



Connecticut State Prison Employees AFSCME Local 391

109 Elm Street
Enfield, CT 06082

President's Report February 2008

Contract: After 10 Negotiation meetings with the State beginning in August of 2007 the State refused to offer any form of an Economic proposal. After all the statutory requirements were met the Arbitrator assigned to our Contract Arbitration is Arbitrator Larry Foy. Arbitrator Larry Foy is not new to the Corrections Bargaining Unit having been involved in the beginning of our Union being represented by AFSCME in the '70s. Arbitrator Larry Foy was the Arbitrator assigned in the 1993-'94 wage re-opener and he awarded us good raises that were eventually rejected by the Legislature (The first of 2 such rejections for this bargaining unit by the Legislature, the 2nd was the '97 contract) Arbitrator Foy was also recently used by this Local (2007) in a contract dispute regarding overtime for an employee assigned to no inmate contact without cause. Arbitrator Foy was instrumental in our member receiving \$5,000.00.

www.afscmelocal391.com has State & Union Proposals: In order to understand them read this carefully. The Union and State had 3 meetings in which to submit proposals. Then we discussed same during the negotiation sessions. Some minor proposals were agreed to as noted on the site, while others were "pulled" by either side for various reasons. Those proposals marked as "Submitted issues" are the proposals that are in front of the Arbitrator (They too can be "pulled" at any time, so updates will be utilized as necessary). The biggest issue I see people asking about at this stage is the 40 hour work week for maintenance proposed by the State. This proposal was "pulled" by the State just prior to Arbitration for reasons only they know. Once an issue is pulled any counter proposals by either side are automatically "pulled" also. The Union had made an initial counter of putting all non-continuous to 40 hrs while Correction Officer would remain at 36.25 and receive a bump in pay. This went away once they pulled their proposal.

Why didn't we go forward with all our initial proposals? Timing! In order to get a contract on time this process would need to be tentatively completed by April 6th in order for the Legislature to have 30 days to ratify it or not act on it and let it become law on the 30th day. As you will see, we will easily miss this deadline with the few issues we have gone forward with. We can only meet when the Arbitrator has available dates and then both the State and the Union have to be available. **THE UNION HAS ACCEPTED EVERY DATE OFFERED**, the State had issues with just a couple. Testimony is time consuming and requires more and more dates so we did what we had to. A reading of the Contract Surveys sent out to members with a SASE prior to Negotiations directed us to seek economic increases as the most important items to our members so these are the main issues we went forward with.

What Now: February 8th was our first day of Arbitration. Scheduled Arbitration Dates: Feb 25, March 4, 7, & 11, April 8, 14, & 23 and May 1. Testimony on Pager pay and Increasing Paid weekend drill days for the Military was completed on February 8th by our NP-4 members having knowledge and experience on the issues.

The Arbitrator, at the Union's request, is scheduled to tour Cybulski (overcrowding) & Osborn on March 7th with the Union & State to see our current working conditions and get a feel of what this bargaining unit faces on a daily bases.



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What if the process goes beyond April 6th? Statutes concerning ratifying an award by the General assembly are such that if an award or settlement is filed at the Legislature without 30 days left in the session and not acted on by the Assembly by the end of session (May 7th) it will be considered "filed" on the first day of the Legislative Session beginning January 2009. Then if not acted on it becomes effective 30 days from filing and will be applied retroactively to July 01, 2008 or the Legislature can act on it either way, voting yea or nay.

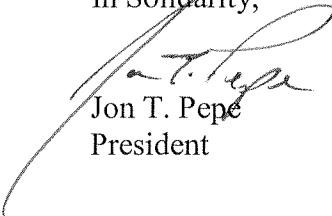
Is there anyway we can get an award on time? Yes, nothing precludes the State from making an offer and it would be brought back to you for a vote if it reflects the direction we have received from you our members. If not, we will continue with Arbitration as planned. We have professional witnesses scheduled regarding the economy & our decreased purchasing power when compared to other States. **WE ARE PREPARED!**

What Can You Do?

- Be patient and don't take the easy non-informed position of blaming the Union for the statutory process and length of it. We have our marching orders and have not deviated from them. All timeframes have been met by the Union with no delays whatsoever.
- *Prior to 2007 we had to wait until January before we could begin Negotiations, so we are months ahead of where we used to be.*
- ATTEND if called upon to show the Governor and Legislature that YOU are serious about getting a fair contract. The State knows the Negotiation Team is serious, but they may need to see your support of us in the form of an ORGANIZED & RESPECTFULL informational meeting at the Capitol or Governors residence. This is a last resort. We are aware that this can backfire at times (Some members speaking to media with no clue of the issues or how they are being perceived by the public) so we will only call one if absolutely necessary.

In closing I would share this: The entire Negotiation Team is aware you want a contract and want a good one, we do too as we are all in the same Bargaining Unit. We have and will do all that we can to ensure we uphold our end of the Bargain. We will not lose an issue or not get raises because we were not prepared. Neither I nor this Executive Board has ever deceived you or not fought for you;(Radios, Bubble enclosures, Additional posts, etc) believe in your Union as we have nothing to hide. Ignore rumors and Go to the web-site and Union meetings for your updates.

In Solidarity,


Jon T. Pepe
President