



**Maryland Classified Employees Association, inc.**

## **MCEA Press Release**

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### **MCEA and Harford County Government Have Reached a Tentative One Year Agreement for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Which Includes 9% and 10% Pay Raises for Harford County Employees**

MCEA (the oldest and largest independent labor organization serving Maryland public employees) and the Harford County Government have reached a tentative agreement which features an increased pay/health plan for Harford County employees.

For the last several months, MCEA Labor Relations Specialist Michael Keeney, Harford County Human Resources Director Scott Gibson and the respective negotiating teams have conducted negotiations concerning wages, hours of work and other terms and conditions of employment for Harford County employees.

Scott Gibson commented, "This case study truly shows how management and employees strive to work together to address problems and concerns. We have come up with some equitable solutions, and if we continue to maintain this upbeat mentality, then we will continue to succeed in future endeavors as well."

MCEA would like to extend a special thanks to the negotiating team members of MCEA's Chapter 610 (Harford County's General Workforce) who have served diligently to improve the quality of life for Harford County employees. Members include Chapter 610 President Jack Yost, Vice-President Amanda Weyant, Secretary Lisa Vaught and Treasurer Karen Schanberger.

To assist with relieving the employees' concerns about the Council passing the plan, MCEA organized efforts to share the employees' viewpoints. As a result, this was an unprecedented event. For the first time, more than 700 public county employees attended the two public hearings to provide testimonials to support their rights.

Additionally, Harford County's Human Resources Deputy Director Janet Shaub provided testimony in support of the tentative agreement as well. Due to the Harford County employees' testimonials and overwhelming turnout, an affirmative unanimous 7-0 vote was confirmed by the Council.

On June 13, MCEA's collective bargaining unit will meet at 205 Hays Street in Bel Air, MD to vote for the ratification of the contract. MCEA recommends bargaining unit approval.

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The following highlights of the new pay/health plan are:

- Harford County will offer CareFirst Products for health care and pay an average of 95% of an employee's health care/vision insurance. Delta Dental Insurance will be offered.
- All employees will receive a 3% cost of living adjustment increase, effective June 14, 2008
- All eligible employees will receive a 3% merit increase, effective June 14, 2008
- Employees will receive a 3% market adjustment increase
- All dispatchers working in Emergency Operations Centers will receive a 4% market adjustment increase
- Longevity will now be an additional increase in base pay awarded on the employee's 15<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> year of service. Longevity will also be awarded every year after 25 years of service.
- Harford County will be changing the retiree medical policy. Any changes to the vesting requirement will only impact employees hired on or after July 1, 2008. Changes to the subsidy rate will be made to give more weight to years with the County. Twenty-five years with the County will still earn 90%.

Special thanks goes out to Harford County Executive David R. Craig and the seven members of the Harford County Council who voted unanimously to support the proposed pay/health plan, including Council President William Boniface and Council members Dion Guthrie, Veronica Chenowith, James McMahan, Chad Shrodes, Richard Slutzky and Mary Ann Lisanti.

MCEA Labor Relations Specialist Michael Keeney concludes, "At the end of the day, you look at what has been won and what has been lost. Clearly, this contract is a win-win for all Harford County employees."

More information about MCEA and Chapter 610 (Harford County General Workforce) is available at [www.mcea.org](http://www.mcea.org). For additional information, please call Vanessa DiDomenico (MCEA Communications Coordinator) at 1-888-611-MCEA, Ext. 211.