



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

IVY R. TAYLOR
MAYOR

July 21, 2015

Mr. Mike Helle
President
San Antonio Police Officers Association
1939 N.E. Loop 410, Suite 300
San Antonio, TX 78217

Dear Mr. Helle:

I am in receipt of your July 20th letter and concur with your assessment that the last 18 months have been tough for a variety of reasons. We have made some progress in the collective bargaining process though I admit that I believed we would be farther along at this point in time.

As I have repeatedly stated since assuming the role of Mayor one year ago, these negotiations are not and have never been about the City Manager. This process is focused on the goal of arriving at an agreement to provide our excellent public safety force with the best compensation and benefits package that the City of San Antonio can afford and continuing safeguard our financial stability for the future.

The San Antonio City Council has entrusted the City Manager, her staff and the City collective bargaining team with negotiating in the best interest of the city. They are operating based on the principles and goals that we outlined from the beginning and that we reaffirmed in our recent budget work session. I urge you to reassess your position that it will be “next to impossible to negotiate a fair deal” with the City Manager because there are no changes foreseen with our management or bargaining team. If your goal is to negotiate a fair deal, then focus on the discussions at the bargaining table, and not the personalities.

The City Council will reconvene the first week of August and our first order of business will be the 2016 budget. The July 31st goal for completion of negotiations was not arbitrary. In order to give the City Council maximum flexibility in addressing wages for officers for the coming year, an agreement on key points is still desired this month. If completing negotiations is a priority, I believe it is reasonable to assume that your negotiating team will be available. The City negotiating team is available.

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In conclusion, I will reiterate that we will not spend time debating this in the media, making accusations of personal attacks, or focusing on staff personalities or motivations. The only motivation from City Council, City staff and the City bargaining team is to arrive at a deal that is fair for all and protects our financial viability for the future. Based on the outcome of recent elections, I am confident that this is the outcome desired by the citizens of our city. Given the dedication of you and the entire San Antonio Police Department team to serving this community, I am sure that you also share the desire to protect our sustainability for the future.

Sincerely,



Ivy R. Taylor
Mayor