

**Huntington Beach Firefighters Counter-Proposal to the City of Huntington Beach April 4, 2016 The following proposals are presented in package form and are not intended to be agreed to separately. Any City Proposals Not Referenced Herein are Rejected**

**1. Term:**

**HBFA Position:** In the interests of the citizens of the City, HBFA points out that the legislature recognizes that there is a significant value to the creation of stability in the Public Safety labor force, and in order to promote the City's economic well-being by ensuring stability in one of its most vital industries HBFA proposes a two year term.

Moreover, HBFA wishes to be partnered with the City in a cooperative effort to be competitive and yet fiscally prudent. A two year term will allow the City to spread out its labor costs and budget for them more efficiently.

Based in part on the foregoing: HBFA proposes the following:

**a. 21 Months (October 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017). City Agrees to commence negotiations for a successor agreement no later than April 1, 2017;**

**2. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA):**

**HBFA Position:** Historically the City has experienced a staffing crisis which required that the City take significant resources to stem the flow of employees out of the City service. The City also had to increase compensation to recruit the best qualified candidates. The City states that it does not currently see a “compelling” or “competitive” problem with recruitment and retention and that HBFA are adequately compensated.

The City’s position ignores the fact that, while there are many candidates applying, the new methods of the application process allow applicants to easily apply to as many departments that they want. This results in applicants applying to a greater number of agencies.

As such, while hundreds of applicants apply for each vacancy, very few actually measure up to City standards and as a result, fewer qualified applicants are available and academies are not being filled. Highly qualified applicants are selecting other agencies.

Significantly, HBFA anticipates that approximately 30 current employees will retire from City service in the next three years placing a significant urgency on immediate recruitment. In the face of this urgent need to recruit, other Fire agencies throughout the State are increasing total compensation on a percentage basis while the City is only offering a non-percentage flat rate equivalent to 1.35% of base salary which is a “stipend” verses a percentage salary increase.

Most alarmingly, recent interview candidates are failing to appear at the interviews without the courtesy of a phone call which is unheard of in the Fire service. Estimates are that as many as 25% of the Paramedic applicants invited to interview with the City didn’t show and didn’t call. They simply “blew-off” the interview and it is believed they did so to attend interviews with other departments.

From an employee morale perspective, HBFA points out that its membership has not received a monetary increase in compensation since 2013 while the Consumer Price Index (Cost of living) has increased by 4.4%.

Comparable Agencies are anticipated to receive salary increases over the next three years in the amounts of 3-5% per year.

Based in part on the foregoing: HBFA proposes the following:

- a. **2% COLA increase effective October 1, 2016;**

### **3. Medical Insurance Contribution:**

**HBFA Position:** Members have fallen significantly behind in City contributions compared to comparable agencies. Members have not had a contribution since approximately 2004 and this has resulted in as much as a 50% difference between HBFA and comparable agencies.

Based in part on the foregoing: HBFA proposes the following:

**On the first day of the month following the City Council approval of the MOU, The City's contribution to health insurance will increase to the following:**

**Single - \$500.00;**

**Two Party - \$815.00;**

**Family - \$1325;**

**Opt Out - \$500.00**

### **4. Holidays:**

**HBFA Position:** Internal bargaining Unit comparisons show that all other bargaining units received an increase in Holiday pay approximately 1 year ago without the same benefit being extended. Additionally the City does not recognize certain State recognized holidays.

Based in part on the foregoing: HBFA proposes the following:

- a. Effective upon ratification Increase Holiday hours to 100 for 40 hr. employees.
- b. Effective upon ratification Increase Holiday hours to 140 for 56 hr employees.

### **5. Union Business Hours:**

**HBFA Position:** HBFA hours are limited to 400 hours currently. HBFA representatives have been called upon more increasingly to meet with City personnel on labor issues and are finding that more union leave time is necessary.

Based in part on the foregoing: HBFA proposes the following:

- a. Effective October 1, 2016 Union Business Bank increased to 500 hours

**6. Bilingual Pay:**

**HBFA Position:** Internal comparisons demonstrate that other bargaining units have broader Bi-lingual coverage. Additionally, HBFA members have been called upon to speak Japanese for City purposes without the Bi-Lingual compensation.

Based in part on the foregoing: HBFA proposes the following:

- a. Effective January 1, 2017 Japanese shall be added to the bilingual pay **limited to two positions** ;

**7. Minimum Staffing: Tentative Agreement**

- a. Maintain minimum Staffing language in Article VII H 1 **With the Date of the Sunset changed to June 30, 2017.**