



News Release

Russell M. Pry – Summit County Executive

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Summit County Executive Russell M. Pry, Summit County Sheriff Drew Alexander Respond to FOP Deputies Union

Over the past two years, the County has seen its anticipated general fund revenue decrease from \$117.2 million to \$98.7 million. As a result, our offices have had to make serious cutbacks in our operating budgets. For the 2010 Operating Budget, the Executive's Office reduced its budget by 11.9% and the Sheriff's Office reduced its budget by 8.4%. These cutbacks have included employee buyouts, a hiring freeze and pay freezes and furlough days for non-bargaining employees. Additionally, several union employees in our offices have agreed to concessions involving furlough days rather than seeing their fellow members laid off and out of work.

In November and December, 2009, our offices entered into negotiations with the FOP Deputies Union and FOP Supervisors Union to negotiate concessions in lieu of layoffs and to reduce a \$1,968,683.00 budget shortfall in the Sheriffs budget. Prior to those negotiations, our offices provided the Unions with several possible concession options, including foregoing uniform allowances, foregoing their 3% pay raise, foregoing longevity pay, foregoing double-time and a half pay for 13 holidays, furlough days, and a revised health insurance plan consistent with the plan of other County employees. We advised the Unions that several options existed to close the budget gap, and gave them the flexibility to choose which ones are best suited for their membership.

In December 2009, the bargaining committees for both of the Unions tentatively agreed to concessions of 20 furlough days. These concessions would have resulted in savings of \$1,488,116 for the Deputies Union and a \$307,888.00 savings for the Supervisors Union. The County agreed to forego \$143,077.00 in savings for the Deputies Union and \$29,602.00 in savings for the Supervisors Union. The Supervisors Union approved the concessions overwhelmingly, thereby, avoiding layoffs of their members. Unfortunately, the Deputies Union voted against the concessions in favor of laying off 30 of their brothers and sisters in uniform.

Following the layoffs, our offices remained committed and open to negotiating a concession package that would bring these 30 deputies back to work. Fortunately, in mid-January 2010, the membership of the Deputies Union voted in favor of their bargaining committee returning to the table to negotiate a concession package. As a result, our offices were hopeful that both sides appeared willing and prepared to negotiate a mutually acceptable concession package.

Negotiations have been ongoing for the past month. During our meetings, our offices have negotiated in good faith and presented proposals that should have resulted in a mutual settlement. However, the bargaining

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committee instead presented economic proposals that amounted to only a fraction of the needed savings and chose to focus on non-economic issues affecting their non-laid-off members. Now, rather than continuing negotiations, the bargaining committee has chosen to break off negotiations with a press release that both mischaracterizes the nature of the negotiations and the amount of concessions offered by the committee.

Again, at the time of the tentative agreement for 20 furlough days, \$1,631,193.00 in savings was needed in concessions by the Deputies Unit. The 20 furlough days would have generated \$1,488,116.00 in savings, and our offices agreed to forego the balance of \$143,077.00. Since that time, the layoff of the deputies has generated \$447,004 in savings, thereby, reducing the amount needed to be saved through concessions to \$1,184,189.00.

During the recent round of negotiations, the bargaining committee provided an initial offer that would have generated no, or very little, cost savings in 2010. After several counters and proposals, the last offer from the bargaining committee was for nine furlough days, which would have generated only \$669,651.75 in savings, leaving a gap of \$514,537.25. Additionally, the bargaining committee was insistent upon language that would have allowed them to substitute furlough days with holiday pay, thereby, potentially reducing their proposed savings by up to 78%. Furthermore, as negotiations proceeded, it became apparent that the bargaining committee was more concerned about how bringing the 30 deputies back would impact the position and shift assignments of the currently working employees than what was financially necessary to bring those deputies back to work.

On the contrary, the County's most recent offer was for the Deputies Union to take 12 furlough days, which would have generated \$892,869.00 in savings. In so doing, our offices agreed to forego an additional \$148,811.50, on top of the \$143,077.00 that we already agreed to forego, for a total of \$291,888.50. The impact of our most recent proposal on the deputies would have been minimal. While the furloughs would represent a 4.62% decrease in 2010, that reduction is offset by the 3% pay increase they received pursuant to their contract in January 2010.

Given these facts, it is inaccurate for the bargaining committee to state, as they have in their recent press release, that they have offered \$1,116,639.00 in concessions and that the County has not been willing to move toward settlement. Instead, while our offices have shown a willingness to forego an additional \$148,811.50 in savings, on top of the \$143,077.00 already offered, the bargaining committee has offered proposals that represent only a fraction of the needed savings, and far less than what was previously offered in December 2009. Additionally, the current concessions that have been proposed by our offices are no more, and are actually less than, the concessions realized by the other union, non-union and management employees in the Sheriff's Office. However, at this point, it is apparent that the bargaining committee is willing to draw the line in the sand at \$669,651.75.

Again, it is extremely unfortunate that the 30 deputies and their families will continue to suffer as a result of the breakdown in negotiations. It is also unfortunate that the bargaining committee has felt it necessary to break off the negotiations in such a public manner. Our offices remain committed to reaching a resolution to this matter, but believe the bargaining committee must approach these negotiations with an understanding that the County has limited financial resources going forward.

"I'm completely disheartened by this news and am disappointed in the FOP leadership," stated Sheriff Drew Alexander. "I don't believe it was ever their intention to bring back these laid-off deputies. The Summit County Sheriff's Office will continue to provide excellent service to the residents of Summit County."

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