



December 6, 2017

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

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Linda Cochrane
City Manager
City of Edmonton

Dear Ms. Cochrane,

With respect to your recent memo advising CEMA of the freeze on economic salary increases for management and exempt staff, I am writing to express concerns on behalf of the members.

As an association without bargaining power, we have always relied on fairness and equity when it came to cost-of-living or economic increases. Historically, CEMA members have received the same, or similar, increases as unions. This has not been the case in recent years.

As we enter 2018, however, we now find ourselves 7.75 percent behind our unionized colleagues in terms of recent salary increases (2011 to present). We are seeing serious incidences of salary compression at all management levels; some to the point where unionized subordinates will out-earn their management supervisors when the union's wage increases take effect next year.

In many other cases, there is a very small difference between salaries for management positions and their next levels down.

Further, our benefits packages have been eroded to the point where unionized personnel can access an average of \$8,000 more annually in benefit coverage compared to management personnel.

This, together with the pressures of providing valuable services to citizens amidst continual organizational change, means that many CEMA members are under tremendous stress. They work long hours – many regularly put in 10-12 hour days – while they watch their union counterparts work fewer hours for more money and greater benefits, with less risk and accountability.

We appreciate the fiscal conditions facing the City of Edmonton at this time, but also wish to advise you that a zero economic increase is unacceptable. We know you will agree that a competitive compensation package is important to attract and retain top talent. Between increasing numbers of retirees and other employment options in the Edmonton region, the City of Edmonton could soon find itself with a significant management deficit.

We are seeking two outcomes: first, the opportunity to revisit senior leadership's decision with respect to economic increases; and second, to address serious incidences of compression for specific positions.

We're looking forward to discussing this further at an upcoming meeting.

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