

Local 117 Shop Stewards at King County prepare for upcoming bargaining

King County Stewards to meet, strategize



Teamsters Local 117 Shop Stewards from across King County are scheduled to meet on Saturday, May 22, 2010 from 9 AM-12 PM to begin preparations for bargaining. The day's agenda will include the creation of a demands' survey as well as a communications action network so that members are kept informed and engaged during the bargaining process. Local 117 General Counsel, Spencer Thal, will be on hand to lead a discussion and answer questions about bargaining as it relates to COLA.

As you know, King County continues to project a \$10 million dollar budget deficit, even if a proposed sales-tax increase announced by the County Executive is approved by voters in August. According to the County Executive, the tax, which would raise \$47 million for the County and \$32 million for the cities in the first year, would be used to fund courts, law enforcement, and public health.

Your Local Union supports the proposal and General Counsel Thal testified at a recent King County Budget and Fiscal Management meeting in favor of referring the

proposal to the electorate for a vote. We urge you to contact the King County councilmember in your district to voice your support as well. Any additional revenues will help mitigate the budget crisis, which directly affects the bargaining power of County employees. If you have questions about who represents you at the County, visit the County's website at www.kingcounty.gov. It is important to note that the Executive's sales-tax proposal, if approved by voters, will not fully resolve the underlying structural problem that has kept revenues at the County from keeping pace with the cost of maintaining vital public services.

Ramping up Communication

As we move closer to bargaining, your Local Union will provide several ways for you to receive communication so that you can stay informed on developments in bargaining and take action when necessary.

You can check for updates on the **Public Sector News and Information** button on your Union website at www.teamsters117.org. We will also

distribute a monthly print newsletter to members at the County. Talk to your Business Representative or Shop Steward for copies of the newsletter.

With bargaining approaching, we will take steps to revitalize a King County blog on your Union website that has been dormant for some time. The blog will allow you to engage in discussions about critical issues that concern you and your co-workers. In order to access the County blog, you must be a registered member of the Local 117 website. You can also connect with other Teamsters by joining the Local 117 group page on Facebook or receive Union updates by following Local 117 on Twitter.

Moving forward, we will distribute a report that summarizes the meeting on May 22. As far as any discussions that relate to COLA, it is important to remember that the County cannot singlehandedly eliminate COLA since it, along with all other contractual obligations that relate to wages, hours, or working conditions, are mandatory subjects of bargaining.