



**ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
INC.**

AFSCME LOCAL 16

Mailing Address: PO Box 242633, Anchorage, AK 99524

“AMEA fights and wins improvements for workers and the community, when every voice is represented.”

Assembly Work Session, Friday, August 26, 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about an issue that remains very important to many of our members, **Telework**.

First, we would like to sincerely thank the Assembly Members and the previous Administrations for their leadership in 2020 and 2021 working with AMEA to develop an Administrative Agreement to implement policies to create a safe workplace in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. From the union’s perspective the telework policy was a successful response and worked well. The work of the Municipality did not stop, it got done; our members adjusted their lives and continued to do their job and do it well.

Unfortunately, not every AMEA member could take advantage of the telework policy because of the operational needs of their position. From the union perspective we understood that telework would work for some employees but not everyone.

A lot has changed since the worst days of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. AMEA negotiated a new four-year collective bargaining agreement which the Assembly approved in March 2022. I attended the assembly meeting on March 15th and asked for your support to approve the contract, which you did. Thank you. I was asked at that meeting by several assembly members about the issue of telework. I responded that we had been unable to reach an agreement with the current administration during contract negotiations about the inclusion of a telework provision in the new contract. Some assembly members suggested that a work session should be held to address telework before the adoption of the contract, which we preferred not to do. The municipal attorney on behalf of the administration offered us the opportunity for further discussions about telework with staff from Human Resources. AMEA accepted the offer but also said we would come back to the Assembly and brief them on the results of our discussions with HR.

From April to June, Vice President Brian Weigand, and I, met with HR. We discussed various ideas about how telework could work for our members and the MOA. Unfortunately, we were unable to reach an agreement, so we concluded our discussions with HR in June.

AMEA put a Telework Petition on our webpage so that our members could express their support for telework. 173 of our members (~38%) signed the Petition.

In addition, the Mayor and Assembly recently received a letter signed by **40** employees of AWWU who support a hybrid telework policy. I will not read the entire letter other than to restate the comment that, **“A robust and well-practiced telework program improves employee performance, engagement, efficiency and supports increased productivity.”** AMEA absolutely agrees with this statement.

Jon Cecil, President
AFSCME/AMEA Local 16

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