On May 23, our ONA negotiation team was supposed to meet for a bargaining session with Columbia Memorial Hospital’s (CMH) management bargaining team. Unfortunately, management had to cancel the session due to their lawyer suddenly needing to attend an extended hearing with the National Labor Relations Board, regarding nurses at Legacy’s Unity Center forming a union with ONA. For more information on that please see https://www.oregonrn.org/page/news20190512 and recent coverage on Oregon Public Broadcasting: https://www.opb.org/radio/programs/thinkoutloud/segment/maupin-internet-addiction-dhs-unity-center-union/

Our members have expressed frustration that management is using a lawyer with such a large case load, as it makes it very difficult to reach an agreement and delays our annual wage increases. It’s simply not fair to the hardworking nurses at CMH to not see management prioritize these negotiations. Our own bargaining team has to use Earned Leave, not pick up available shifts, and/or work on their only days off for each of these bargaining sessions, while management has paid time to attend. It is disrespectful to our time for management to not bring proposals with real movement towards reaching an agreement.

As we look ahead, we only have two bargaining sessions scheduled for next week, on May 30 and 31, in which a very large amount of progress is going to be necessary to reach an agreement before our contract expires on May 31. Management’s initial response to the majority of our proposals have been very slow with understanding or accepting the changes that need to be made for our hospital to recruit and retain good nurses, as well as assure quality of care for our patients. We have reached tentative agreements on six articles, but still have 30 articles currently open for negotiation! At the same time, management continues to project extremely large operating margins, some of the highest in Oregon.

What happens when a collective bargaining agreement expires? Our contract has a special section in it that basically keeps the contract in effect after the expiration date, so the status quo should be maintained after May 31. Be sure to let your ONA representative know if there is a change in the status quo. However, there is still a problem after May 31, because there are no raises in the current contract scheduled after it expires. This makes the bargaining sessions on May 30 and 31 especially important! We need to pack the room to show them how serious we
Nurses Gearing up for More Actions (continued from page 1)

are taking this and stand together for a fair contract. Come on your meals and breaks, come on your day off. Pack the room!

Even if management isn’t moving forward, our nurses are. Our team was hard at work on May 23, even though the session was canceled. We are now conducting a mid-bargaining survey, so that we can really emphasize to management the list of items our nurses continue to push as our highest priorities. Additionally, our bargaining team and contract action team members visited nurses across all units during our canceled bargaining session, bringing free donuts and checking in with coworkers to make sure staff are getting proper breaks.

And we are moving forward with actions to show not only management, but the board of trustees, and the entire community how important this is. We’ve collected a huge number of signatures on our banner and signs. If you haven’t signed yet, there is still time this week! If you don’t know where to sign, be sure to ask your bargaining team rep, or email cooper@oregonrn.org. If we don’t reach a tentative agreement on May 31, please be sure to check your email and check in with your bargaining team reps for further instructions for our next actions in June. Our bargaining team and contract action team is ready to move forward, if needed, with further actions.

And again, we’re asking all ONA members to go to the following link to fill out our survey by noon on Wednesday, May 29.

How Can Every Nurse Do Their Part to Win a Strong Contract?

1) Continue to wear buttons and stickers every day.

2) Pack the bargaining room and wear black on bargaining days.

3) Put a sign in your car window and ask local business to put up signs of support as well. Get a sign from your contract action team (CAT) representative.

4) Sign the banners going around your department. Having signatures from every nurse to show support is key!

5) Pose for a picture holding a white board with a message of what is important to you! Send those pictures in as we are collecting them from all nurses for our PR efforts.

6) Talk to your coworkers about how we need every single nurse to take part to win a strong contract. Be sure to learn about what is important to them and share what is important to you. Discussions are key to supporting and standing behind each other to build a strong workplace!