



**HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT
TEXAS 88TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION
SB736**

Samuel Peña, Houston Fire Chief

April 4, 2023

SB736



- **Sec. 174.1535. MANDATORY ARBITRATION. (a) This section applies only to:**
 - (1) a fire department that serves a municipality with a population of 1.9 million or more; and
 - (2) an association that is a bargaining agent for the employees of a fire department described by Subdivision (1).
- **(b) A public employer and an association that is a bargaining agent shall submit to binding interest arbitration if the parties:**
 - (1) reach an impasse in collective bargaining; or
 - (2) are unable to settle after the 61st day after the date the appropriate lawmaking body fails to approve a contract reached through collective bargaining.
- This legislation allows for an impasse between firefighters and the city to be resolved for at least a one-year period by a panel of three arbitrators. The firefighters would be able to appoint one and the City of Houston appoints one. The third is a neutral party chosen in agreement between the firefighters and the city.
- *Explicit standards to be used by the arbitrators in making a determination are not included in the text of the bill.*

<https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=88R&Bill=SB736>

Arbitration Standards



Austin and San Antonio Voters approved Compulsory Binding Arbitration following Impasse in Collective Bargaining

City of Austin

...In making its decision, the Board (Arbiters) may consider only the following:

1. The history of collective bargaining agreements and negotiations between the parties;
2. Compensation and conditions of employment that prevail in comparable public sector employment in other cities;
3. The rate of increase or decrease in the cost of living for the Austin area as determined by the Consumer Price Index, adjusted as necessary to account for housing and tax costs in the Austin area and other relevant local factors;
4. Revenues Available to and contractual obligations of the City and the impact of any arbitration ruling on the taxpayers of the City; and
5. Any of the following conditions:

Hazards of employment; Physical Qualifications; Educational Qualifications; Mental Qualifications; Job Training; Skills; Employee Morale; Any other factors the Board determines to be relevant to the issues raised by the parties

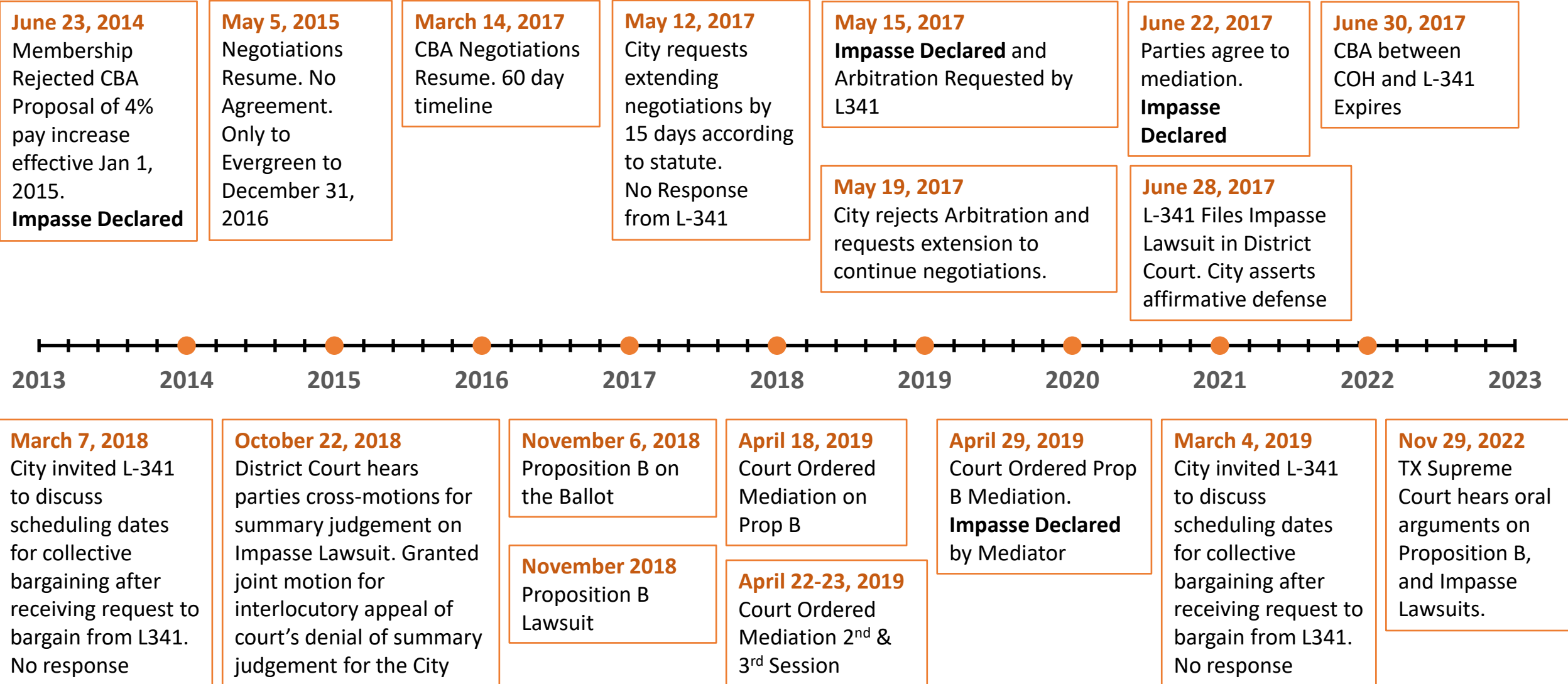
City of San Antonio

...In making its decision, the Board (Arbiters) may consider only the following:

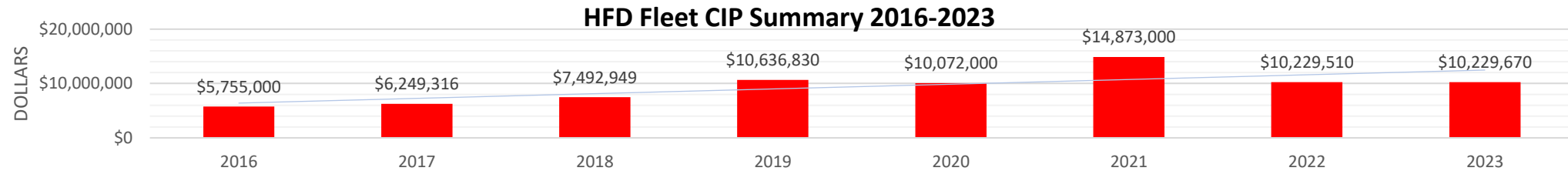
1. Compensation and conditions of employment that prevail in comparable public sector employment in other cities;
2. The rate of increase or decrease in the cost of living for the San Antonio area as determined by the Consumer Price Index;
3. Revenues available to the City and the impact of any arbitration ruling on the taxpayers of the City
4. Any of the following conditions:

Hazard of employment; Physical Qualifications; Educational Qualifications; Mental Qualifications; Job Training; Skills; Any other factors the Board determines to be relevant to the issues raised by the parties; and

CBA Timeline



Fleet Cost Escalations



Apparatus	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Totals	Replacement %
Fire Engines (88)	4	4	10	8	9	6	5	46	52%
Aerials (38)	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	18	47%
Ambulance (103)	0	9	18	8	15	0	6	56	54%
Life Safety Bureau, Training Academy, OEC – Lease Vehicle Program									78%

Apparatus	Unit Cost FY2020	Unit Cost FY2021	Unit Cost FY2022	Unit Cost FY2023	Unit Cost FY2024	% Escalation since FY2020
Fire Engines (88)	\$522,000	\$640,888	\$661,260	\$748,913	\$898,695	43%
Aerials (38)	\$947,000	\$1,179,122	\$1,236,000	\$1,400,388	\$1,680,465	48%
Ambulance (103)	\$175,000	\$214,485	\$227,970	\$283,354	\$340,025	62%
Truck, P/U Crew (50)	\$95,000	\$95,180	\$97,850	\$121,728	\$146,073	29%

HFD Investments



Program Investment 2017-2023	Estimated
18% Total Pay Raise (over 3yrs. FY22 – FY24)	~\$63 Million
NFPA 1582 Compliant Medical Physicals and Cancer Screening for all HFD firefighters	~\$2 Million
Plymovent Vehicle Exhaust System Installation @ HFD Fire Stations – 100% funded	~\$7.5 Million
Extractor Commercial Gear Washers @ all HFD Facilities – 100% funded	~\$1.2 Million
2 nd Set of Firefighting PPE – Strategic Purchase Plan	~\$8 Million
HFD Health and Safety Chief Position Created	~\$155,000
Half-Mask Respirators for all Emergency Operations, Arson, LSB Personnel	~\$400,000
Ballistic Helmets/Vests @ all riding positions	~\$1 Million
Replaced SDI Fireground Accountability System	~\$800,000
Over 50% Fleet Vehicle Replacement in 6 years	~\$63 Million
Added New HazMat Unit and 5 Peak-Time Ambulances to the response system	~\$3.3 Million/Yr.
CFAI Accredited Agency Designation – Commission on Fire Accreditation International	
Insurance Services Office Public Protection Classification 1 – ISO Class 1 Designation	



Questions?



HFD Staffing Summary

- Current staffing is ~273 FF below optimal level
 - Optimal = **3,931** personnel
 - Current = **3,658** personnel
- FY18 and FY20: Higher than normal attrition
- FY19-20: Prop B forced cancellation of 4 academy classes
 - Missed recruitment target by ~180 FF
 - 18 months between academy classes
- Mayor Approved 4 Academy classes in FY21 & 5 Academy Classes in FY22, FY23, *Requested in FY24*
 - 350 Recruits per year (100 above normal attrition)
 - **\$5,000 Cadet Incentive Pay**

