

AFSCME to Metro Council January 25, 2018 at 6:00pm

Good Evening,

I am here tonight before the council as a single, working mother, a proud AFSCME union member and negotiations committee member, and most of all a concerned and dedicated Louisville Metro Government worker. Almost one year after beginning the bargaining process with the Mayor's Labor Relations Team, I felt it pertinent to address the council regarding the Mayor's team stall tactics. We have proposed new language only to be denied with little explanation. For example, members must navigate a confusing process to obtain FMLA leave. The committee proposed language to help streamline the process for both members and Louisville Metro which was denied by the Mayor's team. In September 2017 the Mayor's team agreed to provide a counter proposal. It is now 2018 and the committee is still waiting on that counter. We are given underhanded proposals and it seems Metro's intention is to purposefully keep employees overworked, departments understaffed, and union members undervalued. This leaves some of Metro's best employees burnt out and with high compassion fatigue especially after feeling they gave up so much in the last contract to help the city out during the previous economic shortfall.

I work in Codes and Regulations and since I was hired in November 2015, I have seen more turn over and disappointment among employees than anywhere I have ever worked. My story is not my own and is parallel to so many of my AFSCME brothers and sisters. After speaking with colleagues, I have found this to be a major issue in all departments. There are members who have lost their homes, their livelihood, and most devastating of all the appearance of their integrity from being suspended without pay for several months while Louisville Metro conducts an internal investigation only for the member to be exonerated. This again is another stall tactic that further degrades workers and creates tension and hostility in the workplace.

Tonight I ask the council to help us find some consensus and get a Master Contract that is fair for the people of the City that work diligently every day for the safety of you and your families and the economic development of this great city. The city needs you. My AFSCME brothers and sisters need you. I need you. The Mayor and his appointees are no longer bargaining in good faith. In November 2017, our invitation for Mayor Fischer to join us was rejected by his appointee quoting, "We have total confidence that the Labor Relations team will work with you." I would like to say that we do not have total confidence in Mayor Fischer or his team when he himself would not directly respond to us and his team continues to undermine negotiations. I leave you tonight with an open invitation for each council member who would like to discuss these issues further with myself or any of my committee colleagues. Thank you for your time and dedication to us and all Louisville Metro Government workers in helping us show all citizens where the true compassion of this wonderful city really lies.



AMANDA JESSEE
CODES AND REGULATIONS
LOUISVILLE FORWARD

PLAN REVIEWER
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AFSCME 2629 Master Collective Bargaining Agreement includes:

Public Health and Wellness:

Responsible for inspecting restaurants, grocery stores, schools, swimming pools, hotels, motels, mosquito control, disease control and address health inequities of the city.

Office of Resilience and Community Services:

Responsible for providing services that move individuals and families to self-sufficiency.

Economic Development – Air Pollution Control District

The APCD implements the Federal Clean Air Act in Louisville and works in partnership with the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Kentucky Division for Air Quality, and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Office of Management and Budget –Finance & Revenue (Tech)

The Louisville Metro Office of Management and Budget ensures financial integrity by directing, coordinating and monitoring all financial functions of Louisville Metro Government. We assist in developing a fiscally sound budget that is responsive to the community's needs.

We also:

- Ensure that vendors are paid for goods and services received by local government
- Issue payroll for all Metro Government employees
- Invest cash resources, issue financial statements, and manage property and liability risks.

Metro Animal Services

The Department of Animal Services has a fundamental mission to protect public health and safety, ensure the humane treatment of animals and provide quality, professional service to the public.

Metro Corrections

Responsible for protecting the safety of the public and the inmates.

Youth Detention Services

Responsible for protecting the juvenile clients and the public at large.

Codes and Regulations –Construction Review, Electrical and Building Inspection

Responsible for plan review of construction documents to ensure structural safety and soundness of new and remodeled commercial, residential and industrial buildings according to the Kentucky Building Code. Inspectors responsible for making sure the safety aspect is carried through to the last inspection.

Develop Louisville- Planning and Design Services

Responsible for new and re-development of the cities infrastructure.

Department of Information Technology (Dolt)

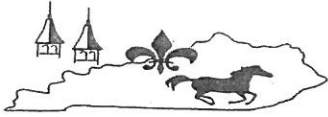
Responsible for keeping Louisville Metro technology up to date and without fault.

Revenue Commission

Responsibilities include the collection of occupational license taxes on behalf of Louisville Metro (which includes all of Jefferson County, Kentucky), the Jefferson County Board of Education, the Anchorage Board of Education, and the Transit Authority of River City (TARC).

In addition, the Metro Revenue Commission collects various other license fees that include taxes for transient rooms, insurance premiums, and large trucks and trailers that use the Louisville/Jefferson County Metro streets.

**AFSCME
LOCAL 2629**



*American Federation of
State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO*

November 1, 2017

Mayor Greg Fischer
527 W. Jefferson St.
Louisville, KY 40202

Dear Mayor Fischer,

This open letter is concerning ongoing negotiations between Metro Government and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 2629. We, the committee who represent the dedicated employees of Metro Government, have been tasked with bringing the needs and voices of your employees to the table representing a wide range of departments within Metro Government.

We want to take this opportunity to reflect on past negotiations which historically have lasted approximately two years. Workers understood the fiscal crises that faced our city, we heard your request for help on our part in 2013, and we made major concessions during negotiation talks. We came together in 2013 as a committee and as a union in solidarity to contribute in getting the great city of Louisville back on financial track. Now we are asking that you hear our request for help on your part in 2017 of giving back to the workers that gave to you. We also ask the same of your negotiators that represent you and Metro Government at the negotiating table.

Over the last several years employees have worked short staffed, positions have disappeared, and vacant positions have intentionally been left unfilled. As a result, workers have been forced to take on more tasks and more responsibilities, often performing the work of two or more employees for the pay of one. These conditions have heavily contributed to a major increase in FMLA usage across the membership, compassion fatigue, worker burnout, and high turnover. Workers grievances, which have risen considerably in number, have been continuously pushed to the full lengths, even when it was evident that Metro had violated the workers' contract.

In fact, there has been a significant increase in the number of supervisor positions and pay, while the pay of Metro Government union workers has seen little movement. This practice has dwindled the morale of workers and their positions within Metro Government.

Historically, government negotiations are where both parties come together and work towards the common good and betterment for all. This practice opens opportunity for all voices to be heard and feel those voices have contributed to the future of all workers and this great city positively. We want to recruit new talent and retain the dedicated employees we already have in a supportive work environment rather than an oppressive one.

We come to you, so that you may hear our voices and the voices of over 600 Metro employees calling on you to do the right thing for workers. Our goal is that you hear our concerns and move towards a common ground that works for all, not just a few.

We want to make you fully aware of what is happening at the table, so that you can step up and do the right thing. Help us create a positive, supportive, and lasting work environment for your employees again. We ask that you come to the table and join us for AFSCME Master Negotiations on November 10th and November 17th, 2017 at 10:00am.

Sincerely,

AFSCME Local 2629

Master Contract Committee

Departments Represented:

Public Health and Wellness

Office of Resilience & Community Services

Economic Development- Air Pollution
Control District

Office of Management and Budget- Finance
& Revenue (Tech)

Metro Animal Services

AFSCME President

Metro Corrections

Youth Detention Services

Codes and Regulations-Construction
Review

Develop Louisville-Planning and Design
Services

Department of Information Technology
(DoIT)

AFSCME Vice President



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

GREG FISCHER
MAYOR

November 9, 2017

AFSCME Local 2629
Master Contract Committee

I am in receipt of your letter to the Mayor dated November 1, 2017, concerning ongoing negotiations between Metro Government and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 2629.

First and foremost the Mayor and I would like to thank the many AFSCME employees for your daily contributions to Metro Government and to the citizens of this great city. Over the past 10 years, I know we've all been asked to do more with less. We've endured an economic recession while maintaining an excellent bond rating. We could not have done this without your help. However, we continue to face challenges with uncertainties in our pension funding and the impending budget cuts from the state. This means we have to continue to be fiscally responsible while continuing to provide top line services to our citizens.

As you may know, our Collective Bargaining ordinance grants the Mayor, or his designee, the authority and the duty to bargain collectively and exclusively for Metro Government. Our Labor Relations team, which includes Mr. Mike Carrell and Ms. Penny Bland, is the negotiation team that the Mayor has designated to represent Metro Government at the bargaining table. The Labor Relations team has been very successful over many years in negotiating collective bargaining agreements.

It has been the policy and practice of this administration, like those before it, for the Mayor to not directly participate in or circumvent the collective bargaining process; thus, he will not be attending negotiation sessions. We have total confidence that the Labor Relations team will work with you, as it has with many other unions, to achieve a settlement.

Sincerely,

Kellie Watson, Esq.
Chief Equity Officer
Office of the Mayor Greg Fischer

