ARTICLE SEVEN
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Section I – Definition

A. A grievance is a complaint by the Union or one or more employees concerning the application or interpretation of this MOU, the Personnel Ordinance, the Salary Resolution, written departmental rules and regulations, and policy and procedure manuals governing personnel practices or working conditions between the City and the Union.

B. Matters excluded from consideration under the grievance procedure:

1. Position classification and grade designations;

2. Items otherwise expressly excluded under this MOU;

3. Nothing in this procedure shall be deemed to supersede the authority of the Civil Service Commission;

4. The loss of skill pay, due to a change of assignment, work or duties.

C. If an employee alleges that their rights protected by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act are being violated, the resolution of such may only be pursued by the appropriate quasi-judicial agency that is authorized to provide remedial relief. However, any complaint within the definition of a grievance as set forth above (except Article One, Section IV-B) that specifically relates to this MOU, may be pursued under this Article.

Section II – Grievance Presentation

Employees shall have the right to present their own grievance or do so through their Union representative (Union Officers, Shop Stewards, and Site Representatives) or Union staff. Grievances may also be presented by a group of employees or by the Union.

Section III – Grievance Forms

Grievance forms can be obtained from the City or the Union. Grievances shall be processed on standard forms provided by the Department of Human Resources and shall contain information which:

A. Identifies the aggrieved;
B. Contains the specific nature of the grievance;
C. Indicates the time or place of its occurrence, if known;
D. States the Article(s) of the MOU, including Personnel Ordinance and Salary Resolution, written departmental rules and regulations, and policy and procedure manuals, if applicable, which have been violated, misinterpreted, or misapplied;
E. Indicates the persons contacted at the informal stage; and

F. States the corrective action desired.

Section IV – Time Off for Processing Grievances

A. Informal – The processing of a grievance at the informal stage shall be considered as City business. However, such processing shall be at reasonable times so as not to disrupt the normal working processes of the division, bureau, or department.

B. Formal – The processing of a grievance at the formal stage, except filling out the form and the initial filing, shall be considered as City business; the employee and their representative (limited to one City employee) shall receive time off from regularly-scheduled duty hours to participate in the grievance procedure and arbitration at Steps I through V, without loss of pay for the time so spent.

Section V – Cost of Witnesses at Grievance/Arbitration

The cost of witnesses called by either party shall be borne by the party who requests the witnesses. The cost of witnesses called by both parties shall be shared equally by both parties. City employees called as witnesses, on duty at the time, shall receive time off from duty to participate in the grievance/arbitration, without loss of pay for the time so spent. City employees called as witnesses, not on duty at the time, may receive compensation by the party or parties who request the witnesses.

Section VI – Number of Witnesses at Arbitration

Calling of witnesses by either party shall be done with reasonable amount of constraint. Approximately three or four witnesses may be called by each party. In the event that more witnesses are desired by either party, the arbitrator shall make the final decision as to the number of witnesses permitted by each party.

Section VII – Extension of Time Limits

Failure by management to reply to the employee's grievance within the time limits specified automatically grants to the employee the right to process the grievance to the next level.

If an employee fails to appeal from one level to the next within the time limits established in this grievance procedure, the grievance shall be considered settled on the basis of the last decision, and the grievance shall not be subject to further appeal or reconsideration.

All time period specified in this procedure may be extended by mutual written consent of the aggrieved employee(s), Union staff, or Union representative (Union Officers, Shop Stewards, and Site Representatives) and the designated management representative.

Section VIII – Informal Procedure

Within ten (10) working days of the occurrence or knowledge of the matter which causes the complaint, the employee may discuss the complaint with their immediate supervisor,

unless the supervisor is the subject of the grievance. The Union's presence may be requested by either party. Employees shall be encouraged to discuss complaints with their immediate supervisor in an attempt to resolve the grievance at the lowest possible step.

Within ten (10) working days of the discussion with the employee, the supervisor shall verbally reply to the employee's complaint. If the employee is dissatisfied or if the supervisor fails to respond, the employee shall have access to the formal grievance process.

For Long Beach Utilities and Harbor Departments only, an aggrieved employee shall discuss the matter with their immediate supervisor up to the division head.

Section IX – Formal Procedure

The Union has the right to be present if invited by the grievant at any formal grievance meeting concerning a grievance that directly involves the interpretation or application of the specific terms and provisions of this MOU. However, no settlement that interprets the agreement shall be made without the Union's knowledge and input.

Step One – First Level Division/Bureau Head

A. Within ten (10) working days of the occurrence or knowledge of the matter which causes the grievance, or within ten (10) working days of the supervisor's response (or lack of response) at the informal level, if this option was exercised, the Union, group of employees, or employee may file a formal written grievance. The grievant(s) shall submit one (1) copy of the grievance to the Division/Bureau head.

B. Within ten (10) working days, the Division/Bureau head shall schedule a meeting and give their decision, in writing, to the grievant(s) and to the Union representative, if one was present at the meeting.

Step Two – Department Head/Designee

A. Within ten (10) working days of the response from the first level, the grievant, if dissatisfied, may submit to the Department Head a copy of the first step response and a copy of the grievance. A meeting shall be held by the Department Head. A Union representative shall be present if requested by grievant(s).

B. Within ten (10) working days after the meeting, the Department Head shall give their decision, in writing, to the grievant(s) and to the Union representative, if one was present at the meeting.

For Long Beach Utilities and Harbor Departments only, substitute Administrative Officer or equivalent for Department Head/designee.

Step Three – Human Resources Department Head/Designee

A. Within ten (10) working days of the response from the second level, the grievant, if dissatisfied, may submit, to the Director of Human Resources or designee a copy of the second step response and a copy of the grievance. A meeting shall be held by the Director of Human Resources or designee. A Union representative shall be present if requested by grievant(s).

B. Within ten (10) working days after the meeting, the Director of Human Resources or designee shall give their decision in writing, to the grievant(s) and to the Union representative, if one was present at the meeting.

For Long Beach Utilities and Harbor Departments only, substitute Department Head for City Manager.

Step Four – City Manager

A. If the City Manager (Long Beach Utilities or Harbor Department Head) does not satisfactorily dispose of the complaint, the Union or the employee may, within ten (10) working days, request that the matter be submitted to arbitration. The person designated by the Department of Human Resources shall meet with the Union representative to determine what issue(s) the Union or employee desires to submit to arbitration. If agreement is reached as to the specific issue(s), the so agreed issue shall be reduced to writing, and the submission agreement shall be submitted to arbitration. If the parties cannot agree on the specific issue(s), then each may submit its own statement, and the Arbitrator shall consider and decide only the specific issue(s) submitted to the employee in writing by the City and the Union, and shall have no authority to make a decision on any other issue(s) not so submitted.

Step Five – Arbitration

If the matter is submitted to arbitration, the Arbitrator shall hold a hearing as soon as practicable, and the following shall apply:

1. The parties shall meet and attempt to jointly select an Arbitrator. If they are unable to make a joint selection in a period of time not to exceed ten (10) calendar days, either party may request a panel of five (5) arbitrators from the American Arbitration Association;
2. Upon receipt of the panel from the American Arbitration Association, the parties shall meet within ten (10) working days, at which time the parties shall determine the Arbitrator by the alternate strike method. A coin flip will determine the party to strike first;
3. Employees called as witnesses shall be released from duty as needed;

4. The rules of conduct of proceedings shall be according to those procedures utilized by the American Arbitration Association;

5. The findings of the Arbitrator shall be transmitted only to the parties to the dispute or their representatives;

6. Each party shall bear the expenses of presenting its own case;

7. Costs of making a stenographic record shall be borne equally;

8. Seventy-five per cent (75%) of the Arbitrator's fee shall be paid by the party whose position was not supported by the Arbitrator's findings. The Arbitrator shall be empowered to allocate or apportion the fee if questions exist as to whose position was supported.

9. The Arbitrator shall have no authority to modify, amend, revise, add to, or subtract from any of the terms or conditions of this MOU.

10. The Arbitrator shall be without power to make decisions contrary to or inconsistent with federal or California law, the City Charter, City Ordinances, and Resolutions. The City shall take no action to resolve the dispute in its favor by amending its Ordinances or Resolutions related to the issue(s) in dispute during the duration of this MOU.

11. Following the conclusion of the hearing, the decision of the Arbitrator rendered in accordance with the foregoing shall be final and binding upon the Union, the City and any employees involved in the grievance. Any dispute regarding the legal effect of the Arbitrator's decision may be pursued by either party in the manner legally available.