
M E M O



Date: October 4, 2010

To: Chair J.J. McCament and members of the Board of Trustees

From: Mary Getchell, Communications Director

Subject: The News Tribune's Wage Information Inquiry

In September, Kris Sherman, a reporter with The News Tribune (TNT), requested employee wage information for 2005-2010. She specifically wanted copies of quarterly reports that Pierce County Library System files with the Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD) and annual reports of the same data. Kris referenced the September 19th column by Karen Peterson, TNT's Executive Editor, which discussed The News Tribune's public disclosure request of salary related documents from the Employment Security Department. The column stated TNT's interest in the information to see how local government agencies have addressed salaries with the local rate of inflation, with an eye on how local government agencies are building 2011 budgets with declining tax revenues.

The Washington State Attorney General Office's guidance to ESD was to not provide the records, because it deemed the information confidential, and that TNT could obtain the information directly from each of the 81 local government organizations.

Dale Hough and Cliff Jo pulled the Library System's Quarterly Tax Summaries, which contained the requested information of by-quarter number of people employed, total earnings, and average wage. TNT also requested an annual accounting of this information. The Library is not required and does not provide ESD with an annual report. Therefore, Dale and Cliff provided that information by discerning the annual total unique employees. The people employed accounts for all full time, temporary, part time, and substitute employees.

In transmitting the information to Kris I stated that the primary reasons for quarters/years with increases in wages were due to fulfilling levy promises and meeting union contract obligations.

Also, Tim Gugerty, a liaison with Employment Security, called me and stated that his agency was contacting the largest employers on the list of 81 agencies to let them know about TNT inquiry and offer to assist local government agencies in responding to the inquiry.

Attached is a copy of the e-mail that I sent to Kris in response to the inquiry, as well as a copy of a summary of the quarterly wage information and full annual data.

Pierce County Rural Library District

Compensation by Quarter per WA State Employment Security Department Unemployment Insurance Reports

	Number Employed		Total earnings		Average Wage
2005					
Q1	339	\$	1,686,742	\$	1,659 monthly average
Q2	351	\$	2,128,428	\$	2,021 monthly average
Q3	350	\$	2,201,892	\$	2,097 monthly average
Q4	366	\$	2,198,723	\$	2,002 monthly average
Total	388	\$	8,215,785	\$	21,175 annual average
2006					
Q1	368	\$	2,293,622	\$	2,078 monthly average
Q2	372	\$	2,357,602	\$	2,113 monthly average
Q3	378	\$	1,958,576	\$	1,727 monthly average
Q4	376	\$	2,341,283	\$	2,076 monthly average
Total	417	\$	8,951,082	\$	21,465 annual average
2007					
Q1	359	\$	2,440,259	\$	2,266 monthly average
Q2	378	\$	2,715,996	\$	2,395 monthly average
Q3	398	\$	2,423,794	\$	2,030 monthly average
Q4	413	\$	3,053,678	\$	2,465 monthly average
Total	460	\$	10,633,727	\$	23,117 annual average
2008					
Q1	427	\$	3,232,694	\$	2,524 monthly average
Q2	444	\$	3,330,114	\$	2,500 monthly average
Q3	450	\$	3,409,294	\$	2,525 monthly average
Q4	447	\$	3,456,979	\$	2,578 monthly average
Total	488	\$	13,429,081	\$	27,519 annual average
2009					
Q1	441	\$	3,569,948	\$	2,698 monthly average
Q2	447	\$	3,560,958	\$	2,655 monthly average
Q3	420	\$	2,933,404	\$	2,328 monthly average
Q4	405	\$	3,484,701	\$	2,868 monthly average
Total	462	\$	13,549,011	\$	29,327 annual average
2010					
Q1	407	\$	3,041,767	\$	2,491 monthly average
Q2	395	\$	3,204,297	\$	2,704 monthly average
Q3	392	\$	2,750,000	\$	2,338 monthly average - projected
Q4	392	\$	3,200,000	\$	2,721 monthly average - projected
Total	440	\$	12,196,064	\$	27,718 annual average - projected

Mary Getchell

From: Mary Getchell
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2010 1:41 PM
To: 'Kris Sherman'
Subject: RE: Need some information
Attachments: ESD salary data 20100927.pdf; ESD Quarterly 2005 2010.pdf

Per your request, attached is Pierce County Library System's Quarterly Tax Summaries that we submit to the Washington State Employment Security Department and by-year data for the number of people employed, total earnings, and average wage.

The increase in the number of people employed and total earnings is attributed to the levy voters passed to maintain and improve library services in 2006. The levy went into effect in 2007. For the most part, two of the four levy promises affected staffing levels: increasing hours by 20% and adding services for children and teenagers, meant adding additional staff—mostly librarians at a higher than average library pay rate (i.e. librarians are paid more than pages or senior branch assistants).

Another key factor for increased earnings and wages is the agreement between the Library and its employees' union, Washington State Council of County and City Employees, Local 3787, for Jan. 1, 2007 through Dec. 31, 2009, which called for annual cost of living adjustments (COLA) and steps (which are incremental gradations in a pay scale). We are currently negotiating an agreement for 2010-2012.

Also, as I said via e-mail last week, we produced the by-year wage information for you, because we only provide quarterly reports to Employment Security. We produced the annual data with an actual head count by accounting for individuals with unique social security numbers. The number of employed accounts for all full time, temporary, part time, and substitute employees.

Please let me know if you'd like additional info.

Mary Getchell
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From: Kris Sherman [mailto:kris.sherman@thenewstribune.com]
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2010 4:57 PM
To: Mary Getchell
Subject: Need some information

Mary,

We're looking for some information that your agency should have in reports previously filed with the state Employment Security Department. We would appreciate if if you could give us copies of the information below (preferably in electronic form) as soon as possible. The figures we're seeking are aggregates reflecting all employees in the Pierce County Library system.

For the years 2005-2009 (and available quarters for 2010)

By quarter

- Number employed
- Total earnings
- Average wage

By year

- Number employed
- Total earnings
- Average wage

Thanks for your prompt attention,

Kris

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