



Washington-Baltimore Newspaper

Guild @ BNA

Contract Update # 5

Jan. 13, 2010

BARGAINING RESUMES WITH FOCUS ON NON-ECONOMIC AREAS GUILD WAITING FOR HEALTH INSURANCE FIGURES

Contract negotiations resumed Tuesday after a holiday break with tentative agreements on three more articles. The Guild also presented counters to three BNA proposals and pushed BNA to accept new language clarifying the right to flexible work arrangements.

BNA told Guild bargainers it could not yet provide the breakdown on the various health care expenses that formed the basis for BNA's cost-shifting proposal. BNA now says the information will be available Jan. 22 when the two sides have an off-the-record meeting.

Tentative agreements were reached on Article XII (Hours and Overtime), Article XVI (Leaves), and Article XXX (Tuition Aid).

Agreement was reached in the Leaves article with no changes in the current contract language. BNA withdrew a minor change it had proposed.

BNA also withdrew a previous proposal in Hours and Overtime, and the two sides agreed to the same language except for a minor clarification on when night differential pay goes into effect.

In Tuition Aid, BNA had initially proposed several changes that would have added restrictions to using the benefit — including giving BNA “sole discretion” in deciding whether the planned courses qualified, increasing the time on the job needed to qualify for the tuition aid, and eliminating tuition aid for courses that might lead to advancement at BNA. Tentative agreement was reached when those proposals were withdrawn.

The Guild used the session to once again push for language spelling out more clearly how and when employees can get flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting. The Guild has proposed that an FWA be approved when “technologically feasible” and when it doesn't interfere with office coverage, training, or participation in collaborative projects.

The Guild offered counters in Article V (Union Rights) to answer BNA's concerns about how shop steward time is accounted for; Article VI (Safety) to allow BNA to monitor only customer service calls, and Article XV (Paid Leave), where we agreed to increase the amount of sick leave an employee can use to care for a spouse, partner, or parent. The current amount is ten days a year, and it would increase to 15 under this proposal. The Guild also withdrew a proposal to provide a minimum of 15 days sick leave for pregnant employees and an expansion of the types of family members for whom an employee could use bereavement leave.

GUILD MEETING

Members and nonmembers welcome

Thursday, Jan. 21

Noon-1 p.m.

First Floor Conference Center

Agenda: Your contract

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