

SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 6.8.23

Take Action!

- **Membership meeting** June 10 at Llewellyn Elementary School 6301 SE 14th Ave. at noon. You can also attend via [zoom at this link](#). Children are welcome!
- **Attend bargaining** Monday June 12th 10-2 at 525 NE Oregon St.
- **Join the board meeting** Tuesday June 13th 6pm when they're voting to adopt the budget

UNION UPDATES

Bargaining Updates

The bargaining team met with management on Tuesday for our fourth bargaining session. Thank you to all of our fellow workers who came out in support! The following is a summary of our proposals:

Article 14: Employee Evaluations

- require that employee evaluations are done by management, not bargaining unit members
- allow employees the opportunity to evaluate managers

Article 19: Safety

- Provide custodians extra pay when buildings are understaffed
- Clarify that custodians do not do the job of security
- Make sure that employees are not required to work at the same location as someone they have filed a complaint of harassment against.

Nutrition Service Wages

- 45% wage increase for all nutrition service staff
- Insure that all employees are credited with longevity based on similar relevant work experience outside of PPS
- Base longevity system off of years of service overall, not years in a certain position.

We will make our proposal for custodial wages on Monday, June 12. If you are not working, please join us anytime between 10 and 2 at the SEIU building 525 NE Oregon St to show the district we are united in demanding livable wages!

Management also shared their first counter-proposals with us. They proposed that head custodians will work 8 hours plus a half-hour unpaid lunch like evening custodians. Management also wants to be able to change custodians' shift time related to teacher planning days and winter, spring, and summer breaks without providing any advance notice. They also rejected our proposal for allowing evening custodians a free meal, claiming that it would be an "administrative nightmare." We have not yet responded to their counters.

Membership Meeting 6/10/23

Based on the recent survey about membership meetings, we are changing the meeting time to 12 noon to accommodate evening custodians' schedules. This month's meeting will be at Llewellyn Elementary (6301 SE 14th Ave.) We encourage you to bring your kids as well. We will provide activities for kids and snacks for everyone. There will also be union t-shirts.

Our proposed meeting agenda is as follows:

- Welcome, review agenda
- Explain changes to meeting
- Small group discussion / member concerns
- Bargaining update
- Know your rights training: Weingarten rights
- Hazard pay update
- Free Mumia Abu-Jamal resolution
- Photos and videos for social media and outreach

LOCAL NEWS AND SOLIDARITY

Camping Ban

On Wednesday, the Portland city council passed a new [ordinance](#) banning camping within the city between 8am and 8pm. The ordinance which goes into effect July 1 will further [criminalize homelessness](#) and subject violators to a \$100 fine and/or 30 days in jail. Not only does the ordinance require homeless residents to dismantle their shelters every day, it also bans camping outright in many locations and bans the use of campfires and gas heaters. While it gives police the authority to enforce the ordinance, it does not provide any services or alternative shelters for people to use. Already, homeless people make up roughly 50% of all people arrested in Portland despite being around 2% of the overall population.

The new measures will not solve the lack of access to permanent housing. Instead, it will pour more resources into policing and criminalizing the most vulnerable. This ordinance does not serve the majority of Portlanders. Rather than working to reduce rent, increase wages, and improve access to free medical, mental health, and addiction services, the city is spending more money to police the victims of an economic system that only benefits the wealthy.

Many of us are housing insecure or at risk of being evicted ourselves. Our wages have not kept up with the skyrocketing cost of living and we are struggling to be able to afford to live in the city where we work. This is why the bargaining team is proposing a minimum wage of at least \$25/hr. We know that the solution to homelessness is higher wages, increased social services, and reduced cost of living, not the further criminalization of the poor. We must resist the damaging myths that poverty and homelessness are a result of laziness, drug use, or poor choices. These are only cruel attempts to shift blame away from those who are actually profiting off our exploitation and suffering. As workers, we must demonstrate our solidarity with those who are unemployed and homeless who endure some of the most violent and inhumane conditions imaginable. We must not allow those in power to pit us against each other, but stand together to fight for a world where everyone has access to safe, permanent housing and the services they need.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS AND SOLIDARITY

Debt Ceiling Deal Reached, More Austerity

Biden reached a deal with the GOP this week in order to prevent a default on the nation's debts. Sadly for the working class and poor, the deal contains a variety of cuts to public services. It also contains a variety of give-aways to the extractive industries such as approving the permits of Joe Manchin's darling Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) which is currently under construction in West Virginia and Virginia. The MVP would carry liquified natural gas for export, and although much of it has already been completed a few key sections have been stalled for years as the grassroots battle to halt it has led to necessary permits being denied. Chuck Schumer evidently has ties to the very corporation behind the pipeline, and Joe Manchin has well publicized links to the fossil fuel industry. The deal also contains stipulations that remove obstacles to environmental permitting for corporations engaged in resource extraction or development. On the austerity side, the deal will lead to increased work requirements for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) without any cuts to the national military budget or increases in taxes for the wealthiest portions of our society.

Supreme Court Rulings Harm Environment, Workers

Recently the Supreme Court ruled on two different cases that impact the environment and workers in the cases Sackett v EPA and Glacier Northwest v. International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 174.

In Sackett v EPA, the court ruled in favor of a couple who filled in wetlands at their lakefront property without getting a permit to do so. The 5-4 ruling presents serious barriers to the EPA's ability to limit development in many of the nation's wetlands. This comes after years of attempts by developers and the oil and gas industry to undermine the Clean Water Act provisions that protect wetlands in order to expedite various kinds of construction and resource extraction. Wetlands are vital ecologically and provide habitat to fish and other marine life while also enhancing the health of waterways overall, which is more critical than ever in these times of climate crisis and drought. Interestingly, the decision was far from unanimous unlike the Glacier v Teamster case discussed below, where Justice Jackson was the only dissenting vote.

In Glacier Northwest v. International Brotherhood of Teamster Local 174, the Court ruled 8-1 that striking Teamsters workers at a cement plant in Washington could be sued after going on strike and leaving cement trucks running with cement in them. Despite telling the company what they were doing, giving them a chance to empty them out, the company didn't do so leading to financial damages. The Court's ruling is significant because economic damages are one key tool that unions and the working class use against the owning and employing classes in their fight to reclaim some of their stolen labor power! This case may have serious repercussions throughout the labor movement, but it's crucial to remember that our main power is worker self-organization and that this is one thing that the bosses can't take away from us!

Preparations Underway for Potential UPS Strike

Teamsters UPS workers have made it clear that they intend to strike this summer if they are asked to work without a contract. This is a unique situation for several reasons including the massive number of workers and sectors of the economy that would be affected by a strike, as well as the fact that workers often go quite a while without a contract before striking. The strike would occur at the end of July, so stay tuned for more coverage of this in future issues and ways to stand in solidarity.

Climate Crisis: New York and Much of East Deal with Severe Air Pollution

Wildfires burning across the occupied Indigenous territories known as Canada have seriously polluted the air in New York and other parts of the East Coast. Bad air quality, whether caused by transportation, industrial activity or wildfire smoke, impacts the health of everyone, but is especially harmful to those with existing health conditions such as asthma. This will continue to be a problem that we'll have to deal with here in Portland as well. According to facilities protocols, we are supposed to open the windows in buildings without air conditioning to let in cool air in the mornings. It's also stated that we can shut off the air intakes if it gets too hot. The air intakes in most if not all buildings are fitted with filters, although it's not clear how much of the particulates from smoke these filters remove. It's also unclear what we're supposed to do when it's hot and smoky, since we can't open windows to let in colder air if the air quality is really bad. All schools do have HEPA air filters, and these provide some protection against COVID as well as particulates when used effectively, yet it's hard to imagine these having too much impact on the air quality of a whole building especially given how drafty many of the older schools are. All schools should have received a stock of N95 masks for such situations, which is essentially the district acknowledging that they don't have a way to actually keep the air clean in most buildings. It's also worth noting that despite our ongoing grievance regarding disaster pay, and efforts to put stronger language around this in the contract, we currently have no additional compensation for this or other severe weather events.