

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Stockton Employees Vote to Strike

STOCKTON – After employees with the City of Stockton recently authorized a strike by a 90 percent vote, three of the units (Stockton Municipal Utilities District Supervisors, the Maintenance Unit and the Trades and Maintenance Unit) overwhelmingly rejected the City’s Last Best and Final offer yesterday. The offer failed to meet cost-of-living increases and address other important issues. City workers, which are represented by Operating Engineers Local 3, have requested a meeting with City representatives and a state mediator to avoid a Labor Action. This meeting is scheduled for January.

Despite avoiding a Labor Action so far, city employees have become increasingly frustrated with the City’s failure to address their concerns, which union representatives and city employees brought before the City Council last July. Since that time, these workers have organized several informational pickets at City Hall and Stockton’s Regional Wastewater Control Facility. At the heart of their concerns is a 2 percent raise being offered by city negotiators, despite the cost-of-living rate increasing at 3.1 percent.

“A 2 percent ‘raise’ isn’t a raise at all, if the cost-of-living is increasing at a rate of 3.1 percent! In reality, it’s a pay cut!” said Local 3’s Senior Business Agent Mike Eggener.

During the city’s bankruptcy in 2012, city employees accepted pay cuts and significantly reduced benefits in order to help the city secure its financial footing. Since that time, Stockton has steadily improved its economic situation and is now ranked one of the five most financially stable cities in the country. City employees, however, feel that the city is failing to acknowledge the personal sacrifices they made to get the city where it’s at today.

“We took furloughs and weren’t getting a cost-of-living increase for approximately 10 years,” said city employee Henry Torres, “When we did, it was below the rate at which the cost-of-living was going up. We were told that we were all going to have to take a haircut. Well, my hair has never grown back!”

Adding insult to injury, City Council members approved a 60 percent pay raise for themselves in 2018 and recently approved a 10 percent compensation increase for the city attorney.

“All we want is a fair contract to get us back to trying to be whole,” said Torres. “This [the city’s proposal] doesn’t even try to catch us up with what we’ve lost already.”

Operating Engineers Local 3 represents about 37,000 heavy equipment operators and other workers in construction, public works and law enforcement. More information is available at www.oe3.org.

Image 01: Operating Engineers Local 3 President Steve Ingersoll leads picketing city workers around Stockton City Hall.

Image 02, 03, 04: City of Stockton employees picket in favor of a better contract outside of City Hall.

Image 01



Image 02



Image 03



Image 04

