



APWU Web News Articles

Statement from President Mark Dimondstein to APWU on Status of Collective Bargaining

WEB NEWS ARTICLE #: 119-2018

12/21/2018 - The Collective Bargaining Agreement (Union Contract) between the American Postal Workers Union and the United States Postal Service initially expired on September 20, 2018.

Negotiations began in July with a big kick off and national day of action during which many of you participated as together we are "Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow!" Since our contract expired there have been four extensions of negotiations in an effort to reach a voluntary agreement.

As your president, taking general guidance from the National Negotiating Committee, I led in reaching a tentative agreement with management on December 6, 2018. I believe it to be fair and positive for the members.

The APWU Constitution has a democratic process where any tentative agreement goes to the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee for acceptance and their decision whether to send it to the membership for a ratification vote.

The Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee had some serious concerns with the tentative agreement and sent it back to the APWU National leadership to reopen negotiations with management and attempt to address their concerns.

We did just that in two meetings on Wednesday December 19, 2018 and follow up discussions on Thursday December 20th. However, we were unable to reach any changes or new agreements with the Postal Service. The APWU and USPS are now at "impasse."

Next Steps

Interest Arbitration will now be the next major step. Our future wages, benefits and working conditions will be determined by an outside arbitrator. During this period both sides can continue discussions and, if possible, reach new tentative agreements. The APWU National leadership is committed to the goal of reaching a voluntary agreement that addresses the Rank and File Bargaining Advisory Committee's concerns and can be put before the membership for a ratification vote.

The APWU will be fully prepared to present a solid case in interest arbitration to back up our demands and protect the many gains of the past. The union has already been preparing for such a possible outcome and preparations will continue full steam ahead. We will also consider invoking the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) process prior to interest arbitration. Interest arbitration is a slow process and can take many months of preparation, hearings and adjudication.

It is important to remember that almost all the provisions, rights and benefits contained in the current union contract remain in full force and effect until we obtain a new contract. This includes the no lay-off protections for those career employees with six years of employment. The MOU "Re: Retail" with a moratorium of any expansion of CPUs, VPOs and Approved Shipper programs. (page 337 of the CBA) and the MOU providing lay-off protection for the life of the contract for career employees who had not yet reached their six years of employment (p 274 of the CBA) have both ended due to their specified expiration date.

Past APWU President Moe Biller always said, "the struggle continues." And so, it does.

Negotiations and interest arbitration are fluid and challenging. They are not helped by rumors, half-truths, fabrications, innuendos and accusations.

Let's make sure we stay united and strong as APWU family, wear your union gear with pride and keep those Contract Action Teams on the move. The battle for a new and decent contract is far from over!

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