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MOFD and the firefighters union come to tentative labor agreement

By Nick Marnell

After nearly six months of negotiations, which included discussions with a state-appointed mediator, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District and Local 1230 reached a tentative agreement on a new three-year labor contract. The union ratified the tentative agreement on Sept. 18.

The term of the Memorandum of Understanding runs from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2021. Among its significant provisions are salary increases of 3 percent across the board for years one and two and 2 percent in year three. A 2 percent equity adjustment will also be added to wages in the first two years, with 1 percent added in year three.

According to the district, salary survey data showed firefighters, engineers and captains were behind the labor market in both salary and total compensation. The purpose of the equity adjustment increase was to move district salaries closer in line to salaries paid by comparable agencies.

"We worked very long and hard on this. We came to a pretty good compromise," Director Kathleen Famulener said about the MOU.

Director Steve Anderson was out of town when the two parties reached the tentative agreement. "Before I left I was very clear on what I would accept and not accept. When I came back, the MOU exceeded those upper limits," Anderson said. "We need to pay our employees and we need to pay them well, but I have some serious questions about the MOU. Considering our finances, we were overly generous."

Other board members either declined to discuss the agreement or could not be reached for comment.

Representatives from Local 1230 also declined to comment on the MOU.

The full cost to the district to implement the MOU for the 2018-19 fiscal year comes to more than \$750,000.

At the Oct. 3 district meeting, should the agreement be approved by the board, the district will decide how to account for the added expenditure in the general fund.

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