



# COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

## IT'S NOT AS SIMPLE AS ONE & DONE

Collective bargaining is the process by which unions representing their members negotiate contracts with the City or other employer to determine terms of employment, including pay, benefits, hours, leave, job health and safety policies, and ways to balance work and family. While it sounds simple, it's anything but.

The reality of the process is that Local 1180 has one goal in mind and the City has another — the Union wants to get the most it can for its members, and the City wants to give the least.

There are so many moving parts to the negotiating process that coming to terms on an agreement takes at a minimum several months, and sometimes even years. Just ask those unions that have been out of contract since 2015 and earlier.

"The contract bargaining process can be long and frustrating for our members, who are rightfully anxious to receive their raises and back money," said President Gloria Middleton. "We are keeping everyone informed with whatever information we have, but there just isn't that much to report. We have had four meetings so far, and we are making progress with each one. However, we cannot possibly predict a date when we will be finished as there is so much back and forth in order for us to get the best agreement with the most benefits we can for our members."

As soon as an agreement with the City is reached, members will receive retroactive pay to the date that the previous contract ended on May 5, 2018. Middleton said members are not losing out on any money as negotiations continue. DC 37, which holds the citywide bargaining certificate, is always the first to negotiate. While it appears that they resolved their contract quickly, the fact is that there were years of behind-the-scenes negotiating that the public did not see. Since Local 1180 operates under the auspices of the citywide agreement, we collaborate with other unions under the MLC to negotiate citywide issues.

Middleton said it would not be in anyone's best interest for the union to sit at the bargaining table and accept what the city offers, because members would not be happy with the outcome.

The chart below is a small indication of what the process looks like and why it is so lengthy. "We all wish this could be a 'one-and-done,' but it's not. The city negotiates with hundreds of locals, all of which want their contract done first. Every local takes a number and has to wait their turn. So much goes into the process that members just don't see," she said. ■

