

## Press Release

The Town of Portsmouth and Local 302 of the International Brotherhood of Police Officers are pleased to announce that they have agreed to two (2) new collective bargaining agreements that will cover the period from 1 July, 2006 through 30 June, 2010. The first agreement will cover FY 07 and the second agreement will be for fiscal years 2008, 2009, and 2010. The vote will be formally announced by the Town at the Council meeting of 13 November, 2006. During the many meetings between the parties the Town was represented by Councilman Leonard Katzman, Town Administrator Robert Driscoll, and Finance/Personnel Director David Faucher. Local 302 was represented by Sergeant Brian Peters and Patrolmen George Grassi, Garrett Coyne, and Michael Arnold. The parties held their first meeting on 21 December, 2005.

### Highlights of the new contract include:

- **Pay raises to the members of the bargaining unit of 3% retroactive to 1 July, 2006, 3.5% on 1 July 2007, 3.5% on 1 July, 2008, 1% on 1 January, 2009, 3% on 1 July, 2009, and 2% on 1 January, 2010. Additionally, effective 1 July, 2008 the base salaries of the Department's Administrative Officer and the Lieutenant and Sergeant of Detectives will be increased by \$20 per week. Effective 1 July, 2006 longevity for eligible officers (those with over 5 years of service) will be increased by 1%. These raises will help address a problem noted by the Newport Daily News in a study of municipal salaries conducted in April of 2006 that established that the average base pay of Portsmouth police officers was the lowest in Newport County and trailed the County's average pay by 7.18%, or \$3,181 per year.**
- **Increases in health insurance cost sharing for all members of the bargaining unit to 15% of premium capped by a maximum of 3% of salary by the last year of the contract. This brings the members of the Portsmouth Police Department in line with the health insurance co-payments which will be made by their fellow Town employees in management positions, the Public Works Department, and the Portsmouth Municipal Employees Association (PMEA) by the last year of their existing contracts. The Town's contract with its firefighters requires a co-payment of \$1200 per year for a family plan and \$400 per year for single coverage. The firefighters' 3 year contract will expire on 30 June, 2007.**
- **Payment of 1% of salary by all members of the bargaining unit towards the Town's recently established "other post employment benefit" (OPEB) trust fund. This employee contribution to OPEB is designed to help fund the benefits which will be received after retirement by Portsmouth police retirees. Local 302 is the first Portsmouth bargaining unit to agree to this OPEB contribution.**

- **Other changes include increases of \$50 per year for uniform allowance, increases in detail pay (paid by third parties), an increase of one personal day (to 3) and family sick leave (but out of the employee's normal allotment of annual sick leave). Language changes included clarifications of the Vision Care coverage available to employees, the compensatory time accumulation cap, the vacation time bid procedure, and the posting of sick leave.**

**The Town calculates that the cost of this contract will be \$69,500 in FY 2007, \$65,000 in FY 2008, \$61,500 in FY 2009, and \$59,000 in FY 2010. The Town Police budget of \$3,529,932 constitutes 19.33% of the Town's overall budget (excluding School Department expenditures). Using the new state property tax levy cap as a guide, it is anticipated that total Town spending on police services can remain at the same percentage of the Town's overall budget and increase by \$126,700 in FY 2008, \$130,300 in FY 2009, and \$130,000 in FY 2010.**



**Robert Driscoll**

**31 October, 2006**