



MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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NPMHU AND USPS BEGIN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS



President Paul Hogrogian discusses bargaining protocol with PMG Megan J. Brennan and chief negotiator Doug A. Tulino



National President Paul Hogrogian delivers the Union's opening statement



On March 1, 2016, the parties gathered for the first of many main-table negotiating sessions. President Hogrogian presented the Union's first batch of non-economic proposals to the United States Postal Service.

On February 25, 2016, National President Paul V. Hogrogian gave the Union's opening statement, formalizing the start of national negotiations with the United States Postal Service. The Union's statement is featured below in its entirety:

On behalf of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union and almost 44,000 Mail Handlers that our Union represents, we are pleased to be here in the Benjamin Franklin Room to open 2016 negotiations with the Postal Service. Although we expect a difficult round of bargaining, the NPMHU is committed to making every reasonable effort to reach an agreement that is good for our members, good for the Postal Service, and good for the American mailing public.

The Postal Service certainly is facing continuing challenges, some caused by economic conditions, others by legislative actions (or inactions), and still others by technological changes. But the Postal Service also is more stable and more robust than it has been at any time since the Great Recession of 2008.

When the parties opened their 2011 round of bargaining, the 2008 recession was still in control. Mail volume and postal revenue were in a constant, and seemingly irreversible, decline. Today, that recession is part of history, economic growth has returned to the American economy, and the Postal Service is once again operating with significant surpluses in revenue over expenses.

When the parties last negotiated starting in 2011, the Postal Service was seeking substantial reductions in labor costs from bargaining unit employees represented by the Mail Handlers Union, including substantial numbers of non-career employees earning less money and having fewer benefits than career employees. Some of those proposals actually were awarded to the Postal Service through the 2013 Fishgold Arbitration. Based on these fundamental changes in our workforce, the Postal Service has reduced its overall labor costs for mail handling activities, and many of those reductions, including a revised wage scale for future career employees, are scheduled to continue into the future. The Postal Service also continues to downsize its complement of mail handlers, with the current number more than 6% lower than in 2011.

The return of normal growth in the American economy and operational surpluses for the Postal Service should mean a return to more normalized collective bargaining. And the Mail Handlers Union remains deeply committed to the negotiating process. Certainly, the NPMHU will continue to work with the Postal Service so that Congress enacts postal reform legislation: to obtain relief from mandatory payments into the Retirees Health Benefit Fund; to

STATEMENT BY PAUL V. HOGROGIAN NATIONAL PRESIDENT NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION UPON THE OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WASHINGTON, D.C. FEBRUARY 25, 2016

allow for more rational investments of the monies already in that Fund; to integrate the postal health care system into Medicare; to expand the mailing and other services that the Postal Service offers to the American public; and to stop the unwise closings and consolidations of mail processing facilities. But it is at the bargaining table where most other issues belong. We expect, and will demand, that the Postal Service engage in good-faith bargaining on all of the issues that are properly the subject of mutual bargaining.

Today obviously is neither the time nor the place for discussing specific proposals. Not only are formal negotiations just beginning, but the Mail Handlers Union does not believe it is productive to negotiate in public, in the newspapers, or in the halls of Congress.

Nonetheless, the goals of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union in this year's round of bargaining can be stated simply. We seek a negotiated agreement that protects our jobs and improves our standard of living; we seek a negotiated contract that improves the status of Mail Handler Assistants, who are our newest members and the Postal Service's future career employees; we seek a contract that minimizes the dislocation and inconvenience to Mail Handlers whose careers may be involuntarily disrupted by excessing or downsizing; and we seek to stop future subcontracting and return currently outsourced work to the Mail Handler craft.

In short, we seek practical solutions to the problems faced by Mail Handlers, so that working together we can ensure that the Postal Service and all of its Mail Handler employees can continue to provide the American public with the service that they have come to expect.

In closing, let me state that the National Postal Mail Handlers Union seeks to obtain a fair and just settlement with the Postal Service. We understand that these negotiations will be difficult. But if management makes reasonable proposals and counterproposals at the bargaining table, we certainly will recommend ratification to our membership. We also hope for and expect the same attitude from postal management — that reasonable proposals from the Union will be met with acceptance. If both parties are able to adopt this approach to bargaining, I remain optimistic that we will be able to reach a negotiated settlement.

Thank you very much.



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March 2016