



NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

Paul V. Hogrogian – National President Mark A. Gardner – Secretary-Treasurer

2016 Contract Update #2

Bargaining Continues

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You are reading the second Contract Update produced and distributed by the NPMHU during the course of 2016 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.

Bargaining is underway! Representatives from the Postal Service have now met at least three times with representatives from the NPMHU Negotiations Team for productive rounds of on-the-record meetings.

The purpose of these meetings at this early stage of the proceedings is to introduce and explain all of the parties' official bargaining proposals. Typically the Union presents its proposals first, followed by counter-proposals from the Postal Service a few weeks into bargaining. To this point, the NPMHU has presented almost 100 bargaining proposals, covering the full panoply of topics covered by the National Agreement. In response, the Postal Service has offered only a few proposals of its own, but as usual these management proposals seek substantial givebacks or concessions from the bargaining unit comprised of the mail handler craft.

Over the course of the on-the-record meetings, President Hogrogian has taken the lead in explaining the Union's noneconomic proposals to USPS representatives at the main table. Some of these proposals came out of the Field Negotiating Committee that convened in October. Others were conceived by members of the NPMHU National Executive Board and Negotiations Team to

address some of the National Agreement's most pressing concerns.

The proposals varied in intent and substance. A handful of the proposals contain simple cosmetic changes, for example updating dates and correcting typographical errors. Others are more dramatic – changes in benefits, work hours, seniority and the posting of bids, and securing more contractual protections for Mail Handler Assistants.

At these main table sessions, the Postal Service's bargaining team, led by its chief spokesperson Patrick Devine, asked questions aimed at understanding the purpose of the proposals brought forward. Sometimes the USPS seeks clarification, for others the Postal Service promised further inquiries during the coming weeks. At this point, concrete discussions about the viability of certain proposals are just beginning. Those conversations will happen in the coming weeks, more frequently and more openly, once the pace of negotiations pick up through continuing main table discussions and numerous subcommittee meetings.

In the meantime, the Union is working to prepare its final set of proposals – those addressing economic issues, including wages, benefits, premiums and differentials, and subcontracting as authorized under Article 32.

NPMHU bargainers are slated to meet with the Postal Service on several days each week to address each and every one of the issues to be bargained. Please watch your bulletin boards for more bargaining information throughout the coming weeks.

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