

STATE OF HAWAII  
HAWAII LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

In the Matter of	)	CASE NO. CE-01-232
UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS, AFSCME,	)	ORDER NO. 1244
LOCAL 646, AFL-CIO,	)	ORDER GRANTING UPW'S MOTION
Complainant,	)	FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT
and	)	
STEPHEN YAMASHIRO, Mayor, County	)	
of Hawaii,	)	
Respondent.	)	

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ORDER GRANTING UPW'S MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT

On August 11, 1994, Complainant UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS, AFSCME, LOCAL 646, AFL-CIO (UPW or Union) filed a prohibited practice complaint against STEPHEN YAMASHIRO, Mayor, County of Hawaii (County or Employer) with the Hawaii Labor Relations Board (Board). The UPW alleged that it filed a grievance challenging the ten-day suspension of Raymond Mattos, an Equipment Operator III in the Solid Waste Division, Department of Public Works. The UPW further alleged that the Director of Personnel indicated that there was no Unit 01 contract in effect covering the County of Hawaii employees at the time the matter first arose and hence, no contract violation occurred. Thereafter, the UPW indicated its intent to arbitrate the grievance. The UPW contends that the Respondent wilfully violated §§ 89-13(a)(1), (7) and (8), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS).

On August 25, 1994, Complainant UPW filed a motion for summary judgment with the Board. The UPW contended that

Respondent, in his answer filed on August 22, 1994, indicated that the Unit 01 agreement expired on June 30, 1993 and the County has not agreed to any extension of the agreement. Thus, Respondent indicated that the agreement does not apply to the present case. Based upon the Respondent's representations in its answer, the UPW contends that there are no genuine issues of material fact in dispute, and the UPW is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.

The UPW argued that the Board already held in Order No. 1090, in Case No. CE-01-204, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO, which is presently pending before the Board, that pursuant to § 89-6(b), HRS, a simple majority of the public employers or their designated representatives may bind the entire employer group for the purposes of negotiations. In that case the Board held that the extensions of the Unit 01 agreement, effective from July 1, 1989 - June 30, 1995 (Contract), entered into by a majority of public employers was valid. Thus, UPW contended that since the same parties and issues are involved in this case, Respondent is estopped from contending that the Unit 01 Contract has not been validly extended.

Based upon the foregoing case, the UPW argued that once a multi-employer unit has been formed for bargaining purposes, the multi-employer group becomes the "employer" for purposes of bargaining and a public employer is not permitted to withdraw from the multi-employer unit for negotiations and act on its own. UPW thus contends that the doctrines of res judicata and collateral estoppel preclude the relitigation of the validity of the Unit 01 contract extensions.

Further, the UPW relies upon previous Board decisions in Dennis Yamauchi, 2 HPERB 656 (1981); State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers, 3 HPERB 71 (1982); and Robert Burns, 3 HPERB 114 (1982) in arguing that the County's refusal to arbitrate the instant grievance constitutes a prohibited practice because of the Employer's noncompliance with § 15.22 of the Unit 01 Contract.<sup>1</sup>

On September 27, 1994, Respondent filed a memorandum in opposition to Complainant's motion for summary judgment. Respondent contends that neither the Board nor the parties can retroactively legitimize a prior prohibited practice. Respondent also contends that the Complainant must establish that the parties intended to retroactively reinstate the grievance procedure and that the intent of the parties is a question of fact which precludes summary adjudication. Respondent also argues that collateral estoppel and res judicata do not apply because Order No. 1090, supra, is not a final order.

On October 21, 1994, the Board conducted a hearing on the UPW's motion for summary judgment which was consolidated for the purpose of hearing with similar motions filed in Case Nos.

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<sup>1</sup>Section 15.22 of the Unit 01 Contract provides for the arbitration of grievances and states, in pertinent part:

15.22 Step 4. Arbitration. If the matter is not satisfactorily settled at Step 3, and the Union desires to proceed with arbitration, it shall serve written notice on the Employer or his representative of its desire to arbitrate within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the decision of the Employer or his designated representative.

Within ten (10) calendar days after the receipt of the notice of arbitration by the Employer, the parties shall meet to select an arbitrator as provided in Section 15.24.

CE-01-228, CE-01-229, CE-01-230, CE-01-231, CE-01-233, and CE-01-235. All parties had full opportunity to present evidence and argument to the Board. The Board took the motions under advisement. Based upon a review of the record, the Board makes the following findings and conclusions.

Complainant UPW is the exclusive representative, as defined in § 89-2, HRS, of the employees of the County of Hawaii who are included in Unit 01.

Respondent YAMASHIRO is the Mayor of the County of Hawaii and is the public employer, as defined in § 89-2, HRS, of the County employees who are included in Unit 01.

The public employers and the UPW executed the four-year Contract for bargaining unit 01 employees on June 27, 1989, covering the period July 1, 1989 through June 30, 1993. Complainant's (C's) Exhibit (Ex.) 2. The public employers, except for YAMASHIRO, and the UPW executed a Memorandum of Agreement, dated June 4, 1993, extending the terms of the Contract from July 1, 1993 through August 31, 1993. C's Ex. 3. Thereafter, the same parties executed another Memorandum of Agreement, dated August 27, 1993, extending the Contract from September 1, 1993 through January 15, 1994. C's Ex. 4. The same parties executed a third Memorandum of Agreement, dated January 14, 1994, extending the terms of the Contract from January 16, 1994 through April 1, 1994. C's Ex. 5.

Subsequently, the public employers, including YAMASHIRO, and the UPW executed a Memorandum of Agreement, dated June 21, 1994, which constitutes the settlement on all sections of the

collective bargaining agreement for Unit 01. The Memorandum of Agreement includes a retroactive effective date of July 1, 1993 and extends to June 30, 1995. The Memorandum of Agreement provides that the terms and conditions of the Contract which existed on June 30, 1993, were incorporated without change in the new Agreement except for certain provisions which were specifically set forth. The Memorandum of Agreement does not modify the applicable provisions of the Grievance Procedure, § 15, of the Contract. C's Ex. 6.

By letter dated May 24, 1994, Chief Engineer Donna Fay K. Kiyosaki informed Raymond Mattos that he would be placed on suspension without pay pending an investigation of a fighting incident. C's Ex. 7. By letter dated June 7, 1994, the UPW, by its business agent, filed a grievance at Step 2 challenging Mattos' ten-day suspension as a result of the Employer's investigation. C's Ex. 8. By letter dated June 16, 1994, the UPW filed an appeal at Step 3 of the grievance procedure indicating that there was no response at Step 2. C's Ex. 9. By letter dated June 16, 1994, Donna Fay K. Kiyosaki responded that since there was no bargaining unit agreement, there was no violation of the agreement. C's Ex. 10. Kiyosaki indicated, however, that a meeting was held and it was determined that the UPW's claims were without merit. Id. By letter dated July 11, 1994, Personnel Director Michael R. Ben stated that since there was no Unit 01 collective bargaining agreement in effect covering the County employees, there was no violation of the Contract nor any recognizable status for the UPW to raise such allegations. C's Ex. 11. Further, as his review of

the department's actions revealed no violations of law or rules, Ben stated that no further action was necessary. Id. By letter dated July 26, 1994, counsel for UPW requested Respondent to select an arbitrator within ten days as required by § 15.22 of the Contract. C's Ex. 12. Respondent has not responded to the Union's request to select an arbitrator.

This case raises identical legal issues to those raised and decided by the Board in Order No. 1190, in Case No. CE-01-210, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; Order No. 1225, in Case No. CE-01-213, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; Order No. 1226, in Case No. CE-01-214, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; Order No. 1228, in Case No. CE-01-219, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; Order No. 1236, in Case No. CE-01-226, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; Order No. 1237, in Case No. CE-01-227, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; Order No. 1238, in Case No CE-01-228, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; Order No. 1239, in Case No. CE-01-229, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; Order No. 1242, in Case No. CE-01-230, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO; and Order No. 1243, in Case No. CE-01-231, United Public Workers, AFSCME, Local 646, AFL-CIO. The Board, in those cases, decided that Hawaii County was bound by the agreements reached between the majority of the public employers and the UPW to extend the terms of the collective bargaining agreement pending negotiations for a successor agreement. The Board held that grievances arising during the terms of the Contract extensions were valid and the County's

refusal to arbitrate the grievances constituted a prohibited practice as violative of §§ 89-13(a)(5) and (8), HRS. The Board further held that the agreement entered into between the public employers and the UPW with the retroactive effective date also bound the parties to recognize grievances arising during the affected term, i.e., July 1, 1993 - June 30, 1995. Thus, the Board held that the County should have proceeded to arbitration on the grievances filed by the UPW and the Board ordered the County to submit the cases to arbitration.

Under the facts of this case, the Union filed its grievance on or about June 7, 1994, during the period of the retroactive contract. The County failed to respond to the UPW's request for arbitration but previously indicated in the grievance procedure that the County did not recognize the validity of the Contract. Based upon the holding in the foregoing cases, the Board concludes that the retroactive contract was valid and the County was obligated to comply with the applicable grievance procedure and arbitrate the subject grievance.

In Decision No. 194, United Public Workers, 3 HPERB 507 (1984), the Board held that the employer's treatment of the grievances as null and void evinced an intentional refusal to process them to arbitration. The wilfulness of the violation was presumed as it arose as a natural consequence of the employer's express refusal to arbitrate the grievances with no mitigating circumstances. The natural consequence of the action was to deprive the grievants of their right to have their grievances arbitrated. In addition, the Board in that case also found that

the employer violated § 89-13(a)(1), HRS, by its refusal to arbitrate grievances. The Board stated at p. 517:

While the right of an employee to pursue a grievance to arbitration through the collective bargaining agreement is not specifically provided in Chapter 89, HRS, Section 89-3, HRS, protects the employee's right to pursue "lawful, concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, free from interference, restraint, or coercion." The employee's right to pursue and correct a grievance has been held to constitute lawful protected activity. Keokuk Gas Service, Co. v. NLRB, 580 F.2d 328 (8th Cir. 1978); NLRB v. Selwyn Shoe Mfg. Corp., 428 F.2d 217 (8th Cir. 1970).

The Board therefore found in Decision No. 194 that the employer's deliberate refusal to submit the grievances to arbitration interfered with and restrained the respective employees' rights to engage in the lawful, protected activity of pursuing their grievances thus violating rights implicitly guaranteed by Chapter 89, HRS.

As set forth above, the Board concludes that the contract with the retroactive effective date of July 1, 1993, was valid. The Board concludes that these contracts bind the County to recognize the grievances filed during the affected time period in which the instant grievance arose. The Board therefore, finds, based upon the County's refusal to respond to the UPW's request to arbitrate because there was no valid contract in effect, that the County committed prohibited practices in violation of §§ 89-13(a)(1) and (8), HRS.

Here, the Employer's deliberate refusal to submit the grievance to arbitration violated the contractual provision



relating to arbitration and also interfered with and restrained the employee's right to engage in the lawful, protected activity of pursuing its grievance, thus violating a right implicitly guaranteed by Chapter 89, HRS. The Board finds that the deprivation of statutory and contractual rights occurred as a natural consequence of the County's actions and, therefore, the County's actions were wilful in this case.

In accordance with the foregoing, the Board hereby concludes that the UPW is entitled to judgment as a matter of law and the Employer has committed prohibited practices by its refusal to arbitrate the subject grievance.

Finally, as Complainant failed to state a claim under § 89-13(a)(7), HRS, by failing to designate which provisions of Chapter 89, HRS, were violated, the Board hereby dismisses such charge.

#### ORDER

The Board hereby orders the Employer to cease and desist from refusing to recognize the validity of the Unit 01 contract with the retroactive effective date. Affirmatively, the Board orders the parties to submit the subject dispute, in good faith, to arbitration.

The Employer shall, within thirty (30) days of the receipt of this order, post copies of the order in conspicuous places on the bulletin boards at the worksites where Unit 01 employees of the County assemble, and leave such copies posted for a period of sixty (60) consecutive days from the initial date of posting.

the employer violated § 89-13(a)(1), HRS, by its refusal to arbitrate grievances. The Board stated at p. 517:

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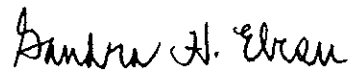
The Employer shall notify the Board within thirty (30) days of the receipt of this order of the steps taken by the Employer to comply herewith.

DATED: Honolulu, Hawaii, October 30, 1995.

HAWAII LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

  
BERT M. TOMASU, Chairperson

  
RUSSELL T. HIGA, Board Member

  
SANDRA H. EBESU, Board Member

Copies sent to:

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