Over the last 6 bargaining sessions (including many pre-negotiation meetings and trainings) your negotiation team worked long and hard to come to a final Tentative Agreement (TA) for your contract. Aletta Mannix, SKY BU Chair started yesterday’s session by reading a powerful two-page statement on your behalf and we presented an economic package that brought the nurses to their needed raises over the next three years.

Tentative Agreement Reached!

Your team showed up to negotiations in their “Essential” t-shirts to remind the hospital that without nurses, Sky Lakes could not provide ESSENTIAL care to the community!

Back row: Kristin Tyson, Steph Drake, Aletta Mannix, Michelle Roche
Front Row: Tessa McConnell, Julianne Underwood, Monica Meier, Misty Gravum, Ashley Chen

Priorities WON!

#1 Priority! Rested Nurses Are Ready Nurses!

We won strong and enforceable rest break language that incorporates shared governance in the decision making for how each unit will find solutions to make sure every nurse gets every contractual break (30-minute meal, three 15-minute breaks in a 12-hour shift), while ensuring meaningful patient care.

The hospital agreed to financial resources to enact these break coverage plans. The team was certain that there are no one-size fits all, cookie cutter plans for coverage, and feel that the nurses on the units, when provided with
the resources to do so, will have the best ideas on how to make breaks in their unit work.

**Flexibility And Stability With Alternate Scheduling!**

Our language, based in shared governance, to provide for the option of four day in a row schedules was agreed upon. If units decide they will incorporate four day in a row matrixes, the nurse will commit to that schedule and a predetermined review of the schedule will take place. If a new nurse takes on that matrix, they will commit to that schedule to prevent unit wide schedule disruption until the next review cycle at which point the nurse will request a schedule change, if desired.

**Maintaining Separation of Flex Team and Resource Team!**

This was a priority we identified as necessary to ensure there was a break team in place which could grow when we reached agreement on our priority of ensuring breaks. The Resource unit will provide critical coverage for breaks when units are ready to put into practice their plans. Flex team will continue to remain a separate team.

**Transparency On Step Increases**

We wanted to have a solution to nurses rarely knowing when their step increases were due. The agreed upon solution was to present to a nurse during their annual review how many hours they needed to reach their next step increase.

**Holidays**

We wanted a solution that met the goal of more nurses receiving some holiday pay over the eves of holidays. We reached an agreement where holiday hours will be Midnight to 11:59 p.m. (0000-2359)

**Retirement Plan Added To Contract**

We won adding the retirement contribution to the contract language to provide for its security during the current financial uncertainties. We saw the removal of the optional retirement contributions during the start of the COVID-19 crisis and wanted to protect the five percent retirement contributions within the contract.

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**Things We Fought Back On:**

- Removing the call back differential when called into work! Nurses will continue to receive their call differential when called back.

- The hospital wanted to add language allowing them to reprimand an ONA nurse leader if they thought the person was engaging in harassment of and retaliation towards non-dues members.

- Adding language that would have allowed a hospital representative in on the 15-minute union portion of New Employee Orientation.

- Adding language that would be disadvantageous to ONA during grievance arbitrations.

- The hospital wanted to remove ALL of article four-language on anti-discrimination – we refused.

- Reducing rest breaks from 15 minutes to 10 minutes, we refused this change and 15-minute breaks remain in the contract.

**Compromises**

MRO – We had a lot of discussion on the state of MRO for management request off during negotiations. The hospital agrees that the nurses are bearing the burden of many lost hours. They wanted to be able to offer work if it was foreseen that later in the day the nurse could be offered work; but were currently held to MRO at the start of the shift. The team discussed this in depth and decided that with needing work hours vs immediate MRO; most nurses would prefer the option to pick up hours later in the day. First MRO requests remain an option. We recognize that this new process will need additional education. We plan to have an information session where we can explain aspects of the new contract changes in depth. Look for more information on when this will take place.

**Compensation**

The nurses realized coming into negotiations that the financial situation we all find ourselves in currently is completely different than nine months ago, when COVID-19 first appeared. We acknowledge that the
hospital has incurred financial hits; however, we do know that the hospital is well on the way to recovery. The hospital started negotiations at an embarrassing low starting point of 0/1/1 over a three-year contract. We had hoped to come away with a competitive wage that will recruit and retain nurses. This was one of the hardest fought issues during these negotiations. We heard from nurses that they wanted at the MINIMUM to achieve a six percent wage increase over the next three years and they did NOT want to give up their call back differential.

We were finally able to agree to an overall six percent wage increase over a three-year contract.

**Wage Increases:**

- January-June 2021 – 0.5%
- July-December 2021 – 0.5%
- January-June 2022 – 1%
- July-December 2022 – 1%
- January-June 2023 – 1.5%
- July-December 2023 – 1.5%

This allows the hospital time to get back on firm financial footing and prevents wage stagnation for nurses. In three years we have every intention of fighting hard to make sure Sky Lakes nurses are receiving wages that compare regionally, which is what they deserve.

**Differential Increases**

- Increase in float differential to $3.00
- Removal of supplemental from retirement for increase in supplemental differential to $5.00
- Charge nurse increase to $3.25 in 2022

**Fixes:**

- We cleaned up language throughout the contract to gender neutral terms.
- We made clarifying language between float RNs with Tier 1 differentials and FLEX Team RNs with Tier 1 differentials.

**Things We Fought Back On:**

- July-December 2023 – 1.5%

Labor Council – the team was disappointed that management did not agree to a standing meeting with the union to address issues of common interest and concern. They said they are willing to meet with us whenever such a need exists. We will be immediately scheduling meetings with management to address issues that were not dealt with during these negotiations.

Successorship remains unknown. There are no guarantees in the contract that if the hospital were ever to change ownership, the union’s contract would be maintained.

**Things We Wish We’d Come Away With:**

Do you know we have a Sky Lakes/ONA Facebook page?

"SkyLakes Medical Center ONA all Nurses"
After you request to join, all you have to do is answer a question and you'll be added to the page.
Make Our Union Stronger by Becoming a Steward

Are you interested in learning more about representing your coworkers, problem-solving workplace issues, welcoming new members to their union, and building our union’s overall power to make improvements for nurses?

ONA stewards are the lifeblood of what makes our union strong. A strong union has at least one steward for every unit and shift. Stewards are there to answer colleagues’ questions and discuss concerns and help keep every nurse up to date on important union activities.

Register today to participate in a virtual steward training, Saturday, Nov. 7, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

More steward training dates are being finalized for December.

Visit www.OregonRN.org to learn more.

ONA Nurse Leadership Institute - Build Your Leadership Skills

Are you interested in taking your career to the next level? Apply today for the Oregon Nurses Association’s Nurse Leadership Institute (NLI). This free, year-long program is designed to help you improve your leadership and communication skills. Join a dynamic group of people who want to make positive change in health care through politics, practice and labor. In 2021, the NLI will focus on equity in nursing and health care during a series of monthly classes, a group project and a mentorship opportunity.

Space is limited and the deadline for applying is Nov. 30.

To learn more and complete your application, visit:

www.OregonRN.org/NLI