

BARGAINING BULLETIN #3

At our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on April 30th, Chief Negotiators Jane Barker and Rhiannon Don discussed the Employer's package for FASBU and some of the troubling concessions that they were proposing. What was also concerning was the looming prospect of government imposed legislation that would set a ceiling for total compensation by the end of May.



Given this prospect, the Collective Bargaining Committee (CBC) set out to discuss the possibility of an accelerated bargaining process with the Employer. The Employer indicated they were open to this idea and so the CBC began to prepare for what's called "package bargaining." Unlike the more linear, item-by-item approach to bargaining, this means grouping articles together into a package that tries to balance out the proposals of each party, making some concessions and prioritizing the most important articles for our Members. It means laying your cards on the table in good faith, and giving up some things for the sake of a deal that both parties can live with.

On May 8th the CBC presented the idea of package bargaining to the Employer and the Employer agreed. The CBC spent long hours working on a two-phase package of which Phase 1 was presented to the Employer on May 9th. After working all day Saturday and Sunday, meeting with the Employer on Mother's Day at 4pm to discuss pensions, they presented Phase 2 on May 13th. These packages signaled the top priorities of the NUFA membership, including compensation, pension, and workload, and they reflected a willingness on NUFA's part to accept, with modifications, some of the Employer's proposals, such as Tenure and Promotion and Sabbaticals. Other articles were either to remain as status quo or pulled from the package. The Employer was then in a position to either accept or reject the package as a whole. While the CBC was willing to discuss minor points of language, the purpose of this package bargaining approach was to come to an agreement on the whole deal. The deadline for this package was Friday, May 17th.

Our bargaining team was willing to make concessions that they wouldn't otherwise have made to achieve a deal before the legislation comes into effect, and for the sake of the package deal approach. However, after meeting with the Employer on Wednesday, May 15th, it became clear to the CBC that the Employer was not fully appreciative of how package bargaining works as they were attempting to re-negotiate individual articles. In the end we were too far apart and the May 17th deadline passed without us reaching agreement on the package.

If you are reading this with a sense of disappointment, you can surely imagine how the Collective Bargaining Team is feeling right now. We are at a very critical juncture. We NEED YOUR SUPPORT. As a show of solidarity for all the efforts being put forth on your behalf, we urge you to come to Tuesday's meeting to find out what's at stake at this point in the process and where we go from here.

NUFA Special Membership Meeting: Tuesday, May 21st
@2pm Room F210 *(zoom option available)