

Union leaders blast county officials

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ELYRIA — Contract negotiations between the Lorain County administration and Jobs and Family Services workers boiled over Wednesday morning during the county commissioners meeting, with one union representative labeling the commissioners as “traitors.”

During the public comment session, union leaders expressed dismay with the negotiations. According to the president of the county’s AFL-CIO, Harry Williamson Jr., the employees, who are part of the Local UAW 2192, have not had a contract since Sept. 15, 2016.

“The time has arrived, and we must publicly voice our disappointment with the lack of judgment, the disrespect to bargain in good faith by the representatives of Lorain County,” Williamson said. “These individuals have been dedicated to their jobs within that year, and they consciously and loyally continue to serve the residents of our communities — mind you, without a collective bargaining agreement.”

Jim Slone, who was representing the UAW CAP Council, took it even further.

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BLAST

From C1

“I would like to inform the commissioners that last Thursday we had a state board meeting with all of Indiana and all of Ohio to publically call each one of you out by name and say that you guys are ‘so-called’ Democrats, but yet you do not stand on the principles of the Democratic Party in working with men and women in labor,” Slone said. “Not only did they call you out as not doing your job, you were called out in the state as being traitors to the working people of this great state of Ohio and this great county.”

Slone continued to complain during his lengthy comments, which went past the three-minute time limit the commissioners recently began enforcing. Two other people also exceeded the time limit.

“On behalf of the UAW CAP Council, on behalf of the state UAW, we’re here to tell you that we have labeled each one of you as traitors to working men and women and you have committed treason on behalf of these people.”

Though the commissioners usually refrain from getting into debates during public comments, Commissioner Lori Kokoski responded to Slone’s accusations.

“Are you serious?” she said. “We have one issue, and we did have a fact sheet that we were going to send out, but as of yesterday, we found out that SERB ordered the parties, us and the union, to mediation. We’re not going to talk about issues or anything right now. I could say a lot.

“I just think it’s ridiculous

because we have not treated anybody with any disrespect that I’m aware of. I’ve never treated anybody in this room with disrespect. Calling us ‘traitors’ and ‘treason’ and all that is really over the top.”

Slone responded by saying the law firm of Clemans Nelson and Associates, which represents the county in the negotiations, treated the union with disrespect.

“You personally may not think you’re treating them with disrespect,” Slone said. “You may think you’re not treating them unfairly. You sent your representatives in to negotiate these contracts, and what they do falls back on you. The way they treat these ladies and gentlemen of 2192 falls directly back on your shoulders and no one else’s.”

Lorain Councilwoman Mary Springowski, D-at large, also spoke during the public comments and echoed Slone.

“You have engaged with a firm to negotiate on your behalf, as your representative,” Springowski said. “Therefore, their actions directly speak toward you. Their actions during the course of this directly reflect on the commissioners here.”

Slone also told the commissioners that the UAW Region 2 directed him to find challengers for the county commissioners and the UAW will finance those campaigns.

Commissioner Matt Lundy said the mediation between the two sides is scheduled to take place Tuesday at the Lorain County Administration Building.

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