November 9, 2021

Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

PROPOSED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH KERN LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSOCATION FOR WAGES, HOURS, AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024
Fiscal Impact: $6.6 million; Not Budgeted; Discretionary

Kern County's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan includes the key objective *"Be a Model of Excellence in Managing our Business and Workforce."* Included under that objective are the goals of attracting, developing, and retaining top talent across all business areas of the County. The plan identifies the need to ensure competitive compensation practices and to reform our countywide compensation system to enable regular cost of living adjustments (COLAs). The proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Kern Law Enforcement Association (KLEA) takes a significant step toward achieving these objectives for the employees they represent.

The current MOU with KLEA expired on June 30, 2020. The parties began successor MOU negotiations on August 12, 2021 and reached a tentative agreement on all items on October 1, 2021. KLEA conducted a successful ratification vote of the tentative agreement, and the parties jointly propose the attached successor MOU for Board of Supervisors approval.

The key substantive changes provided in this proposed MOU are:
- Contract term through June 30, 2024
- A 5% equity adjustment effective November 20, 2021
- A new 10-Base Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) step salary schedule with 2% incremental growth between each COLA step to be effective January 1, 2022
- A 2.5% additional COLA effective July 2, 2022
- A restructuring of the recruitment bonus from $10,000 to $15,000
- An annual option to cash out up to 40 hours of vacation balances during the MOU
- Addition of Winter Recess for 2021, 2022, and 2023
- The elimination of the Retiree Health Premium Supplement Program for new employees and the option to opt out for existing employees

The jointly proposed MOU exemplifies a necessary restructure of our compensation structure affording all employees more regular wage growth throughout the tenure of their employment with the County. The restructured salary schedule increases the entry-level salary for all represented positions by 10% to better position our Sheriff's Office with recruiting new deputies to fill vacant and vital positions. It also provides regular and sustainable base wage growth of 2% each year for a total of nine years. This structure also

affords the County the ability to offer additional COLAs at a more regular intervals to ensure that we are keeping pace with the labor market and the rising cost of living, starting on July 2022 with a 2.5% COLA.

The restructuring of the recruitment bonus allows the County to supplement the wages earned by new personnel throughout years three through eight of their career. The purpose of this restructured bonus is to better retain our new hires.

The proposed MOU also continues your Board's approach to limiting future liabilities through the elimination of the Retiree Health Premium Supplement Program for new employees. The MOU adds Winter Recess for three years of additional paid time off for all members during the holiday season, or in the alternative up to three floating days to use in a subsequent calendar year.

The fiscal impact of the proposed three-year MOU is $6.6 million. County Counsel has approved the proposed Memorandum of Understanding as to form.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that your Board approve the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with the Kern Law Enforcement Association for wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment through June 30, 2024 and direct the Human Resources Division to implement the changes.

Sincerely,

Devin Brown
Chief Human Resources Officer

Attachment

cc: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator
        Cynthia J. Zimmer, District Attorney
        Tim Caughron, President of KLEA