



NEWS RELEASE

From Mayor Dean DePiero

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PARMA UNIONS NEARLY UNANIMOUS ON ACCEPTING FURLOUGHS

(PARMA) – The City of Parma has negotiated furlough agreements with nearly all of its nine unions in an effort to bridge a \$2.4 million dollar gap in tax revenue. Parma firefighters voted down a proposed furlough plan even though the recommendation by union leaders and the fire department administration would have kept daily staffing levels at 25 at the city’s five fire stations.

In addition, the administration was unable to come to an agreement with members of the USW Union Local 1-701, which represents the City’s service workers.

Parma Mayor Dean DePiero and Safety Director Gregory Baeppler say the firefighter vote will create a reduction in minimum daily staffing levels to 21. The city stresses this is primarily a realignment of scheduling, resulting in a significant reduction in overtime.

“I want our residents to understand the Parma fire stations will be able to handle the same workload as they did previous to furlough negotiations,” said Mayor DePiero. “What I’m doing is cutting back on overlapping shifts and the necessity of overtime. Manpower will remain adequate 24 hours a day.”

Safety Director Gregory Baeppler says daily assignments will vary and all fire stations will remain open every day to ensure adequate staffing to handle fire apparatus or medical units. Baeppler says the elimination of all overtime not critically necessary for the safe and efficient operation of the Fire Department has become a necessity.

“We are moving forward and doing what needs to be done by July 2,” said Baeppler. “Not one individual in our city will be put in harms way. As Mayor DePiero says, we are cutting overtime and realigning shifts. We are not now nor will we ever compromise the safety of our citizens.”

(more)

Fire Department employees are represented by the International Association of Firefighters Local 639. In all, the city negotiated with nine unions representing the bulk of Parma's estimated 550 full-time employees. Non-union employees began taking the first of 16 furlough days in early June. The furloughs will continue through the end of the year.

"As we have always done in the past, in the event of an emergency the city will call in additional firefighters, and we will rely on mutual aid with adjoining communities," said Mayor DePiero. "My aim from the very beginning is to keep people working while maintaining a balanced budget and quality city services."

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