



# MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

**NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION**

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## UPDATE ON NPMHU-USPS BARGAINING

Negotiations between the NPMHU and the Postal Service over the terms of their 2016 National Agreement have been revived, with the parties meeting in Washington, DC to resolve their remaining disputes.

One of the primary reasons for extending the NPMHU-USPS negotiations deadline past May 20, 2016 was to await issuance of a related interest-arbitration award, and that event has now occurred. On July 8, 2016, an arbitration panel chaired by Stephen Goldberg issued its award, setting the terms of the 2015 National Agreement between the Postal Service and the American Postal Workers Union.

That arbitration decision awarded a contract covering 40 months, from May 21, 2015 to September 20, 2018. On the key economic issues, the award provided career employees with three general wage increases of 1.2%, 1.3%, and 1.3%, as well as a potential for five cost-of-living adjustments during the same time period. Non-career employees who are

not eligible for COLA were awarded wage increases of 2.2%, 2.3%, and 2.3%, plus another 50 cents per hour spread over the contract. The award also included no layoff protections for career employees currently on the rolls, and a continuation in the cost-sharing adjustments for the costs of career employee health insurance.

With this APWU-USPS award now being implemented, the NPMHU and the Postal Service are jointly aiming to complete their bargaining process. Only a handful of issues remain, and talks are underway to resolve those differences. It will probably be late summer or early fall before all matters are finalized, but if and when a tentative settlement agreement is reached, it will be subject to ratification by the entire membership of the NPMHU.

Please watch your bulletin boards for the latest information.

## NPMHU CONVENTION APPROACHING

In a summer filled with conventions, this year's NPMHU 2016 Convention is scheduled to take place in Chicago, Illinois over six days from August 22 through August 27. Throughout July, various committees comprised of delegates elected to the 2016 NPMHU National Convention have been meeting at NPMHU Headquarters in Washington, DC, all geared toward ensuring that the Convention proceedings will be organized and that the delegates will have the tools necessary to set the course for the NPMHU for the next four years.

The Credentials Committee has now certified and issued credentials for all of the delegates attending the Convention, with changes made only as individual delegates withdraw in favor of elected alternates; the Committee to Elect the Election Committee has met to adopt rules and procedures for the selection of this year's Election Committee; the Constitution Committee has developed its recommendations on

constitutional amendments; the Legislative Committee has endorsed various legislative and political resolutions; and the Resolutions Committee is recommending a host of important statements of NPMHU policies and activities.



In August, prior to the Convention, these Committees will continue to meet to address intervening developments, and to fine tune their presentations. Also meeting will be the Convention's Rules Committee, which will draft and recommend all of the rules that will govern the actual proceedings and debates to be held during the six days of meetings.

Final written reports from each of these committees will be distributed, upon registration, to the delegates attending the Convention. Whether you call it the Windy City, the Second City, Chi-Town, or the City of Big Shoulders, everyone is looking forward to a productive week at the 2016 National Convention in Chicago.

## HOUSE COMMITTEE PASSES TWO POSTAL REFORM BILLS

On July 12, 2016, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee passed the Postal Service Reform Act of 2016, H.R. 5714, by a voice vote.

"The NPMHU appreciates the hard work done by both parties in moving forward this bi-partisan piece of legislation, but changes still are needed for the NPMHU to support this bill," said National President Paul Hogrogian.

There are several positive items included in the Postal Service Reform Act, including relief from the unjustified obligations for the Retiree Health Benefits Fund, integration of postal retirees into Medicare, and restoration, in part, of the exigent rate increase. The biggest drawback in the bill is unnecessary and detrimental changes to both residential and business door delivery.

The NPMHU, other postal unions, the Postal Service, and various mailers who have formed a coalition to encourage the enactment of postal reform in this Congress will continue to work together to make changes in the bill that are needed so the NPMHU and its allies can fully support this vital legislation.

In related news, the Postal Service Financial Improvement Act of 2016, H.R. 5707, also passed the House Committee. If enacted, this bill would create a Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund Investment Committee and permit the Secretary of the Treasury to invest a portion of the Fund in index funds, among other investments. The NPMHU strongly supports these investment options, which would allow the USPS to obtain better returns on the investment of these assets. Currently, the Fund contains more than \$50 billion, but investments are limited to low-interest notes and bonds issued by the Federal Government.



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