



**IN THE MATTER OF THE INTEREST )  
ARBITRATION BETWEEN )  
CITY OF RICHLAND, WASHINGTON )  
and )  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION )  
OF FIRE FIGHTERS, LOCAL UNION )  
NO. 1052 )**

**INTEREST ARBITRATION  
DECISION AND AWARD**

**PERC NO. 16022-I-01-373**

**Date: October 24, 2002**

**DECISION OF THE INTEREST ARBITRATION PANEL**

The Arbitration Panel was selected by the parties to conduct an Interest Arbitration pursuant to RCW 41.56.450. The Interest Arbitration Panel (the Panel) consisted of Kelly L. Fox, President, Washington State Council of Firefighters, Union Panel Member; Anthony F. Menke of the law firm of Menke, Jackson, Beyer, Elofson, Ehlis & Harper, LLP, Employer Panel Member; and Michael H. Beck, Neutral Chairman.

A hearing in this matter was held at Richland, Washington on April 16 and 17, 2002. The Employer, City of Richland, Washington was represented by Rocky L. Jackson of the law firm of Menke, Jackson, Beyer, Elofson, Ehlis & Harper, LLP. The Union, International Association of Fire Fighters Union, Local No. 1052, was represented by Alex J. Skalbania of the law firm of Emmal Skalbania & Vinnedge.

At the hearing the testimony of witnesses was taken under oath and the parties presented substantial documentary evidence. A reporter was present at the hearing and a transcript of the proceedings was made available to the Interest Arbitration Panel for its use in reaching a determination in this case.

The parties agreed upon the submission of simultaneous posthearing briefs. The briefs submitted to the Neutral Chairman of the Panel were timely filed and received in his office on July 8, 2002. At the hearing the parties agreed to waive the statutory requirement that the Interest Arbitration Panel issue its Decision within 30 days following the conclusion of the hearing.

On September 25, 2002 the Neutral Chairman provided the other two Panel members with a memo to be used as an initial basis for discussion. On October 3, 2002, all three Panel members met in executive session and discussed in a comprehensive manner the issues in dispute. At the conclusion of this meeting, it was determined by all three Panel members that further consultation between the Panel members was appropriate. Thereafter, the Panel corresponded by E-mail as well as by telephone. On October 23 the Panel engaged in a conference telephone call which resulted in the Panel reaching agreement on a stipulated Award. The parties further agreed that in the interest of providing this Award to the parties as expeditiously as possible, there would be no

Opinion and that the Neutral Chairman would sign the Award on behalf of the full Interest Arbitration Panel.

### **AWARD OF THE INTEREST ARBITRATION PANEL**

It is the Award of the Interest Arbitration Panel that:

- I. The appropriate comparators for the City of Richland Fire Department in alphabetical order are: Bremerton, Kennewick, Longview, Lynnwood, Olympia, Pasco, Walla Walla and Wenatchee.
- II. Effective January 1, 2001 the base wage of all bargaining unit members shall be increased by 4.75%. Effective January 1, 2002 the base wage of all bargaining unit members shall be increased by 3.85%.
- III. Kelly Days shall remain unchanged at 17.
- IV. The Employer's proposal on insurance, Article 25, shall be adopted, effective as soon as the Employer is able to put in place the necessary administrative requirements.
- V. Effective January 1, 2002 the Employer shall contribute \$37.50 per month per bargaining unit member to the Washington State Council of Fire Fighters Post-Retirement Medical Trust ("Trust Fund"). Each bargaining unit member will also contribute \$37.50 per month to the Trust Fund. The Agreement shall include the language contained at Article 41, Section 41.3 and 41.4 of the Battalion Chief's Agreement between the parties.

- VI. With respect to Article 9, Employer Rights and Responsibilities, the Employer's proposal is adopted.
- VII. With respect to Article 30, Probationary Period, the Employer's proposal is adopted.
- VIII. The parties have reached agreement regarding Article 35, Agreement to Bargain, and therefore this issue has been removed from Interest Arbitration.

This Interest Arbitration Award represents a unanimous Award of the Panel. It is issued with only the signature of the Neutral Chairman and without the signatures of the two other Panel members with their consent.

Dated: October 24, 2002

Seattle, Washington

S/MICHAEL H. BECK  
Michael H. Beck, Neutral Chairman