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MAINLINE

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Report from Calpelra 2014

This year's conference was informative but not as hostile, as the last four years, towards the Unions. It did, however in almost every workshop talk about how to get the Unions to support Management in the infrastructure work at the cost of rank and file members getting help with benefits or raises. They discussed reserves and capital-projects and how to move money into the capital projects in order to block union access. - Say: Team Concept!

The conference began with keynote speaker Steve Uzzell, Photographer. His introduction was called "Open Roads Open Minds: An Exploration of Creative Problem Solving". It was inspiring in its perspective towards everyday work.

Key Labor relations Decisions from Public Employees Relation Board (PERB): Stated that the PERB was beginning to lean in the direction of Labor. It had been in management's arena for the last 5-10 years and is slowly coming around to defend labor in key situations. - This is good news for us because we have a number of ongoing Unfair Labor Practice complaints, which are likely to go before the PERB.

The Outlook on CalPERS Pension System: contribution policy and assumption changes will increase contribution rates significantly which will impact agency budgets and labor negotiations.

Advanced Issues In discipline and Grievance Arbitration: dealt with successful imposition of discipline when reaching arbitration. They talk about how to select

and retain an arbitrator: How to navigate confidentiality issues and considerations for challenging an adverse arbitration decision. – This was a very important seminar for our Chief Steward who defends our members.

Going With The Flow: Managing Multiple Bargaining Units To Obtain Optimal Settlements. They talked about substantial advanced planning, how to demand to bargain all locals at the same time which helps management control the settlement pattern, and gave information on how important it is to analyze total compensation comparability data for all bargaining units. They were told how to choose the bargaining unit to lead the bargaining and set the settlement pattern in order to optimize results with all locals, and how they should decide and establish contract ending dates and term agreements that favor management for the next round of bargaining. – These are important tactics we need to be aware of in defense of our Contract at the next round of negotiations.

Best Practices for Guiding and Defending Your Agency through Contracting-out Decisions: They gave management a general overview of the legal requirements for contracting out; how to proceed with meet and confers and getting an agreement or impasse.

It's all in the Numbers: Using Financial Information in Bargaining and Fact-finding. What is the CAFR—the document that Unions most request during negotiations. They explained the best way to interpret a CAFR, which questions and charges they should anticipate from unions about funds and funding. Then they explained how to use the total budget and financial documents as best weapons for negotiations and fact-finding. – A very important seminar for everyone involved in contract negotiations.

As always, CalPELRA is a very important HR conference for us to attend. We get insight into where management is coming from and what direction they are likely to go. This helps us bargain for a better contract at every round negotiation, and to defend our members rights and working conditions every day.

Special thanks to Chief Steward Cheryl Franklin for attending and providing a report summary.