



Michigan AFSCME Council 25

News Release

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AFSCME Contract Fact Finding Postponed: City of Detroit Isn't Ready!

Detroit MI - November 17, 2009 -- Albert Garrett, President of Michigan Council 25 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO, issued the following statement:

"Fact Finding in the contract negotiations between AFSCME and the City of Detroit was scheduled to begin on November 16, 2009," stated Garrett. "The fact finding hearings did not in fact begin yesterday because the City of Detroit is not prepared to present their case.

"We received a message by e-mail from City Attorney Valerie Colbert-Osamuede, representing the City of Detroit, stating in part, ' . . . the City is unable to go forward with the Fact Finding tentatively scheduled to begin November 16, 2009 . . .'" continued Garrett. "Mayor Bing and his representatives have repeatedly expressed great urgency to reach a new agreement with AFSCME, stressing the importance of this contract to the City's economic recovery.

"Yet when the time came to move forward with fact finding, the City suddenly was unable to proceed," concluded Garrett. "We in AFSCME have repeatedly pointed out that the City has been unwilling or unable to provide facts and figures to support their demands, and the City has just confirmed that failing."

The Michigan Public Employee Relations Act (PERA) provides for fact finding as a part of the collective bargaining process. When the parties have not been able to reach agreement, a mediator may be assigned: a third party neutral who will assist the parties in fashioning a compromise settlement. When mediation is not successful, the parties may request fact finding, in which both parties present facts and arguments in evidentiary hearings conducted by a third party neutral, the fact finder. The fact finder issues a recommended settlement based on his/her evaluation of the facts and arguments presented.

Albert Garrett is also Michigan Vice President for AFSCME International. Michigan AFSCME Council 25 represents more than 90,000 public workers across Michigan. AFSCME International represents 1.4 million public workers nationwide. News releases issued by Michigan AFSCME Council 25 are available at <http://www.miafscme.org/Releases.htm>

- 30 -