



**King County  
Metropolitan King County Council  
Transportation, Economy, and Environment Committee**

**STAFF REPORT**

|                      |           |              |              |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Agenda Item:</b>  | 8         | <b>Name:</b> | Nick Wagner  |
| <b>Proposed No.:</b> | 2016-0010 | <b>Date:</b> | Feb. 2, 2016 |

**SUBJECT**

Approval of a collective bargaining agreement with the Technical Employees' Association, covering employees in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks.

**SUMMARY**

Proposed Ordinance 2016-0010 (Att. 1) would approve a collective bargaining (CBA) (Att. 1-A) with the Technical Employees' Association (TEA) covering about 225 supervisors and staff in the Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP).<sup>1</sup> As described in the Executive's transmittal letter (Att. 3), these employees provide technical services related to the planning, design, engineering, and construction of King County's wastewater treatment facilities.

The new CBA is a two-year continuation of the current CBA with the changes described below. The new CBA covers the period from January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2016.

**BACKGROUND**

This bargaining unit's previous CBA expired at the end of December 2014, but its terms continued in effect pursuant to RCW 41.56.123(1).<sup>2</sup>

**ANALYSIS**

The only noteworthy changes in the proposed new CBA are:

1. Effective Dates. The CBA has new effective dates (January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2016) (CBA Art. 25; Att. 1-A, p. 47);

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<sup>1</sup> The supervisors are in a bargaining unit separate from the staff whom they supervise, but both are represented by TEA, and both bargaining units are covered by the proposed new CBA.

<sup>2</sup> RCW 41.56.123(1) provides: "After the termination date of a collective bargaining agreement, all of the terms and conditions specified in the collective bargaining agreement shall remain in effect until the effective date of a subsequent agreement, not to exceed one year from the termination date stated in the agreement. Thereafter, the employer may unilaterally implement according to law."

2. COLAs. The CBA provides for cost-of-living adjustments in the same amounts that were agreed to with the King County Coalition of Unions, which the Council approved in November 2014 by Ordinance 17916 (2.00% COLA for 2015; 2.25% for 2016) (CBA § 18.2; Att. 1-A, p. 36).
3. Modification and Clarification of the Bargaining Units. The CBA includes minor modifications and clarifications of the classifications included in the two covered bargaining units (CBA § 2.1, App. A; Att. 1-A, pp. 3, 48-49).
4. Use of Benefit Time. The CBA would allow bargaining unit members who are retiring or otherwise leaving county employment to use up to 480 hours of approved Benefit Time<sup>3</sup> if they provide an irrevocable notice of resignation at least six months before their last day of work (CBA § 6.5; Att. 1-A, p. 8). This is designed to enable county managers to make plans for replacing the resigning employees or reallocating their work.
5. Conversion of Accrued Hours between Benefit Time and Extended Sick Leave. The CBA would provide two opportunities for covered employees to convert up to 40 hours (up to a total of 80 hours) of Benefit Time to Extended Sick Leave or vice versa (CBA § 6.7; Att. 1-A, pp. 9-10).
6. Compensation for Being Licensed as Architect. The CBA would extend to architects the \$50 per month compensation for having a current professional license and the additional \$50 per month if the license is directly applicable to their employment (CBA § 18.5.2; Att. 1-A, pp. 36-37). The previous CBA had limited the compensation to licenses for civil, mechanical, electrical, chemical, environmental, sanitary, and structural engineering.
7. Compensation for Additional Certifications. The CBA would add several new certifications to those for which an employee is entitled to receive \$50 per month compensation per certification (up to a maximum of \$100 per month) if the certification is in a discipline that is directly applicable to the individual's employment (CBA § 18.5.3; Att. 1-A, pp. 37-38).
8. Clarification of Standard for Receiving Above-Top-Step Merit Pay. The CBA would make clear that a merit score of 4.25 will be considered "outstanding" for the purpose of receiving above-top-step merit pay. This is intended to be the same as the standard for non-represented employees under the Executive Branch Performance Appraisal and Merit Pay System Manual.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The proposed new CBA would have no substantial fiscal impact beyond that of the COLAs. The amounts listed in the Fiscal Note (Att. 4) are attributable to the COLAs. As noted in the Fiscal Note, the costs associated with the increase in licensing fee

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<sup>3</sup> Benefit Time takes the place of vacation, holidays, and sick leave. Benefit Time is used in conjunction with Extended Sick Leave.

reimbursement and in the number of certifications eligible for professional designation pay are expected to be minimal.

**INVITED**

Jim Johnson, Labor Negotiator, King County Office of Labor Relations  
John Phillips, President, Technical Employees' Association

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Ordinance 2016-0010  
    Att. A (Collective Bargaining Agreement)
2. Checklist and Summary of Changes (prepared by executive staff)
3. Transmittal Letter
4. Fiscal Note