

SPRINGFIELD RIFLE

APWU LOCAL 497



MAY/JUNE
2019

Contract Mediation Ending

June 4 2019

(This article originally appeared on the APWU website)

On June 3, President Mark Dimondstein and Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman reported to the APWU National Executive Council (NEC) that the contract mediator stated that the APWU and the USPS were too far apart, and further discussions would not lead to a new collective bargaining agreement. The statement effectively ends the mediation.

"We invoked mediation to make sure we pursued every avenue to reach a good contract for the membership," President Dimondstein said. On the June call, the NEC was provided a full update about the mediation and negotiation process, and given the opportunity to question President Dimondstein (lead negotiator) and Director Zimmerman (chief spokesman). The Mediation started with a meeting between the mediator appointed by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation

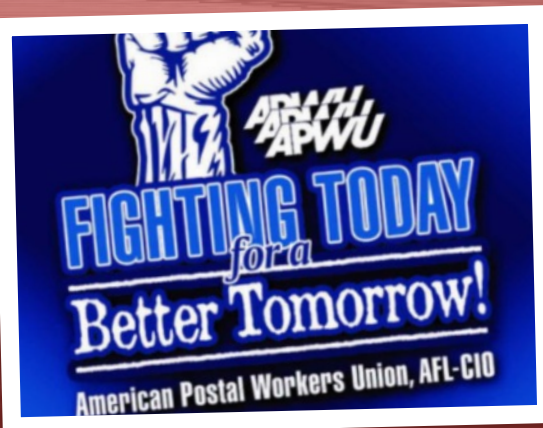
Service (FMCS) and members of the 2018 National Negotiating Committee, including the Industrial Relations Director, Executive Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer and Clerk, Maintenance, and

MVS Craft Directors. Assistant Craft Directors were also invited to participate. Anyone who could not physically attend the meeting could participate via teleconference. The process continued with in-depth joint meetings with the mediator and chief spokespersons of both the USPS and the APWU.

Following day-long meetings with the chief spokespersons, the individual Craft Directors and the Assistant Directors met in separate daylong sessions with their USPS counterparts and the mediator.

After a series of these meetings, the mediator declared the parties were too far apart. "While we were hopeful that mediation would be successful, we have been vigorously preparing for interest arbitration," said Director Zimmerman. "We are working hard to develop our case and preparing evidence to support our demands."

The next stage of the process is for the USPS and the APWU to jointly select an interest arbitrator to chair the three-member panel. This panel will hear the case for the new contract. Once the arbitrator is selected and appointed, the parties will ask for dates for to begin arbitration hearings.



Springfield Public Education

Interactions with the various Unions in this area lead to some eye-opening facts which we may or may not be fully aware of. One of the groups that have presented facts I was unaware of is the Massachusetts Teacher Association. Yes it has been many years since I attended public school but hearing about the changes has been eye opening.

When I attended middle school, it was mandated that you attended three different shop classes. Girls had Sewing and Cooking classes. My brothers attended the same school years later, by then everyone had these same classes.

In Springfield Schools today, **none** of these programs are offered in any middle schools. If a student wants to pursue these skills they have to apply and be accepted in the **one** school that offers these classes. These are just some of the many programs that were dropped by the school systems due to underfunding.

The state of Massachusetts has underfunded the public education system by 1.5 **billion** dollars. Public Funding for higher education has decreased by almost a third since 2001. The student costs have risen over this time forcing a larger debt to receive an education.

Many Office Supply Companies offer teachers a discount on the supplies they buy. The companies understand the Teachers are using their own money to purchase basic supplies for their students not provided by the schools. One teacher said she was given two pencils per student for the year. That is criminal in this day and age.

The Promise Act is one of the items aimed at modernizing the Foundation Budget. This would increase the spending for public schools by 1 billion dollars and the Cherish Act would increase higher state education by a half billion dollars. You can learn more about these two bills by searching for Fund our Future Massachusetts on the internet.

Pete Mooradd Research and Education Director



WE MUST STAY STRONG

The Postal Service would love for the APWU to fall on their Faces. They love to spread discontent and frustrations on to all the members. They do this by not following the contract, spreading lies, blaming The Union for any unpleasant task that they must implement. All of this to create an environment where they can ultimately do whatever they want. **What do they want?** They want to lower your pay, get rid of your job and run this place into the ground.

WE MUST STAY STRONG, to win the fight against management trying to stop the grievance procedure. NO union time, NO seniority, NO Penalty, NO, NO, NO, NO. They want the members and the Union Stewards at each other's throat. They do this by not following the contract, they do this by being very punitive in discipline and overworking our stewards with not enough Union time. IT WORKS I KNOW.

WE MUST STAY STRONG, if we don't stick together, if we don't support our union and our stewards, we will ultimately lose the war. I know for a fact that our Union Officers sacrifice their time, health and relationships for a cause that they believe in, they **WILL get WEAKER** without support from the membership and our stewards. A WEAK UNION IS NOT GOOD FOR ANY OF US.

BIG THANKS to MY stewards for dealing with the unpleasant behind the scenes battle you deal with. My appreciation and support IS there. Your commitment to our labor movement and battle is true leadership. It's very easy to complain or reap benefits of other people's commitment. **THIS UNION** needs people to step up and lead. Talk is easy. Believing and spreading information based on knowing 20 percent of the whole story is a cancer. Get involved, Get the whole story. Unity is our Power. If we are divided, we will fall and that's exactly what they want.

Nationally, The Postal Service wants to: #1 **STOP** increase in pay rates – a freeze for current employees; #2 **Decrease the career workforce**; #3 Pay and benefits **substantially cut** for all future conversion to career and future hires: #4 **Elimination of no lay-off** provision for all future workers. These are just a few of the proposals the USPS wants to implement.

SUPPORT THE UNION THAT IS FIGHTING AGAINST THESE PROPOSALS

SUPPORT THE UNION THAT IS FIGHTING FOR YOUR CONTRACT

Remember, your day to day seniority is **Union Negotiated**. Your Hourly Pay rates are **Union Negotiated**. Your Health Benefits are **Union Negotiated**. Your 5 Weeks and a day vacation you take a year, is **Union Negotiated**. Your Sick leave is **Union Negotiated**. Your bidding once a year, is **Union Negotiated**. Your light duty rights are **Union negotiated**. Your right to investigation and your right to equality is **Union negotiated**. TEN, I repeat 10 PAID holidays is **Union negotiated**.

NONE of these rights are **entitlements**. The Postal Service didn't decide one day to pay your penalty overtime or give you cost of living raises. When you started working here, many of you were hired after countless hours of your Union putting together a Solid ARTICLE 32 grievance. We fought and still are fighting for more work. Every time I see a new PTF I see **Union Victory**, every time I see MVS going to New Jersey I see **Union Victory**, every time I see MVS going to THS and Hartford I see **Union victory**. Every time we convert an employee to full time regular, I see **UNION VICTORY**.

MVS Local 497 information. The Postal Service will be implementing an Attendance control coordinator. They already filled the position, not sure when it will start. We had a meeting with our New Plant manager Ted Goonan and he was very clear that scanners are a huge issue with him moving forward. Any vehicles left unattended and running at any area office is being subject to removal. This notice was giving out at area offices to all letter carriers.

We have recently resolved multiple discipline issues, demanding that article 16 be honored. The GMF phone is being looked at for repair, Form 50 issues are being processed for resolution, we are in pre arbitration on our Overtime issues in relation to our local pecking order, there will be 3 hold downs put up soon due to assignments. 2 VOA jobs will be posted soon to all full-time regulars in the MVS department, All VOA's will be reporting to their work area for assignments. As Craft director my #1 obligation is to Police the vey **Contract** that I believe in. It's never personal, it's always black and white by the contract. I trust in that and do the best I can for all the members of this great local. I can't be on all three tours, I can't win every step 2, but over the next 2 years I will give it my best effort to make this division **Union Strong**.

YOUR VOICE, YOUR UNION, OUR FUTURE in Solidarity, *MVS Craft Director* Ed Rowell



Brothers and Sisters,

The following is part of a letter that I sent to management earlier this year. With the new Acting Plant Manager's arrival, I have hope that issues of safety may be given the attention they deserve, but I am still wary of the status quo as we have all been burned before. I feel that you need to be informed as to the new outline of steps that we, as a Union, will be taking when it comes to your safety concerns. I ask that all of you keep pushing 1767s for all unsafe conditions. They are the only forms that are recorded to track safety issues other than injury reports, and I would like to avoid having injury reports as our only reporting that OSHA may review to determine any willful disregard by management on matters of safety.

PS Form 1767 *"The general disregard for these safety forms by a large amount of management in general has been addressed through emails by the safety department, which have been subsequently ignored by everyone else. Safety and the Safety department on a whole have been ignored in the same manner. Perhaps this can explain why there were over 25 injuries in less than a month's time in this facility during the holiday season. When management ignores accidents by PIT drivers, because they need them to get the area cleaned up in time for the news crew visit, or just because they need the job done and it may slow down the operation to do what is right, it allows injuries to occur. Supervisors using master badge PIVMS access to reset PIT without investigating or taking drivers down is also a concern. Supervisors used to be held accountable for preventable injuries in their work areas, but where is this accountability for unsafe working conditions?"*

I know that it may seem that this may seem unproductive, engaging cooperation between the APWU and management, and perhaps it is, but my intention is only to inform management of the process that I will be incorporating into responses from the union, to safety complaints. I will be asking all APWU local members to follow these simple steps;

- Fill out form 1767 for safety concern.
- Make a copy of 1767 with supervisors' name and preferably signature. (acknowledging receipt only)
- If blue copy is not returned, as per instructions on back of form, request union time to bring copy of the 1767 to the Union office to give a statement and begin grievance process.
- After reviewing the safety complaint, Union safety will determine if a grievance will be filed to Step 2 under Article 14, or at the behest of the employee, a call placed to OSHA for the protection of the members right to a safe work environment, **Plain and simple.**
- 1767s that are not answered in an acceptable/appropriate manner (e.g.: "Will forward to...") will be given the same consideration as an ignored 1767. It is the duty of the management official to actually investigate, and try to find a quick and safe resolution to safety concerns. "Will forward" is not an investigation. It is an acceptable conclusion, but not an acceptable answer.

It is my duty to represent Craft Employees in matters of safety. In this capacity I will accept very few issues being referred to the JLMS&H Committee. The Joint Labor Management Safety & Health Committee in this facility has become nothing more than a suggestion box in which safety issues are placed to be tied up until forgotten about. It's a theme park ride. An illusion of movement without any real forward progress. Issues referred from Labor/Management meetings to JLMS&H and then referred from JLMS&H to Labor/Management. The same issues on a repeating loop for the past several years. If you would like verification of this, you need only to read the minutes from all of the meetings over the past several years. The management representatives at these meetings are mostly willing to talk about the issues brought up at the meeting, but almost all responsibilities are assigned to the Craft Members to find and implement a solution to safety concerns. The management support ends there. If a solution is found that requires any effort on the part of floor supervisors, it is met with resistance, resentment, and disregard. There are very few changes, and the same issues are brought up at every meeting. We have spent the last few years discussing lines that need to be painted inside the building (walkways, storage, mail, equipment) and how they need plans to be drawn up by the engineers. I am fairly certain that skyscrapers are designed and construction begun in less time. It is a joke to Craft Employees, as well as management. Honestly, how seriously is safety being considered when we do not have a meeting for safety, in December, during the busiest month of the year? Perhaps a revamping of the committee is needed.

I am done begging for management cooperation. I have responsibilities as an Employee as well as a Union Representative. These are separate titles with separate responsibilities, and I refuse to waste my time begging for attention. My patience is not limitless. I will have zero hesitation proceeding to the next step in solving the issues in a timely fashion. With, or without management cooperation. The safety of the employees is my primary concern.

In Solidarity,

Dave Sims

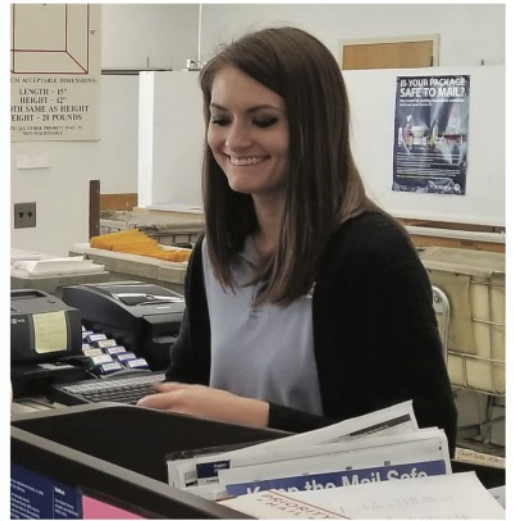
Safety and Health Representative



Dental Insurance Plan

for APWU Members Only

The benefits in this brochure are not part of the FEHB contract or premium, and you cannot file a FEHB disputed claim about them. Fees you pay for these services do not count toward FEHB deductibles or catastrophic protection out-of-pocket maximums. These programs and materials are the responsibility of the Plan, and all appeals must follow the Plan's guidelines. For additional information contact the Plan at 800-222-2798 or visit their website at www.apwuhp.com.



APWU HEALTH PLAN DENTAL INSURANCE

**SUMMER ENROLLMENT IS NOW OPEN THRU
JULY 15TH!**

OPEN ENROLLMENT DATES:

**JUNE 1, 2019 thru JULY 15, 2019 SPECIAL OPEN
ENROLLMENT**

**NOVEMBER 11, 2010 thru DECEMBER 9, 2019
OPEN SEASON ENROLLMENT**

ELIGIBILITY

All members in good standing, including Active /PSE (working at least 20 hours a week) and Retiree/Associate dues-paying APWU members are eligible to enroll. An eligible dependent is your lawful spouse or domestic partner and any unmarried dependent children whom you support up to age 26. (Subject to state variations).

For more information go to the APWU Health Plan Website www.apwuhp.com and click on the blue box that says, "APWU Health Plan Dental Insurance."

CLERK STEWARDS

JIM LONG	T1
DEB KOSCIELSKI	T1
JERMAINE NORFLEET	T1
BRANDON JOHNSON	T1
RUSS EVANS	T2
EMMA LUCAS	T2
JULIE PAIGE	T2
NANCY KENYON	T3
TAMMY DEMARS	T3
DAVE BOGACZ	T3
DEB ROBERTS	T3
MAYA PAYNE	T3
JACKIE CIAK	T3
DIANA KIRKLAND	T3
EVELYN SCYOCURKA	CHICPOEE
MARIA JIMENEZ	ATHOL
ANN PROVOST	WILBRAHAM
NEIL THOMAS	PITTSFIELD

MAINTENANCE STEWARDS

ENID RIVERA	T1
JEFF ZAWALSKI	T1-T2
RICH PEABODY	T2
DAVID JONES	T2
JENNIFER DOYLE	T2
PETE MOORADD	T2
JEFF LAING	MSS
NEIL THOMAS	PITTSFIELD
ANDY MAYO	AGAWAM

MVS STEWARDS

ED ROWELL	T1
HECTOR TORRES	T1
DENNIS REYES	T1
TOM BROWN	T1
GEORGE SCOTT	T2-T3
MAUREEN HICKSON	T2
JUSTIN LINCOLN	T2
ADRIAN PIRIS	T3
DAN ROSSO	T3
ROBERT HYDE	T3

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UNION STRONG!



Shawndra, Brenda and Carol



Dennis, Dan, Justin, Tom, Hector, Russ, and Ed



Dave, Bob, Pete, Shaun and Stu



Tony



Jimmy, Hector, Russ and Stu



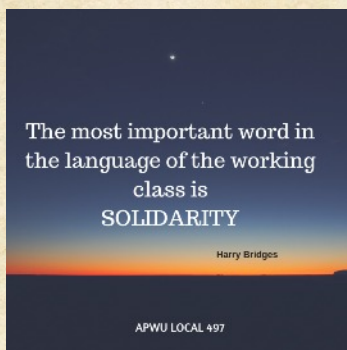
Nancy, Ed, Hector and Jimmy

FUN FACTS;

Did you know the following famous people were Postal Employees?

Honest Abe Lincoln was a Post Master in New Salem, Ill
Walt Disney worked as a Postal Employee during the summer of 1918
Sherman Hemsley aka George Jefferson was a Postal Clerk
Benjamin Franklin was the very first Post Master General
Rock Hudson was a Letter Carrier
Richard Wright author was a Substitute Clerk
Bing Crosby was a Clerk in Spokane Washington
Steve Carell was a Letter Carrier in Littleton MA
Charles Lindbergh was an Airmail Pilot

Please visit our website APWUSAL.ORG for all issues of The Springfield Rifle along with lots of other information about our local!





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