



Hope you are all enjoying a great summer and staying as cool and comfortable as possible. Summer is off to a sweltering start and we are very busy at FDSA.

Budget Hearings

On June 12, 2014, I sent out an update to the conclusion of the FY 2014/2015 Fresno County Budget Hearings. The Sheriff was able to secure eight (8) new deputy sheriff positions that had been wiped away during the economic recession. This was a collaborative effort between the Board of Supervisors, CAO, Sheriff and FDSA to get the funding secured. We are very grateful the money was allocated and the positions were added back to the Sheriff's budget and included in the Fresno County Salary Resolution. Adding these positions back is definitely a step in the right direction. We are hoping this becomes a positive trend and next year we can continue to add more new positions.

June 2014 Primary Election Results

The June primary election came and went with little issues according to Fresno County Clerk, Brandi Orth. The first results were released at 8:01pm, with subsequent updates up until about midnight.

Here are results from the different races the FDSA weighed in on. The races were highlighted in the April 2014, Presidents message.

Fresno County District Attorney

- ***End of an era for District Attorney Egan***

Fresno County will swear in a new District Attorney in January of 2015. Current District Attorney Elizabeth Egan was defeated on a re-election bid for her fourth term, by challenger Lisa Sondergaard-Smittcamp. It was evident by the results at the polls that the voters in Fresno County want to see change at the DA's office.

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- *New era of DA elect Lisa Sondergaard-Smittcamp*

Lisa Sondergaard-Smittcamp started her career as a prosecutor in Madera County in 1997, where she served four years before leaving and taking a job with the Fresno County DA's Office in 2001. During her tenure as a Deputy District Attorney, Lisa served in the Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault/Child Abuse and Homicide Units. Lisa was named Lead Attorney of the Domestic Violence Unit, where she supervised seven deputy district attorneys, and she and her team accomplished an unprecedented ninety-percent trial conviction rate.

Lisa has prosecuted many violent crimes during her time as a deputy district attorney. She was notably given praise by a superior court judge during one of her opening statements in the case of former US Marine Dejon Baskin from Reedley who was convicted on three counts of first degree murder. Lisa's opening statement was what one superior court judge said, "the most compelling ever given in the history of the Fresno County Courthouse."

Lisa is a Fresno native, who graduated from San Joaquin Memorial and went on to college at USC, before returning to Fresno and graduating with a Juris Doctor from San Joaquin College of law in 1995.

Sitting Down with Lisa Sondergaard-Smittcamp

I met with Lisa shortly after the election and she is ready to go to work. Although we did not support Lisa in her campaign, she and I had the opportunity to discuss many issues and concerns we both had during the campaign and election. It was a productive and positive meeting. We cleared up many misunderstandings and rumors that came up over the past year.

I gave Lisa my word, as the leader of your organization- that we are committed to being partners with the DA's office. We will stand behind her as she takes on this top role.

Lisa gave me the same courtesy and respect as we have promised her. She and I have decided to problem solve and reach out to each other before any issue or rumor spirals out of control.

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The future seems bright and promising with the FDSA and DA-elect Smittcamp.

Fresno County Supervisor Seats

- **District One**

The candidate we supported for the District One Supervisor seat, Brian Pacheco, made the run-off in a five person election. Brian and Blong Xiong moved to the next phase of the election being neck and neck down to the final count. The final count actually had Blong Xiong eight (8) votes ahead of Brian. The winner will be decided during the general election, November 4th 2014. We will make another push for Brian Pacheco over the next few months, to encourage voters to elect him as our next Supervisor for District 1.

- **District Four**

The candidate we are supporting in District Four, Ernest "Buddy" Mendes, also made the run-off in a five person election. Buddy came close to winning outright in such a large field of candidates. He captured 49.70% of the votes, roughly 100 votes short of winning it in the primary. The next candidate is Daniel Parra who finished with 21.03% of the overall vote. Those two candidates will move on to the November 4, 2014 general election, where this seat will be decided as well. We will again help to get Buddy in office and serving as our next Supervisor for District 4.

- **Fresno County Judge**

We supported Lisa Gamoian in a five candidate field in this race. Lisa captured 34.48% of the total vote. Coming in behind her was Rachel Hill, who captured 28.85% of the vote. Lisa and Rachel will move onto the November 4, 2014 general election. We will continue stand behind Lisa in her quest to be Fresno County's newest elected Judge.

Those are the contested races in Fresno County that FDSA took positions in.

Below are also other state and federal races that we endorsed in and how the candidates did. Some were contested others were not.

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- **Assembly District #23: Jim Patterson - - Victorious**
- **Assembly District #31: Henry T. Perea - - Victorious**
- **Senate District #12: Anthony Cannella - - Victorious**
- **Senate District #16: Andy Vidak - - Victorious**
- **Congressional District #21: David Valadao - - Victorious in Primary and moves to General in November**
- **Congressional District #22: Devin Nunes - - Victorious in Primary and moves to General in November**

Another race to mention is Fresno City Council District 7. Although we didn't endorse during this election cycle, we still supported Clint Olivier in his re-election as City Councilman. Clint was victorious capturing 54.68% of the vote in a four candidate election.

Retirement Increases/Decreases

I wanted to give everyone a brief understanding of the recent email the county sent out regarding the retirement increases to the employee.

Those of you who have been with the County over the years have noticed employees contributions have fluctuated year to year. Sometimes their contribution has gone up and sometimes it has gone down. There are years when Tier 1 safety employees drop by a half percent and Tier 1 general increase a half percent. The computations are very complicated and difficult to understand. Many factors are taken into effect- such as age, years in the system, stock market returns on the fund, county contribution and employee contribution.

One of the components that changed under PEPRA in 2013 was the max out of pocket that an employee would be held to pay was 12%.

As many of you saw, the rates under Tier 1 safety rose over 12% (12.36%) which caused us to question why this happened.

Mid April we met with the administration from FCERA along with County Labor to try and make sense of this "above 12%."

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After an hour meeting and explanation, the following short answer was determined. We, as employees, are currently paying about 7% into our share of the retirement fund. The other percentage that makes up the "over 12%" is also paid by the employee, but is paid into the Cost of Living (COLA) portion of the retirement fund. This COLA portion is when the employee retires and is living off his/her pension the retirement board each year determines what, if any, COLA is given to the retiree. This can range from 0-3% each year.

Something I learned during this process is the current employees are continually funding, not only the retirement system as a whole, but also contributing to the COLA account as well.

Another misunderstanding is just because your retirement rate goes from 10.98% to 12.36%- does not mean you are taking a 1.38% pay decrease. It means that whatever your contribution is in dollars to the retirement fund (i.e. \$150.00 biweekly) means that your contribution will now be 1.38% increase of that - - equaling a new total of \$152.07 using the \$150.00 as an example. I have fielded a lot of questions and misunderstandings in regards to this percentage amount.

Below I have attached the new 2014/2015 FCERA amounts each one of you depending on the retirement tier you fall under.

General Members:

- Tier 1 members reflect an average contribution rate of about **9.61%** of retirement base pay (i.e., in most cases, total pay less overtime), an increase from the current 8.59%.
- Tier 2 members reflect an average contribution rate of about **6.87%** of retirement base pay, an increase from the current 6.21%.
- Tier 3 members reflect an average contribution rate of about **7.56%** of retirement base pay, an increase from the current 6.79%.
- Tier 4 members reflect an average contribution rate of about 6.51% of retirement base pay, an increase from the current 6.14%
- Tier 5 members reflect a flat rate of **6.96%** of retirement base pay, an increase from the current 6.25%.

Safety Members:

- Tier 1 members reflect an average contribution rate of about **12.36%** of retirement base pay (i.e. in most cases total pay less overtime), an increase from the current 10.95%.
- Tier 2 members reflect an average contribution rate of about **10.93%** of retirement base pay, an increase from the current 9.73%.

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- Tier 4 members reflect an average contribution rate of about **9.60%** of retirement base pay, an increase from the current 9.32%
- Tier 5 members reflect a flat rate of **11.96%** of retirement base pay, an increase from 11.25%.

Stay safe and protect each other every day in the workplace. We are our only backups.

-Eric

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