**Membership Meeting**

**Tuesday, Feb. 23, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.**

Our bargaining team will be present at our membership meeting: Angela Edwards, Niki Kelley, Robin Baker, Terry Deeds, and our labor rep Gary Aguiar. We will present the results of the pre-bargaining survey and discuss which proposals to prioritize. We welcome all nurses to share ideas at this meeting.

Join us on Zoom on your device. (While not necessary, we suggest downloading the app in advance.)

[https://zoom.us/j/2810307587?pwd=czBLMnBVOVMxKzJFWWh0b1ZSY1U3UT09](https://zoom.us/j/2810307587?pwd=czBLMnBVOVMxKzJFWWh0b1ZSY1U3UT09)
Meeting ID: 281 030 7587
Passcode: 6BjRSn
Dial from any phone: 253 215 8782
Meeting ID: 281 030 7587
Passcode: 070754

All nurses are invited to attend additional meetings our team has scheduled to prepare for bargaining.
Same Zoom login for all our meetings.

- **Tuesday, March 9, 4:00 p.m.** Development of proposals
- **Tuesday, April 6, 4:00 p.m.** Finalization of proposals

**A Bargaining Primer: Part One**

In this issue, we begin a series of articles to share information about the bargaining process. Our current contract expires June 30, 2021.

Our negotiators have listed possible proposals for your consideration in the survey that just closed.

Negotiating a labor contract is a complex and often messy process. In traditional bargaining, each side prepares and presents bargaining proposals to change the language of our existing contract. Thus, it is often called “bargaining a successor agreement” as compared to the situation where newly represented employees bargain a first contract.

At Benton County, we have used “Interest-Based Bargaining,” (IBB) where a third-party mediator is used to help us share our values and concerns.

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A Bargaining Primer: Part One (continued from page 1)

The product of either process is a proposed contract, which must be ratified by our membership. As we move into bargaining later this spring, our bargaining team is weighing whether to use IBB or traditional bargaining.

Many people suggest bargaining a labor contract is similar to buying a house or a car. The seller sets their price high and the potential buyer lowballs their initial offer. With the sale of a single asset, the marketplace is full of potential buyers and many commodities are available for sale.

In a labor contract, the employer holds a monopsony position, they are the sole purchaser of our nursing skills. We are a monopoly, the sole provider, or seller of nurse labor. Economists characterize such relationships as imperfect market conditions, where normal pricing pressures are absent.

Moreover, we also are bargaining a myriad of non-economic working conditions, like scheduling, hiring and use of PTO. Perhaps, a better analogy is a marriage. We have a labor contract with Benton County for many years. Our contracts could be conceptualized as a series of temporary compromises, where every time we bargain each side gets some, but not all, of what it wants.

A second misconception that many people bring is that negotiations only occur at the table. Our bargaining team works hard by listening to nurses, developing and drafting proposals, researching facts and arguments, asking questions of the employer, and trying to resolve the differences. However, our experience teaches that the best bargaining team, smartest lead negotiator, and well-researched proposals are not enough to move the employer.

Instead, our experience is that when a bargaining unit comes together in visible solidarity actions, the employer responds. Restated, to move our employer we need to show our unity in job actions like wearing buttons/stickers, displaying car signs, showing up at the bargaining table, sharing selfies/groupies of why we support our proposals, and participating in unity breaks.

Our Pay for Performance campaign gave us recent experience at building power in this way. A majority of our bargaining unit showed up for two meetings with county administrators. Nearly every nurse spoke or prepared a statement to state our views. We moved the employer to increase our wages. Both majority attendance and the mid-contract wage increase are almost unheard of in the labor movement.

When workers unite, we move the employer. In future articles in this series, we explain the formal process and terms used in bargaining as well as late stage negotiations and ratification.

Virtual Nurse Lobby Week

Feb. 22-26, 2021

Join hundreds of nurses and nursing students for Virtual Nurse Lobby Week, Feb. 22-26.

This is your opportunity to change Oregon’s health policies, improve nurse staffing, raise patient care standards and more by meeting with legislators to advocate for innovative health care solutions. Share your experiences and stories with legislators to help shape health policy for years to come!

Learn more and register for Nurse Lobby Week at: www.OregonRN.org

Legislative Priorities

• Hospital Nurse Staffing: Emergency Planning & Funding OHA for Effective Oversight
• Telehealth Reimbursement
• Workers Comp and COVID-19
• Public Health Modernization
• Addressing Racism as a Public Health Crisis
• Progress Toward Universal Health Care