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FACT FINDING PROCEEDINGS

BETWEEN

MAYVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

AND

REPORT OF FACT FINDER

MAYVILLE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

DUDLEY E. WHITING, HEARINGS OFFICER

APPEARANCES

FOR THE BOARD

Fred Moss
Raymond Manwell
George Sullivan
Jerome Thienes

FOR THE ASSOCIATION

Annmaray Wehrman
Frank Pliska
Frederic H. Schmit
Francene Smith
Helen Lynch
Esther McKenzie
Betty Easton
Ada Harp

Mayville Board of Education

REPORT OF FACT FINDER

Pursuant to a joint application by the parties, the undersigned was appointed by the Labor Mediation Board as its hearings officer to conduct a fact finding hearing and make a report with recommendations upon the matters in dispute.

Accordingly a hearing was held on September 4, 1968 at the Mayville High School in Mayville, Michigan. Both parties were represented and afforded opportunity to present evidence and arguments.

THE ISSUES

1. SALARY SCALE

The Association proposal dated August 21, 1968 was Non-Degree \$5100 to \$5400 in four annual steps, Sub-Certified Degree \$5700 to \$6500 in six annual steps, Certified-Bachelor Degree \$6200 to \$8692 in ten annual steps, and Certified-Master Degree \$6500 to \$8992 in ten annual steps.

The Board proposal on August 21, 1968 was choice of (1) Non-Degree \$5200 to \$5500 in four steps, Sub-Certified Degree \$6,000 to \$6,750 in six steps, Certified-Bachelor \$6250 to \$8,150 in ten steps, and Certified-Master \$6,650 to \$8,550 in ten steps or (2) Non-Degree \$5,200 to \$5,500 in four steps, Sub-Certified Degree \$5,900 to \$6650 in six steps, Certified-Bachelor \$6200 to \$8250 in ten steps, and Certified-Master \$6500 to \$8550 in ten steps.

2. HEALTH INSURANCE (Hospital and Medical)

The Association proposed payment by the Board of an annual premium of \$105.60 per year for teacher coverage under an M.E.A. plan, cost of family coverage to be paid by teacher.

The Board proposed no insurance payment.

ANALYSES

ISSUE NO. 1 - SALARY SCALE.

The Association presented evidence, unrefuted, that the salary scale it proposed would maintain a consistent relationship with the scales agreed upon in other Class F school districts in the area, and with those in other similar districts throughout the state.

The Board presented evidence respecting its estimated income, expenses, and financial problems, which limit the funds available for instructional salaries.

It appears that the inability of these parties to agree upon a salary scale is the result of a difference in basic philosophy rather than any real factual dispute. Association representatives consider the establishment of pay scales comparable to those in surrounding districts to have top priority in the allocation of available funds on hand, to be received or obtainable. Board representatives consider themselves responsible to the taxpayers to provide for contingencies, such as may be involved in the operation of the new high school building sometime during the school year, without seeking additional tax millage under the circumstances existing.

Legal recognition has been given to the right of public employees to engage in collective bargaining, without establishing any criteria or guidelines for evaluation of the ability of the public employer to pay the wages sought. Hence the only guide for impartial evaluation thereof is the weight given to that factor by public employers and employee organizations in reaching agreements. To my knowledge this factor has influenced economic settlements only in extreme cases.

To justify an impartial recommendation for salaries below those existing in comparable districts would require some greater showing than that made in this case. For example, if an operating millage proposal were defeated by the voters and this were the only means of paying requested salary increases, one would have to conclude that the voters had decided to take the chance of not being able to obtain or retain suitable personnel at the existing rate. Since the voters have the last word in public spending that would end the matter. That is stated only as an example rather than a definitive statement of what might be considered an extreme case.

In this case no millage proposal has been defeated in recent years. This year none was made, in part because the village adopted a sewage disposal proposal and 4.5 mills for school operation must be submitted next year. If one considers as available the accumulated surplus in general funds of approximately \$29,000.00, it is obvious that the salary scale proposed by the Association can be comprehended by the budget.

Under these circumstances I cannot reasonably find inability to pay which would justify a lesser salary recommendation, and presently unknown future expenses contingent upon operation of the new high school building or other future events do not justify such a recommendation now. Whether or not such salary scale can be met in subsequent years is a matter for bargaining at that time.

I am cognizant of the fact that such future contingencies have always been considered as proper factors in budgeting for both private and public fiscal planning. They have been discarded as factors in

public employee collective bargaining to alleviate the pressure exerted by threats of or actual withholding of services. I am not so naive as to believe that a single fact finder can or should try to turn that tide. Rather his recommendations must take into account the realities of bargaining in the public service, if they are to be effective in alleviating the pressures of the situation at hand and in achieving a resolution of the dispute.

ISSUE NO. 2 - HEALTH INSURANCE.

The evidence shows that an increasing number of teacher collective agreements in comparable school districts are making some provision for employer payment of partial or full premiums for health insurance (hospital and medical).

This benefit is almost universally provided in agreements covering employees in private industry. In the beginning employers usually paid only part of the premium, frequently one-half, and the employee paid the remaining cost. It appears from some of the figures submitted that this sharing of premium cost exists in some of the comparable districts in which this benefit is provided.

In line with the trend such a benefit should be provided here but, in view of the fiscal situation, a sharing of premium by employer and employee appears to be an appropriate way to inaugurate it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

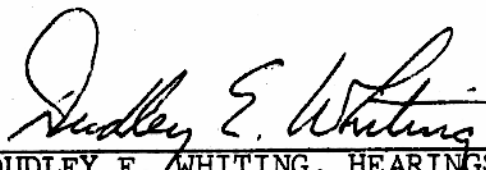
1. SALARY SCALE

The proposal by the Association dated August 21, 1968, set forth hereinabove, should be incorporated in the agreement.

2. HEALTH INSURANCE.

The agreement should provide for payment by the Board of one-half of the annual premium of \$105.60 per year for each participating teacher, the balance of premiums for the teacher and family to be paid by the teacher.

Dated this 12th day of September, 1968.



DUDLEY E. WHITING, HEARINGS OFFICER