

APWU Members to Vote On Tentative 4-Year Agreement

Mailing Starts Dec. 18; Vote Count, Results on Jan. 9

With a mailing set to begin on Dec. 18, the referendum process concerning the tentative 2006-2010 APWU-USPS contract has begun.

The single-question ballot offers a choice of 'Yes' or 'No' on a tentative agreement that would run from Nov. 21, 2006, to Nov. 20, 2010. Completed ballots must be received by Tuesday, Jan. 9, when the vote count will take place.

The ratification mailing includes a summary of the changes, a copy of the tentative agreement, a ballot, a return envelope, the statement of the Rank-and-File Bargaining Advisory Committee, and a letter from APWU President William Burrus.

The Rank-and-File Committee voted unanimously on Dec. 7 to approve the tentative agreement. In accordance with Article 13.9.C of the APWU Constitution, the committee must approve a tentative agreement before members are

given the opportunity to vote on it. The panel is also responsible for supervising the vote.

Talks over a successor to the 2000-2006 National Agreement began in August, and continued two weeks past the Nov. 20 expiration.

If You Don't Receive a Ballot...

The referendum mailing to APWU members will take place Dec. 18-20. Returned ballots must be received by 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 9. The vote-count will begin immediately. If you have not received a ballot by Dec. 26, contact the American Arbitration Association at 800-529-5218 to request a duplicate. (You also may make the request via e-mail to apwu@adr.org.) Provide your name, the last four digits of your Social Security number, your craft, and your mailing address.

Statement of the Rank-and-File Committee

Editor's note: The following is the full report of the 2006 APWU Rank-and-File Bargaining Advisory Committee.

The Rank-and-File Bargaining Advisory Committee, comprised of one appointee from each APWU National Executive Board member plus a representative from the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Task Force, was called to APWU Headquarters on Dec. 7, 2006, to begin deliberations on a tentative agreement.

The committee received numerous presentations from President Burrus, national craft directors, other national officers, and staff. After examination, consideration, and debate of all documents, issues, and responses to the committee's in-depth questions, the Rank-and-File Committee has unanimously approved the contract to be released for ratification vote by the members.

The committee's rationale included the following:

- Basic annual salaries will be increased by 1.3 percent, effective November 25, 2006. All APWU-represented employees will receive a Level Upgrade on February 16, 2008. Basic annual salaries will again be increased, by 1.2 percent, on November 21, 2009. The cost-of-living allowance (COLA) will continue under its current formula for the life of the contract. This contract will provide eight COLA increases.

- Although employee's share of healthcare premium cost will increase 1 percent in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, the committee believes the increase is palatable. The committee considered the rising cost of healthcare throughout the nation, the percentage currently paid by other federal employees (28%), and the probability of an arbitrator imposing his own justice on the parties. Effective in 2008, employees will have the option of enrolling in the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan, and the USPS will pay 95 percent of those premiums.

- The conversion of 10,205 clerk craft part-time flexible employees to full-time in 200 man year offices. In addition, these facilities will always be staffed with regular clerk craft employees. The conversions will begin upon ratification of the agreement and must be completed by December 1, 2007.

- The restrictions placed on casuals working in skilled positions and the requirement to utilize the OTDL prior to casuals in 200 man-year offices. These changes are expected to impact over 450 facilities throughout the country. In addition, these improvements will continue long after the expiration of this contract.

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Committee Statement ...

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- There were improvements achieved by the Clerk, Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Divisions within their craft articles. If this contract had gone to arbitration, these improvements could have been lost in the argument over wages and health benefits.
- The inclusion of bereavement leave into the contract is a much-needed addition to our rights under Article 10. The ability to take up to 3 working days of annual leave, sick leave, or LWOP during these difficult times in our member's lives will be well received by the membership.
- The changes to Article 30 that will establish a model "Local Memorandum of Understanding" which will be applied in those offices not covered by any LMOU because of the absence of a local union structure.
- The importance of extending the no-layoff provisions to November 2010, for all employees on the rolls on November 20, 2006.
- The increase in uniform and work clothes allowance of 2.5 percent per year.

■ The improvement to Article 32, which requires local union notification when subcontracting is initiated at the field level is also significant.

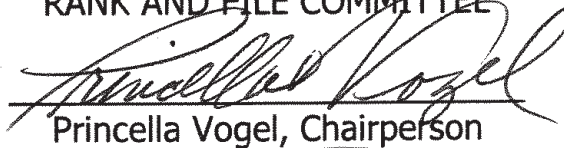
■ Improvements were achieved in Article 13 when making assignments to APWU crafts and local notification of such assignments.

While the union was unable to achieve all the improvements sought in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Memo during this round of negotiations, we are confident that future attempts will result in improved conditions for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing brothers and sisters.

In conclusion, the Rank-and-File Bargaining Advisory Committee believes that the tentative contract provides sufficient wage increases to offset the increases in health benefit premiums.

The upgrade for all APWU members fulfills a convention mandate. The improvements in non-economic areas of the contract extend beyond the end date of this contract. These negotiated contractual provisions will benefit our membership for years to come.

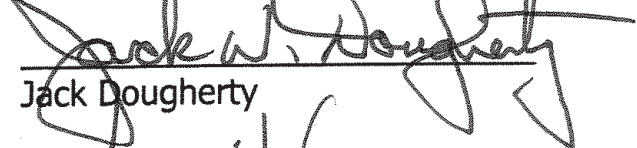
RANK AND FILE COMMITTEE


Princella Vogel, Chairperson

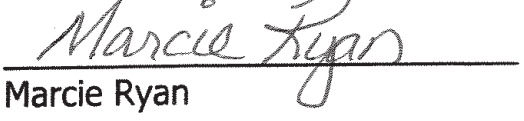

Moe Lepore, Co-Chair

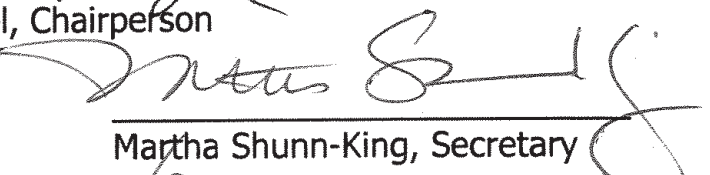

Larry Benson


Thomasine Derricks

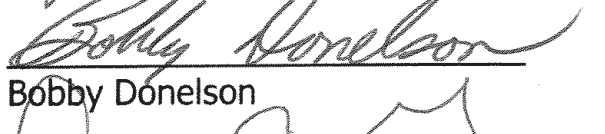

Jack Dougherty


Johnny Holmes

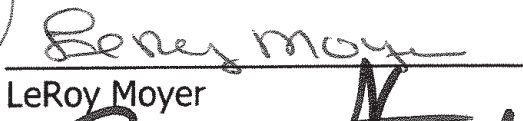

Marcie Ryan


Martha Shunn-King, Secretary


V. Jeanette Carlton


Bobby Donelson


James Guynn


LeRoy Moyer


Roosevelt Stewart