

LOUD and CLEAR

Your connection to faculty contract action alerts

**Full-Timers and
Adjuncts Fill
Boardroom**

ANGRY DISTRICT EMPLOYEES CONFRONT TRUSTEES OVER BENEFITS

LACCD Employees could face serious health consequences as a result of inaction by the Board of Trustees.

Dramatic testimony by Faculty Guild members and others at the August 9 Board meeting focused on the Trustees' failure to resolve unsettled questions about our Health Reimbursement Account for full-timers and an increase in medical premium contributions for qualifying adjunct faculty.

This means that many Guild members will not have adequate information when making medical plan decisions during the open enrollment period from September 7 to October 15.

The Board has dragged its feet on these issues for more than a year, stifling and stalling negotiations with the Joint Labor Management Benefits Committee [JLMBC].

At the same time, talks between the Faculty Guild and Management over our collective bargaining agreement covering wages and working conditions crawl along at a snail's pace.

Despite the Faculty Guild's willingness to meet, there were only two bargaining sessions this summer and no more are scheduled. Terms of the current contract have been extended by mutual agreement.

But that's unacceptable and the frustration by Guild members at the recent meeting was palpable. The boardroom was filled to capacity by dozens of faculty and other District employees who demanded action, insisting that the Board's indifference to employee concerns was disrespectful and would not be tolerated.

The District's attitude and posture on the HRA is particularly irritating. It was decided 20 years ago to separate negotiations over employer-paid benefits from other collective bargaining issues such as wages and working conditions. That's when the JLMBC was formed.

The result: In our first year in CalPERS - the District saved \$18 million. The entire cost of the HRA that year was \$6 million. Since then, the savings have increased exponentially, while the cost remain the same.

Any Trustee plan for substantial cuts in the HRA betrays the spirit of cooperation which has characterized the JLMBC for all these years.

Likewise, it would be short-sighted for the Board to refuse to increase the District's contribution to part-time faculty who are eligible for medical benefits. There's no justification - financial or otherwise - for Trustees to deny what is fair and just to our adjuncts.

