



NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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2022 Contract Update #6

Bargaining Continues Post-National Convention

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You are reading the sixth Contract Update produced and distributed by the NPMHU during the course of 2022 negotiations. These updates, along with the Union's magazine and monthly bulletins, will keep mail handlers throughout the country informed and involved in the issues raised during this round of bargaining.

As the NPMHU National Office returns to Washington, DC after a productive National Convention, our bargainers are eager to return to the negotiations table. Throughout the Convention, members of the Negotiations Team had been working behind the scenes to continue bargaining. The end of the Convention created an opportunity to resume bargaining at the Main Table.

On August 17, the NPMHU Negotiations Team returned to Postal Service HQ to resume Main Table Negotiations, where it delivered Article 32 proposals to USPS representatives. The next day, the NPMHU hosted USPS at its HQ in the AFL-CIO building, where both parties further discussed the NPMHU's proposals and their finer details.

To date, the NPMHU has given representatives of USPS management over 75 proposals, totaling nearly 100 pages of written text. Conversely, USPS representatives have issued the NPMHU less than 10 proposals. In addition to their lack of genuine proposals, USPS representatives have displayed a much less cooperative atmosphere and stalled progress in genuine negotiations.

As the NPMHU Negotiations Team attempts to reach agreements on contract language governing work rules and operational matters in Main Table discussions, USPS representatives are calling for the referral of these proposals to the much lengthier and bureaucratic process for approving economic proposals. Trying to delay bargaining by pushing these proposals all the way up to highest ranking officials in the Postal Service has stalled negotiations at the Main Table.

When the Postal Service is not looking to delay issues to the final economic bargaining, it shows a poignant lack of urgency in coming to tentative agreements on simple issues. This delay occurs even when a proposed change in the contract is — by the admission of members of the USPS negotiating team — already a practice employed by management.

Subcommittees also seem to be stalled, as management shows a fundamental lack of understanding of NPMHU proposals, often belaboring the same point even after a contrary understanding has been reached. Combined with stagnation at the Main Table, it suggests that the USPS fundamentally misunderstands the NPMHU proposals and positions.

On numerous occasions, President Hogrogian has asked the USPS representatives to come to prompt tentative agreements on any issues that would not have an adverse impact on postal operations, or would save USPS money, or which have routinely been granted to other crafts. In these instances, USPS representatives to this point have displayed a noted resistance and lack of transparency as to why.

Perhaps even more problematic, when the NPMHU comes to the Main Table sessions or to numerous subcommittee meetings, it is unsure who has the authority to reach agreements on some of the issues being discussed. As the USPS tries to refer proposals to the economic table, its negotiation team seems less and less able — or willing — to reach any tentative agreements.

As the contract deadline approaches, with 30 days remaining until September 20, 2022, the NPMHU hopes that USPS will be open to discussing more options at the Main Table and agreed upon subcommittees, as well as being more forthcoming and transparent as the parties strive to reach agreements on subsidiary issues. As always, the NPMHU Negotiations Team will strive to do what is best for the NPMHU, the Postal Service, and the American mailing public.

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