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Stalemate continues between ISO and musicians' union; next weekend's classical concerts must be canceled

INDIANAPOLIS – Despite both the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and musicians' union making what they dubbed their best offers over negotiation sessions this past Friday and Saturday, the ISO is disappointed to report that a gap between the parties remains. One twist Interim CEO/Vice President of Finance Jackie Groth described as “challenging” is that the ISO doesn't even know how big that gap is.

The ISO began last week by making a stretch offer on October 1 that included no involuntary terminations, a salary range from \$53,000 in year one to \$70,000 in year five, generous healthcare and pension benefits, a 38-42 week schedule, and a clause that would have permitted the parties a year to renegotiate a new contract if substantial fundraising was not achieved. That clause, though, would “drop out” of the contract if \$5 million could be raised from new sources by March 31, 2013.

The termination clause is deemed critical to the ISO – particularly coming off several years that have seen millions drawn out of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra Foundation (the endowment) due to expenses surpassing income.

“The Board has indicated a steep commitment to step up and find tens of millions of dollars to support the cost of operations over the course of the five years encompassed by the latest offer; but it only felt comfortable committing to the full extent of it if it could secure an initial showing of support from the community that they were willing to partner with the symphony,” said Board Chairman John Thornburgh. “We all know the passion for the symphony is there. We only seek to harness that passion and ensure at least an initial showing of dollars will be there too.”

Among various points of disagreement between the two sides, the parties maintain their mutually exclusive positions on the inclusion of the termination clause. There also

is a list of yet unidentified obstacles to reaching an agreement – “unidentified” because the musicians acknowledge to having a list of items that still divide the parties but have refused to provide that list to the ISO.

Recalling that last point, Groth added, “It obviously makes a deal challenging when one side has a list of issues they claim needs to be addressed but has thus far kept the list a secret.”

Given the stalemate, next weekend’s classical performances featuring Music Director Krzysztof Urbanski have been canceled. For its canceled performances on Oct. 12 and [13](#), the ISO will provide concertgoers with the choice of a credit, an exchange, a donation and or a refund. Ticketholders can contact the ISO Box Office by calling 317-639-4300 or iso@indianapolissymphony.org. ISO subscribers may email the ISO at subscriber@indianapolissymphony.org.

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