



CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

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City and Unions Agree to Voluntary Separation Program

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, August 25, 2010 – The City Council tonight approved a Voluntary Separation Program to help address challenges with the upcoming biennial budget.

“Our employees have accepted significant layoffs and concessions in the past few years, but the City continues to face severe financial challenges,” said Interim City Manager Brenda Bauer. “This tool will allow for strategic yet voluntary staff reductions that can help reduce costs while maintaining skills and knowledge critical to our workforce.”

Both the Police Guild, the union that represents City of Bainbridge Island Police Officers, and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO (IAM), which represents most other city employees, have agreed to allow their members to participate.

“We wanted a rational way to look at even deeper cost reductions as we begin our biennial budget considerations, and this is a creative tool we can use to help stabilize the organization,” said City Councilmember Kirsten Hytopoulos.

Employees may apply to participate in the program. Applications will be accepted at the discretion of the City Manager. Participants will receive a lump-sum payment to leave city service and in lieu of unemployment compensation. Payments will be based on years of service and on the date of separation. The City Manager will consider factors like the ability of the City to continue to deliver services, the difficulty or cost of replacing employees with particular skills or knowledge, the ability to reorganize work or positions to meet operational needs, and potential short and long term savings resulting from individual separations and the overall program, Bauer said.

“We are clearly on a new path,” said City Councilmember Bill Knobloch. “We are working positively with labor and also looking at the bottom line of what we can afford.”

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