Mortgage Rates Still in Good Shape After Fed Minutes

There are Fed Announcements, which involve rate hikes/cuts, press conferences, and updated rate forecasts after a 2 day meeting among Fed members. And then there are the "minutes" from that meeting. The minutes are released 3 weeks after the big announcement and they simply offer some more context to the rate hike/cut, etc.

Today was a Fed minutes day--not a "Fed Day," per se. The minutes didn't offer any striking new insights to the Fed's line of thinking. Thus, bonds (which dictate rates) didn't really respond. Instead, bonds had already moved toward slightly lower rates overnight due to friendly inflation data overseas (bonds like low inflation).

There was a bit of push back in the morning due to a government labor survey that showed job openings remaining extremely high. The Fed is looking for a bit more slack in the labor market to bolster the case for lower inflation. When the labor market shows signs of remaining tight (i.e. more jobs than job seekers), investors worry the Fed will have to keep the upward pressure on rates in order to avoid a resurgence in inflation.

The push-back wasn't enough to derail a bit of improvement in the mortgage market. The average lender was quoting the same rates as yesterday, but with slightly lower upfront costs today. Many lenders were effectively unchanged versus yesterday with the average conventional 30yr fixed rate still just under 6.5% for top tier scenarios.

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