

the thousands of CSU members who are standing united to fight for a fair deal.

As CSU 52 prepares to strike for the first time in almost 50 years, it is apparent that this City Administration cannot be trusted to bargain constructively and has lost touch with its employees. Through bargaining and then mediation, it has been apparent that the City had no interest in negotiating, but rather forcing CSU to accept a unilaterally set mandate. This antagonistic and disrespectful approach taken by the City bargaining team and Senior Administration has pushed CSU to the edge of a strike and we demand drastic changes if the City hopes to reach a fair deal.

Our Coalition is deeply disappointed that negotiations have come to this, but we are not surprised. This is the approach that the City took with each Union in the last round of negotiations and it is the same approach they take with day-to-day business. With the attitudes and approaches currently in place, we find it impossible to see how future negotiations with any of our Unions will be resolved without action.

City Council's statement from March 12 speaks of what is "fair and equitable", but then it tries to pit citizens against CSU members by throwing out potential tax increases without mentioning the failure of Administration to achieve the goals set forth by Council under OP 12. It is silent on how Administration does not support Council by providing realistic salary settlement projections (look no further than current negotiations, a pending EFFU arbitration, or the most recent EPA settlement). It also failed to address how "fair" it is for the Administration to try and undermine the strike by recruiting scabs from within the organization.

Instead of issuing joint-statements trying to scare people, City Council should be questioning why negotiations have stretched so long and demanding to know what City Administration has done to try and reach a deal. We demand that City Council listen to the thousands of City employees who are angry enough to reject the "best and final offer" of this Administration and walk a picket line. Ultimately, we