



*Sedgwick County...
working for you*

NEWS

PUBLIC INFORMATION

316-660-9370 316-383-7946 WWW.SEDGWICKCOUNTY.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2016

CONTACT

Kate Flavin
316-660-9370

FIRE DISTRICT 1 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

(Sedgwick County, Kan.) – Sedgwick County Fire District 1 (District) is committed to working with the International Association of Fire Fighters 2612 (Bargaining Unit) in resolving the collective bargaining agreement. Negotiations between the District and the Bargaining Unit began in early 2015 without reaching an agreement prior to the expiration of the collective bargaining agreement. A Fact Finder was brought in to hear both sides. The Fact Finder issued a report that was returned to both parties in late March 2016. A meeting between the District and Bargaining Unit on April 25th failed to reach an agreement between the parties resulting in an impasse. The next step is a public hearing conducted by the governing body with representatives from the District and the Bargaining Unit on Wednesday, May 11.

The Bargaining Unit is asserting that the District has held wages flat since 2012 while Sedgwick County employees have received pay increases through a merit based pay pool. However, fire fighters received step increases which have been comparable to Sedgwick County Employee pay pool over the past four years.

Historic Fire Fighter Pay/Step Increases

Year:	2012	2013	2014	2015
Step increases:	3.0%	3.0%	1.2%	1.2%

Historic Sedgwick County Employee Pay Pool

Year:	2012	2013	2014*	2015
Pay Pool:	0.0%	2.5%	3.76%	2.5%

*In 2014 county employees received 2.5 percent pay pool and later received an additional 1.26 percent market adjustment as part of the Evergreen compensation study.

The Fire District and Sedgwick County are separate governments, each have a separate governing body, tax base, and source of revenue. Low revenue growth has challenged the Fire District's budget. The Bargaining Unit and the Fire District negotiated in the most recent labor contract (2014/2015) that step increases be held to the percentage of the assessed valuation growth. There has been low assessed valuation growth over the past five years, including growth of less than one percent for 2016, along with future projections of low growth. The Fire District considers it prudent to maintain an operating budget balance for future years.

Assessed valuation increase in recent years

Year:	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Percent					
Valuation Growth:	2.0%	0.8%	1.2%	1.8%	0.9%

The Fact Finder and Bargaining Unit argue that revenue received by Sedgwick County from Kansas Star Casino should be redirected to the Fire District. Under K.S.A. 79-2934, Sedgwick County (along with Sumner County and the City of Mulvane) is entitled to receive an amount equal to 1 percent of the lottery gaming facility revenue because it is one of two counties in the South Central Gaming Zone. This same statute requires such revenue be paid to Sedgwick County. Without explicit statutory authorization these funds cannot be provided to the Sedgwick County Fire District.

-end-