

## **SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 2.8.23**

The bargaining team will have their first meeting with management this Friday. We will likely set ground rules for bargaining and agree on our next meeting dates, but won't submit any proposals yet. Help support us by signing this [petition](#) calling on the district to prioritize higher wages and full staffing. We will need everyone's support and participation to win a strong contract. This includes signing petitions, attending board meetings and rallies, and possibly even going on strike if the district is not willing to meet our demands. The bargaining team will share updates after each meeting with the district.

We also want to remind you that we now have a union [instagram](#) page. You can follow us @seiulocal140.

Finally, our membership meeting is this Saturday at 10am at 525 NE Oregon or on [zoom](#). We hope you can make it and if not, we will add the meeting minutes to next week's newsletter.

### **City Workers Strike**

From Thursday to early Sunday morning, city workers with LiUNA Local 483 were on strike demanding a fair contract with adequate cost of living adjustments (COLAs). Workers refused to come to work and held picket lines outside the entrances to their main worksites to draw attention to their cause and prevent non-union workers or "scabs" from crossing the picket line and taking their job.

At the wastewater treatment plant on N Columbia Blvd, picketers attempted to keep contractors and managers from crossing the picket line. In doing so, they showed the city their value by demonstrating what happens when they choose not to work. A train even stopped in solidarity with the workers, temporarily blocking the main entrance to the plant. Rather than agree to the workers' demands, Ted Wheeler tried to use the police to escort scabs across the picket line. Still, the workers remained strong keeping the picket going 24 hours a day. The city finally caved on Sunday morning and the city and the union have reached a [tentative agreement](#) which members will now vote on.

### **What is a Picket Line?**

A picket line is a form of protest that workers use to bring attention to a cause. Traditionally, a picket is a tactic during a strike to prevent contract workers or "scabs" from being brought in to do their jobs. The recent LiUNA Local 483 strike where workers stood outside locations such as Portland Parks & Rec Tabor Yard, PBOT Kerby Yard or the Environmental Services Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant is a good example. A picket line could also be virtual, for example with the UC graduate workers' strike where those on the picket lines also asked people to respect online strike boundaries and not simply continue offering education through zoom.

Workers or their supporters may attempt to stop the entry of temporary workers or supplies to the location that they are on strike from. In either case, it's important never to cross a picket line, whether as a customer of a particular business, a worker, or in any other capacity. When a worker crosses a picket line to work for an employer during a strike, they are called a "scab" and understandably seen as betraying their fellow workers. While some people may act as scabs with full knowledge of what they are doing, it's also important to inform people of the ways to respect and act in solidarity with striking workers so they aren't tricked into filling the roles of striking workers. Often, unionized workers from other companies will act in solidarity such as when the train stopped in front of the wastewater plant, blocking its entrance. Teamsters UPS drivers also have an option to list "strike" as the reason a package wasn't delivered. The fact that the City of Portland only agreed to the union's demands after workers walked off the job shows the effectiveness of strikes and strong worker solidarity.

### Coming Up

- Sign our [petition](#) for higher wages to show our unity as we begin bargaining
- [Nominate](#) yourself or a coworker for secretary/treasurer and custodial rep at large
- Join our union meeting Saturday 2/11 at 10am at 525 NE Oregon St or on [zoom](#)
- [Sign up](#) for an online steward training Saturday 2/18 from 9am-noon

### Useful Links

Union instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/seiulocal140/>

Our contract: [SEIU 140 union contract](#)

SEIU 140 webpage: <https://seiu503.org/pps/>

Local labor news: <https://nwlaborpress.org/>