

RATIFICATION PENDING— BE SURE TO VOTE

Michael J. Hora, National Secretary-Treasurer



On January 22, 2020, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union reached a tentative agreement with the United States Postal Service. This announcement culminated nearly 18 months of work that began during the summer of 2018, and continued into September 2018, when President Hogrogian first issued the official call for bargaining proposals.

The informal kick-off to bargaining began with a strategy session occurring during the August 2018 SAMLU meeting in Washington, DC. In February 2019, the Field Negotiating Committee gathered in the NPMHU's National Headquarters to review and debate over hundreds of potential bargaining proposals — previously submitted by members, stewards, officers, and Local Unions across the country.

The parties began formal bargaining toward the end of June 2019, and endured round-the-clock bargaining sessions for the final six days of the agreement, essentially locked in a hotel and accessible to each other twenty-four hours a day. Ultimately, in late September 2019, the parties announced that they were unable to reach a tentative agreement over all of the terms and conditions that need to be covered by the National Agreement as of contract expiration at midnight on September 20, 2019. However, the NPMHU and USPS agreed to extend negotiations, giving their bargaining representatives additional time to reach a comprehensive settlement agreement. The NPMHU agreed to extended talks provided they were productive. On September 30, 2019, President Hogrogian briefed all Local Presidents on the status of national negotiations in Washington, DC. Under a mutual extension, bargaining continued for the next four months. Finally, Local Presidents were briefed on the details of the tentative agreement in a national conference call in January 2020.

The highlights of the tentative agreement can be found on page 9 of this magazine. In addition, in accordance with ratification procedures adopted by the National Executive Board, all eligible voters will be furnished with the text of any proposed changes and deletions. We expect to mail the ratification package to all eligible members on February 18, 2020. Additionally, the highlighted changes were mailed and faxed to all Local Unions. Finally, the proposed changes are posted

on the National website (npmhu.org), included in the January 2020 Update, and made available on the mobile app. The Contract Ratification Procedures were posted in the February Update and widely distributed via mail, fax, website, and the mobile app. This is a lot of information delivered being made available to members in electronic and print form.

The tentative agreement provides for guaranteed wage increases, continues the cost of living allowance, eliminates casuals, renews the no-layoff provision, improves healthcare options for MHAs and makes incremental improvements on night shift differential to highlight a few of the more prominent changes. All members are encouraged to review the material and cast your vote. As required by the referenced ratification procedures, the balloting period shall extend for at least thirty (30) days after the mailing of ballots, which will occur on February 18, 2020. The ballots will be collected from the Post Office Box, verified, and counted beginning at 9:00 a.m. on March 23, 2020. The entire NPMHU National Executive Board has unanimously approved the tentative agreement and we encourage you to do the same.

I thank you for your continued support during this lengthy and often arduous negotiation. I'd also like to thank the Locals that provided feedback and supporting information, on short notice, when requested during bargaining. With this documentation, your negotiators pushed back, and were able to squash all harmful proposals.

Shifting focus to the NPMHU 2020 Convention, preparations are well underway for our quadrennial National Convention set to take place on August 11-15, 2020 in Denver, Colorado. Based on rules governing the selection of Local Union delegates to the NPMHU National Convention, each Local was required to determine the number of delegates that each will be sending to the 2020 National Convention. I can report that there will be 340 delegates attending the 2020 National Convention. Thirteen of 37 Locals are sending a single delegate, meaning in those Locals, the Local President is automatically a delegate and no election is required. The remaining 24 Locals are in the process of conducting elections to determine who will represent each respective Local at the 2020 National Convention. Most Local elections will be certified by March 25, 2020. Once the delegates are known, we will



begin to communicate with each delegate directly sharing registration details. Please do not contact the hotel directly. Room reservation details will be shared with each Local Union in the coming months, and reservations will be made through the National Office.

In the coming months, we will be setting the agenda for the 2020 National Convention, as committees will consider possible constitutional amendments and resolutions that will be submitted for consideration by the delegates. In addition to the traditional Constitution and Resolution Committees, the NPMHU will empanel a Legislative Committee to review and recommend the adoption of resolutions concerning legislative and political matters. Appointments to these important committees will occur once all Local Union delegates elections are complete.

Members of the NPMHU who wish to submit proposals for consideration by the delegates at the 2020 National Convention may turn your attention to page 13 of this Mail Handler magazine for submission details. As set forth in Article XII of the National Union Constitution, proposed resolutions and amendments to the Constitution must be submitted in writing by Delegates, Local Unions or other subordinate bodies in good standing, or regular members in good standing to the National President no later than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the National Convention. Should you have any constitutional amendments or resolutions that you would like to propose, please be sure to follow the procedures set forth in Article XII of the National Constitution. Because the opening of the National Convention is set for

Tuesday, August 11, 2020, all submissions must be received at the National Office no later than Friday, June 12, 2020. Each proposal will receive the attention it deserves. Delegates may introduce, debate, amend, and vote upon properly submitted proposals over the course of the Convention. As the Convention nears, additional information will be published. Watch your bulletin boards and npmhu.org for updates.

Finally, I'd like to report on the status of conversions to fulltime regular. I am pleased to report that we have exceeded 14,000 MHA conversion to fulltime regular. As of PP02-2020, 14,018 MHAs have been converted to fulltime regular. The pace of conversions prior to the signing of the MOU on Filling of Residual Vacancies in August of 2015 (prior to PP 18-2015) averaged 50 conversions per pay period. After this memorandum was signed and implemented, the pace of conversions increased significantly, averaging 129 per pay period in 2016, 70 per pay period in 2017, 92 per pay period in 2018, and 100 per pay period in 2019. MHAs are a key component of our craft and represent the path to career status. I am pleased that we were able to secure improvements specific to MHAs in the 2019 tentative agreement and hope you agree.

In Unity,

Michael J. Hora
National Secretary-Treasurer