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City of Boston Employee Contract Negotiations Still Ongoing

Police salary parity with the firefighters has become a key issue as expected

The City has settled employee contracts with 10 of its 14 civilian unions and three school unions, including the Boston Teachers Union (BTU), but unions representing 38% of the unionized employees have yet to agree to new contracts. With agreements reached with the larger unions of SEIU, AFSCME citywide, the BTU, and eight other smaller unions, approximately 10,581 employees, or 61.8% of all unionized employees, are now under contract. However, the contracts with the five public safety unions, four other city unions, and eight school unions are not settled, affecting approximately 6,547 employees, or 38.2% of the City's unionized workforce.

General Settlement

Most city union contracts expired on June 30, 2010 and most school union contracts on August 31, 2010. Each of the 11 unions that have settled agreed to a 12% increase over six years (0% in FY11, 1% in FY12, 2% in FY13, 3% in FY14, 3% in FY15 and 3% in FY16) in two 3-year contracts. As noted in the Bureau's October 2012 [Bureau Update](#), the Administration has been able to achieve agreement with its unions on a uniform set of personnel policies in areas of attendance, light duty, and holidays. A stricter drug/alcohol testing procedure has been negotiated for certain positions. The BTU did agree to the City's standard wage package in its contract along with some good, but incremental, reform measures regarding teacher evaluations and assignments.

Public Safety Contracts

All four police union contracts and the firefighter contract have not been settled and are or will be in interest arbitration. The five unions represent approximately 3,800 uniformed officers. The City and the Boston Police Patrolmen's Association (BPPA) are further along in the arbitration process and may conclude their presentation of evidence before the arbitration panel by the end of May. After other procedural steps, a final decision could be rendered as late as August. The other four decisions will follow.

The four police unions are seeking a compensation increase far above the City's standard six-year plan. The unions believe that the police officers are not at parity with the firefighters as a result of the generous arbitration decision awarded the firefighters in 2010 and the loss of the state's 50% share of the Quinn Bill police education incentive payments. In addition, the firefighters' contract provides for a Transitional Career Awards Program (TCAP), a form of longevity award that provides an extra salary benefit for firefighters. Salary parity was expected to be a key issue in this contract. [See SR 10-1](#)

Funding the Contracts

The Mayor's FY14 recommended budget includes a collective bargaining reserve of \$40M to fund contracts in FY14 that have not yet settled based on the standard six-year salary plan. Reserves have been established for the prior years' expenses.