.

Further, a notable change in the agreement is in regards to Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. In December of 2010, Grey County Council approved the closure of the Administration building at 1:00pm, if those specific days fell on Monday to Friday, thereby granting employees the afternoon off with pay.

At that time it was decided that those employees who were scheduled to work on those days would only be required to work until 1:00pm. However, it was also decided that those employees who wanted the morning off would be required to use a full day of vacation, even though the building was only open for a portion of the day.

The full day vacation requirement has been a note of contention for employees in the Social Services Department, and it was discussed at the negotiation table that requiring an employee to use a full day vacation credit, for a half day of vacation, was somewhat punitive. Staff reviewed the request, and after determining that there was no financial exposure, agreed to include the proposal in the Minutes of Settlement.

It should be noted that the same policy applies to the Non-Union group of employees, and staff will bring forward a report regarding a change to the policy in the fall of this year.

When it came to monetary requests, staff notified the union that the precedent set at the negotiation table with the three long-term care facilities, the Paramedic Services Department and the Transportation Department would frame the monetary offer, and any other improvements to the collective agreement would not be negotiated.

The duration of this tentative agreement is as follows:

OPSEU Social Services – January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2017

The recommended Memorandum of Agreement is included as a confidential attachment to this report.

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology Considerations

OPSEU Social Services

Based on the tentative agreement that has been reached, a 2% increase for Social Services Union Employees would have the following impact on the cost of wages and payroll benefits for 2015 to 2017:

January 1, 2015 Gross Cost increase of \$59,720 with a net levy increase of \$33,972

January 1, 2016 Gross Cost increase of \$60,844 with a net levy increase of \$34,537

January 1, 2017 Gross Cost increase of \$61,011 with a net levy increase of \$34,624

Please note that the 2015 approved budget provided for a 2% wage increase for this group, which will cover the general wage increase of

2% beginning on January 1, 2015.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

This wage increase is aligned with freely negotiated settlements at the three long-term care facilities, the Paramedics Services department and the Transportation department, as well as negotiated and arbitrated awards for unionized employees within the past twelve (12) months. These outcomes align with labour relations plans to create and maintain open and honest communications with all employee groups, while maintaining budget parameters in an effort to control costs.

Attachment(s)

Confidential Addendum to Report HRR-CS-10-15

Respectfully submitted by,

Grant McLevy, Director Human Resources