



Washington-Baltimore Newspaper

Guild @ BNA

Contract Update # 2

Dec. 2, 2009

DAY TWO OF TALKS CENTER ON BNA PROPOSED CUTS IN JOB SECURITY WOJCIK SET TO ADDRESS BARGAINERS DEC. 8 — ARE PREMIUMS COMING?

Guild negotiators questioned BNA's proposed cuts in job security, training, and tuition reimbursement Tuesday, while waiting for the other shoe to drop next week.

BNA CEO Paul Wojcik is scheduled to attend bargaining December 8, immediately after which BNA says it will deliver its proposals on employee health benefits, retiree health, and the pension. BNA has strongly hinted it will be looking for significant cuts in benefits, including requiring employees to begin paying health insurance premiums. Wojcik is expected to attempt to justify the need for the cuts at the same time the company is seeing strong profits in the midst of the worst economy since the Great Depression.

In the area of job security, BNA has proposed reducing the layoff notice period from a maximum of three months to just one month, severely limiting seniority rights, restricting bumping rights, and reducing the time a laid-off employee can be on the rehire list to one year from the current two years.

When layoffs occur, BNA wants to be able to exempt up to 25 percent of employees in a work unit from the layoff. BNA would pick and choose those it wants to exempt without regard to seniority. In other words, an employee with many years of experience could be laid off instead of a new employee if the boss didn't like the older, more senior employee.

BNA also wants to eliminate the right for some employees on layoff notice to be trained for new jobs. It also proposes to make it harder for laid-off employees to move back into a previously held job.

In contrast, the Guild has proposed increasing the lay off notice for all employees to three months, not just those facing a technology RIF, making training available to all employees on RIF notice, and setting a 12-week minimum for severance payments. BNA Tuesday did say it's willing to set a six-week severance minimum.

In addition, BNA originally proposed to allow tuition reimbursement only for courses related to an employee's current job—meaning it would not pay for courses an employee wants to take in order to advance in BNA. After the Guild objected, BNA came back with a counter-proposal continuing to say the company would have complete say-so in whether a course of study is "relevant" and therefore worthy of tuition reimbursement.

In other areas, BNA is proposing to boost the monthly mass transit subsidy from \$75 a month to \$85, and the parking subsidy from \$65 to \$70 per month. The Guild has proposed hiking the transit subsidy to the amount allowed by the IRS, currently \$230 a month, and parking to \$85 dollars a month.

Also, the two sides signed off on the Preamble, ten articles and ten Appendices. There were no changes or only housekeeping changes, such as changing references to D.C. to Arlington. Included in the articles agreed to were Article I--Recognition; Article II--Probation, Temporary Employees; and Article XXI--Transfers.

NEXT BARGAINING

TUESDAY, DEC. 8

1:30 p.m.

FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE CENTER

ALL EMPLOYEES WELCOME TO ATTEND