



MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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Paul V. Hogrogian
National President

NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE PAST DEADLINE



Michael J. Hora
Secretary-Treasurer

From the opening ceremony in late June to the contract expiration date in September 2019, the NPMHU bargaining team has been hard at work, analyzing and developing proposals and meeting frequently with Postal Service representatives throughout the weeks leading up to the midnight deadline on the 20th of September. Although the NPMHU and the Postal Service were unable to reach a comprehensive, overall agreement on all of the terms to be included in the next 2019 National Agreement, enough progress has been made during the past ninety days of negotiations to convince both parties that an extension of the bargaining process could lead to a tentative agreement. For this reason, both parties agreed to extend negotiations past September 20, 2019, with the shared hope that further discussions still could lead to a negotiated agreement.

If such an agreement is reached, it will be subject to a mail referendum ballot of the entire NPMHU membership, in which all members will be able to vote on whether to approve the terms and conditions included in the final 2019 National Agreement.

For the coming weeks, the priorities of the NPMHU's bargaining representatives will now be to secure the key economic items included in the contract—particularly general wage increases, cost of living adjustments, and night shift differential—and to reach final agreement on the precise words to be included in the contract with regard to all of the noneconomic work rules that have been discussed. The parties also have to review every Memorandum of Understanding and Letter of Intent in the current agreement, to determine which shall continue as is, which shall be amended, and which shall be removed.

If the parties find that, despite additional bargaining, they cannot agree on the contract's final terms, the parties will begin the process of impasse resolution, which will eventually culminate in interest arbitration (the APWU is currently engaged in interest arbitration over the terms of its 2018 National Agreement, which expired 18 months ago). As always, the NPMHU would like to avoid possible interest arbitration—deemed a 'last resort' by the Postal Reorganization Act itself—with the hope that next National Agreement can be decided upon mutually, without a third party determining the contract's terms. Should interest arbitration occur, however, the NPMHU is fully prepared to contest the matter.

In the meantime, all of the bargaining representatives understand that, if impasse arbitration is the end result, the previously agreed-to or initialed tentative agreements are of unknown value—they could be declared null and void, they could be brought into the arbitration process to be revived and revisited during impasse proceedings, or they could be ignored totally by the panel of arbitrators.

Regardless of the forum, or of the eventual result, the NPMHU will continue pushing for those items which our membership submitted to the Field Negotiating Committee and in its constant communications with the National Office. The NPMHU will continue to make all arguments that we have to support our own proposals, presenting experience and evidence from across the field in this round's discussions. And, the NPMHU will continue to contest the draconian proposals submitted by postal management.

For now, the NPMHU will continue meeting with its counterparts in the Postal Service—and will continue to consult with the Union's Local and Regional leaders—in its effort to move closer and closer to a new National Agreement.



NPMHU Bargaining Team

L-R/back: Bruce Lerner, Phyllis Thompson, Charles Manago, Matt Clash-Drexler

Front: Bobby Blum, Paul Hogrogian, Michael Hora, Kevin Fletcher.

(Not shown Teresa Harmon)

SAMLU THIS MONTH

Your National Officers look forward to the assembly of Local Presidents at the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU), taking place at the end of the month of September in Washington, DC, where their collective input will assist the National Office greatly in organizing the remainder of this year's 2019 negotiations process. Speakers, meetings, and networking for the success of our new contract terms are sure to prove revitalizing for the final months of the bargaining process. We thank our attendees in advance for their active participation, as well as the perspectives they bring to us from the facilities they represent. This year's SAMLU will also include an 'Open House' of our new National offices within the headquarters of the AFL-CIO—we are excited to welcome everyone into our new space.

BIDDING MEMORANDUM

Effective September 21, 2019, all regular mail handlers will be allowed to bid under the new contract, whether or not the parties reach a tentative settlement, extend bargaining, or enter into impasse procedures. Successful bids made on or after September 21, 2019 will be counted towards the bid maximums eventually established in the 2019 National Agreement.

NATIONAL CONVENTION 2020

As negotiations reach resolution over the coming months, the NPMHU National Office is simultaneously planning for the next National Convention, scheduled for August 11–15, 2020 in Denver, CO. Over the year leading up to this quadrennial meeting, we will be posting various updates and information on the national website. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the guidelines and due dates of election nominations and ballot submissions. Our official Convention Call and 2020 Delegate Election rules are available online at www.npmhu.org and were included in the Summer edition Mail Handler magazine. To stay up to date on all National Convention happenings, continue to monitor your Union's websites and publications.



Please Post!!

September 2019