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News Release

December 1, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wayne County Implements Union Cuts

Nearly two years of negotiations without pay cut agreement forces cuts in dire fiscal times

Wayne County, MI – After nearly two years of negotiations, exhausting every resource in efforts to develop a compromise, Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano is left with no choice, and is forced to implement reductions in pay and benefits to AFSCME union members, effective December 1, 2010.

Wayne County will implement a 10% reduction the union refused to take in budget year 2009-2010, as well as the 10% reduction for the current 2010-2011 budget year.

“Our efforts have been tireless, and unfortunately, it’s painfully clear this action must be taken due to the fiscal reality we’re all living in,” stated Executive Ficano. “These decisions are neither easy, nor taken lightly. We’ve continued to act in good faith throughout this process, which included rescinding layoffs, hoping proposed concessions would be accepted by the membership. Unfortunately, time and time again, they were not, and we’re left with a disappointing and devastating situation.”

Over the nearly two year period, both parties have been, and remain, at impasse on several issues, including key economic and benefit issues. Given the impasse and critical fiscal urgency, Wayne County must immediately act to reduce costs.

Back in July, the county implemented temporary layoffs of 700 workers for two two-week periods countywide, centered around holiday weeks in an effort to minimally impact services to constituents. The county has also permanently laid off approximately 200 employees as part of fiscal year 2009-2010 fiscal needs.

“The county must take fiscally responsible action now, allowing realization of the critical cost containment desperately needed,” Ficano added.

With the county facing a deficit, Ficano has proactively looked at ways to preserve jobs and benefits during the region's economic downturn, keeping Wayne County employees’ best interest at the forefront of his decision making. These efforts include shared sacrifice by all, asking employees to take a 10% pay cut in an effort to reduce the deficit, including the County’s union employees. To date, over 70% of the County’s Unions have agreed to the 10% wage concession, first taken by Ficano and all appointees back in October of 2009.

The County remains committed to collaborating with the union now and in future negotiations.

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