



**COMMISSION
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

Item No. 8f

ACTION ITEM

Date of Meeting March 26, 2024

DATE: March 26, 2024

TO: Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

FROM: Mikel O’Brien, Senior Director of Labor Relations
Milton Ellis, Labor Relations Manager

SUBJECT: **New collective bargaining agreement between the Port of Seattle and the International Association of Firefighters Union, Local 1257, representing Fire Alarm Technicians**

Total Port Cost Increase for the Duration of the Agreement: \$ 0

ACTION REQUESTED

Request Commission authorization for the Executive Director to execute a new collective bargaining agreement between the Port of Seattle and the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1257, representing Fire Alarm Technicians at the Port Fire Department covering the period from March 26, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Good faith bargaining between the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1257, representing Fire Alarm Technicians and the Port of Seattle resulted in a fair collective bargaining agreement consistent with the Port’s priorities.

There are currently two (2) Fire Alarm Technicians employed at the Port of Seattle who are assigned to the Port of Seattle Fire Department. The Fire Alarm Technicians are responsible for working on the Fire Alarm systems on Port properties. Their primary function consists of maintaining and repairing fire alarm and sprinkler system configurations on Port properties.

The Fire Alarm Technicians were removed from the Firefighters contract because they were not eligible to be enrolled in the Law Enforcement and Firefighters (LEOFF) retirement system similar to Firefighters.¹ As a result, they were not interested arbitration eligible pursuant to RCW 41.56. They therefore had to form their own bargaining unit. This new contract provides the two Fire Alarm Technicians with some of the same benefits that they currently receive under the Firefighters contract.

¹ The two Fire Alarm Technicians are currently members of the Firefighters contract. They will be removed from the Firefighters contract effective March 26, 2024.

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This contract represents a first-time agreement for this bargaining group. The agreement is for nine (9) months covering the period from March 26, through December 31, 2024. The estimated total cumulative cost for wages and benefits increase is \$291,164.

The cost is based upon an increase of 5.4% of the base monthly rate of \$10,834 (which includes a nine percent (9.0%) premium for the Fire Alarm Technicians being on day shift and on-call for the nine months of the agreement from March 26, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

The cost also consists of a zero percent (0%) increase in health insurance for the term of the agreement.

Other additions to the agreement consist of a Non-Discrimination provision that recognize the promotion of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace; union leave provision of up to 16 hours per year for the bargaining group; management rights provision that delineates rights of management under the agreement; a seniority and layoff provision; a probationary provision that specifies a one-year probationary period; a discipline and grievance procedure; hours of work provision that allows for an alternate work schedule of forty hours a week; an overtime and call back provision; leave provisions consisting of sick and disability leave, family medical, shared leave, paid parental leave, bereavement, emergency and military leave; and vacation leave. Members of the bargaining group will also be provided with thirteen (13) holidays.

Employees in the bargaining group will remain in the Northwest Firefighters Trust Medical Plan. As part of this medical plan, the Fire Alarm Technicians will be eligible to participate in a Voluntary Employee Benefit Association (VEBA) program that provides an annual Port contribution of \$2,000 for employee only and \$4,000 for Employee and dependents.

Regarding pension, employees in the bargaining group will continue to be covered under the Washington State Public Employment Retirement System (PERS). A Port contribution of \$1.15 per hours worked will be provided only to the two Fire Alarm Technicians who were previously in the Firefighter bargaining unit. This benefit will not be extended to any Fire Alarm Technician hired after October 5, 2023.

The contract also provides for a Port contribution of one hundred dollars (\$100) a month towards the Washington State Council of Firefighters Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP) to offset employee medical expenses after retirement.

Other additions to the agreement include a nine percent (9.0%) differential in recognition of working day shift assignment and being on-call; longevity differential based upon years of service; and an Education premium.

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JUSTIFICATION

RCW Chapter 41.56 requires the Port of Seattle to collectively bargaining wages, hours, and conditions of employment with the exclusive bargaining representative designated by the employees.

DETAILS

Term of the Agreement

March 26, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Wages

Classification	Previous Rate 1/1/2023	Effective 3/26/24 Monthly (5.4% was 1/1/24 ⁱ	Base Rate COLA) applied		
Fire Alarm Technician	\$10,834.60/month	\$11,419.69/month			

Effective January 1, 2024, employees were provided with an 5.4% cost of living increase based on the Seattle/Tacoma/Bellevue CPI-U (All Urban Consumers) October 2022 to October 2023 Index in 2024. ⁱⁱ

Health and Welfare

Members of the bargaining group are currently enrolled in the Northwest Firefighters Trust Medical Plan for medical and dental coverage.

Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP)

Members of the bargaining group will be provided with a Port contribution of one- hundred dollars (\$100) a month for their enrollment in the Washington State Council of Firefighters Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP) to offset employee medical expenses at retirement.

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Pension

Members of the bargaining group will continue coverage under the Washington State Public Employment Retirement System (PERS). In addition, employees assigned to the bargaining group prior to October 5, 2023, will be enrolled in the Firefighter retirement fund and receive a Port contribution of \$1.15 per hour work.

Other Additions include

- An Equal Employment Opportunity provision that complies with both state and federal law and provides a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion
- Union Leave provision of no more than sixteen (16) hours per year
- Management Rights provision
- Labor Management Committee/Safety
- Seniority Provision that provides for a one- year probationary period
- Layoff Provision
- Grievance Dispute resolution procedure
- Hours of Work and Overtime provision
- Light Duty provision
- Call Back provision
- Sick Leave and Disability Provision
- Family Medical Leave provision
- Vacation and Holiday provision
- Bereavement and Emergency Leave Provision
- Military Leave Provision
- Uniform and Protective Clothing provision
- Deferred Compensation Provision
- Strike and Lockout provision
- Drug testing procedure

Cost Impact \$	Year 1
Pay	\$205,559
Benefits	\$ 85,605
Total New Money	\$0
Total Cumulative Cost	\$291,164

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The estimated total cumulative cost to the Port of Seattle for the duration of the contract is \$291,164.

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST

1. Collective Bargaining Agreement

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

None

ⁱ The 5.4% wage rate was applied on January 1, 2024, to the Fire Alarm Technicians as members of the Local 1257 Firefighters contract.

ⁱⁱ The COLA applied to the Firefighters agreement upon which the two Fire Alarm Technicians are currently enrolled. For purposes of this agreement and the cost associated this agreement, the value of this COLA will be prorated from March 26, 2024, through December 31, 2024.