



# OSA Pact Takes Small Step to Address Pay Discrepancy for Some

Administrative Analysts Get Less Than Subordinates; 'Longevity' Improved

By RICHARD STEIER Aug 16, 2021

The Organization of Staff Analysts has reached contract terms under which the de Blasio administration took the first step to address a problem created during former Mayor Ed Koch's tenure that leaves about 230 of its members earning significantly less than their subordinates.

Under the deal, minimum salaries for 22 titles including Administrative Staff Analyst 1, 2 and 3 were raised from about \$62,000 to \$84,000 for the affected titles, but the employees in them will not receive accompanying raises to that new minimum. Instead, they will be “red-circled” for future adjustments while receiving the same raises of 2, 2.25 and 3 percent as OSA's 4,500-plus members in other titles, consistent with the city bargaining pattern.

## Mixed Feelings

The deal is retroactive to Aug. 25, 2017, when the initial raise takes effect, with the 2.25-percent hike retroactive to that date in 2018, and the 3-percent raise payable as of Sept. 25, 2019. The contract expires Sept. 5, the same date that the bulk of \$500 longevity differential increases and service increments will take effect.

OSA Chairman Robert J. Croghan said in an Aug. 11 phone interview that while the raising of the minimum salaries for the 22 Administrative

Analyst titles was the first progress the union had been able to make on the issue since Mr. Koch left office at the end of 1989, “We're 25 percent below the salary for subordinates” who serve in Associate Staff Analyst titles.

The Office of Labor Relations showed a willingness to upgrade the minimums after the union filed an improper labor practice, but it insisted it could not provide raises above the city pattern for the 230 affected employees unless the OSA was willing to reduce the terms for the great majority of its membership to fund it.

“I'm still not happy with it, but it's a great improvement,” Mr. Croghan said, in opening the door for future negotiations while currently hiring those in the affected titles at the sharply upgraded minimum salary.

## 'Almost as Nuts as Koch'

His discontent regarding those already on the job, however, was reflected in a letter he posted to



OSA Chair Robert J. Croghan

members on the union website. It stated that keeping those long-serving employees below the new minimum for their titles meant “continuing paying them less than others newly hired off the street. This is almost as nuts as Ed Koch's prior Managerial Pay Plan.”

The one saving grace of that aspect of the deal, Mr. Croghan continued, was that the city “has agreed to raise the minimum salaries of any 'red-circled' employee who changes their title level or agency after July 1.”

The titles suffering from the depressed salaries used to be considered managerial in nature. That meant employees occupying them were not eligible for collective bargaining, and the Managerial Employees Association, to which many of them belonged, could advocate for upgrades but depended on Mayors to appreciate the problems created by their making less than subordinates.

Mr. Koch was criticized by the MEA during his 12 years in office for shortchanging managers financially. The OSA was the first union to successfully petition the Board of Collective Bargaining for the right to represent the Administrative Analyst titles, with other unions eventually getting a share of titles after showing they, too, had been misclassified.

### 'Froze Their Salaries'

But, Mr. Croghan said, by the time Mr. Koch left office, the damage had been done, noting “he chose to freeze managerial minimum salaries over his 12-year mayoralty despite high inflation in that period.” Unionized civilian workers received annual raises averaging better than 5 percent, and in some cases as high as 8 percent, during that era.

Before Mr. Koch took office, the OSA chairman said, an Administrative Analyst was paid about 10 percent more than a new Associate Analyst. By the time he left, he said, the Administrative Analyst trailed his or her subordinate by 25 percent. The unwillingness of Mayors since then to address the discrepancy, the union leader said, meant that being able to bargain

for those titles had merely meant that the percentage gap didn't widen in the 32 years since, although the difference in salaries had.

The perverse effect of the disparity, Mr. Croghan said, was that an Administrative Staff Analyst making \$75,000 now could get a significant raise by passing an exam for Associate Staff Analyst and being hired into that title, even though it would constitute a demotion on the civil-service ladder.

### Longevity Upgrades

A key gain for all members of the union under the contract—which they must ratify—is the upgrade in differentials based on length of service by \$500 in all cases.

The 10-year longevity differential as of Sept. 5 would rise to \$2,348, and the 15-year longevity payment would reach \$4,696. Those with at least 20 years in city government on that date would have their service increments boosted to \$2,271.

OSA also won an increase in the city's contribution to members' welfare fund accounts consistent with other civilian employees, and got more members and titles included as eligible for coverage by the union's education fund.



**SOME COLLEAGUES AREN'T THIS MERRY: About 230 members of the Organization of Staff Analysts have reason to be less convivial than this group of the union's retirees at a 2019 luncheon: because the Administrative Staff Analyst titles used to be managerial, pay was frozen for more than a decade at a time of high inflation, leaving them today earning 25 percent less those in a lower Analyst title that was always unionized. Photo courtesy of OSA**