



**NWSEO-NWS Contract Negotiations Update  
Negotiations Resume in March – Member input will Shape the Next CBA**

(March 7, 2016) The Federal Service Impasse Panel confirmed what NWSEO has been stating all along – that NWSEO and NWS are not at impasse. NWSEO and NWS will return to the bargaining table on March 22-24, months after the NWS unsuccessfully tried to claim the parties were not willing to negotiate.



NWSEO Negotiation Teams met in late February, to incorporate member input on CBA articles 1 – 20\*, and finalize preparations for upcoming CBA negotiations. This is one of many meetings the NWSEO Negotiation Teams have had over the past few months. The teams are preparing to negotiate the best possible contract for employees; the CBA is a contract that will shape the future of the NWS, including employees' rights, schedules, and benefits.

NWS Management recently hired its third contractor in two years, [Joseph Swerdzewsky](#), to help with negotiations. The NWSEO Negotiations Team are NWSEO members, your co-workers, who volunteered to take on this huge responsibility.

*From left: DeLyne Kirkham, Steve Pritchett, Dave Solano, Bill Hopkins, JoAnn Becker, Suzanne Sims, Dan Sobien*

**NWSEO Negotiations Team**

- Dan Sobien**, NWSEO President, Meteorologist and Chief Negotiator, Tampa Bay, FL
- Dave Solano**, NWSEO Secretary-Treasurer, Eastern Region Chair and Senior Hydrometeorologist. Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center, State College, PA.
- Steve Pritchett**, NWSEO HQ Chair and Meteorologist, Silver Spring, MD.
- JoAnn Becker**, NWSEO NCEP Chair and Meteorologist at the Aviation Weather Center, Kansas City, MO.
- John Werner**, NWSEO Southern Region Chair and Lead Forecaster, Mobile, AL.
- Suzanne Sims**, NWSEO Western Region Chair and Lead Forecaster, Monterey, CA.
- Robert Ruehl**, NWSEO Western Region Vice-Chair and Observation Program Leader, Eureka, CA.
- Nathan Becker**, NWSEO Pacific Region Vice-Chair and Oceanographer Ph.D., Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, Ewa Beach, HI
- Delyne Kirkham**, NWSEO Credentials Committee Co-Chair and Hydrometeorology Technician. Previously an Administrative Assistant. Elko, NV.

**NWS Negotiations Team**

- Kenneth Brown**, NOAA Workforce Management Office, Attorney
- David Murray**, NWS Management and Organization Division, Office of the Chief Financial/Chief Administrative Officer
- Allison Ziegler**, NOAA Office of General Counsel, Employment and Labor Law Division, Attorney

**Joseph Swerdzewsky**, Contracted attorney specializing in working with federal government employees and labor unions. [Joseph Swerdzewski & Associates, LLC.](#)

### **Background on November 2015 Ground Rules Negotiations**

You may recall in November, ground rules negotiations were stalled, due to actions of the NWS. At the end of the first week of two scheduled weekly meetings, NWS negotiator Ken Brown walked out on negotiations and claimed the teams were at impasse (that neither side is willing to negotiate). NWSEO consistently maintained the union was not at impasse and even tried scheduling additional meeting dates. The FSIP ruling this month, states, “The Union is willing to participate in further mediation with the Commissioner while the Employer continues to assert that Panel intervention is necessary at this juncture.” And “Based on the foregoing facts, it does not appear that the parties have exhausted voluntary efforts to reach agreement in their negotiations overground rules.”

The NWS is changing, as members you have the opportunity to make a positive impact on the agency. Your input on the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) articles will help design the future of the NWS and the working conditions of NWS employees. Your ideas are encouraged. This is your contract, it will be built by NWSEO membership, and we hope that you will participate with your steward and regional chair to suggest changes to enhance your employment as the CBA articles are distributed via email and on NWSEO Facebook. Your ideas may be sent to [NWSEOSTrong@nwseo.org](mailto:NWSEOSTrong@nwseo.org) or you may comment on the NWSEO Facebook page with the hashtag [#CBAMemberinput](#) used to organize the articles by number.

As a reminder, here’s how NWSEO is collecting input:

### **Summary of the CBA NEGOTIATIONS – NWSEO MEMBER INPUT PROCESS**

1. Several times a week, your steward will receive an email with one or more articles from the current NWS-NWSEO CBA.
2. The steward will forward the email to only the NWSEO members in your office. Members are asked to provide ideas and suggestions to improve the specific articles mentioned in the email. Please reply promptly to keep the process moving. Late submissions are accepted, read, and considered.
3. Please include the correct article numbers in the email subject line.
4. If a member comments late, you can still submit it or post it on the NWSEO Facebook site using [#CBAMemberinput](#)
5. Remember, you have to be an NWSEO member in order to have a say in the NWSEO-NWS negotiations. Please participate – This is your opportunity to have a voice in the future of the National Weather Service.
6. Please encourage new NWSEO membership and work to recruit new members in your office.

Once NWSEO has completed the collection of your ideas and input on the articles of the current CBA, they will have a period of time to collect input for new ideas and terms not addressed in the current contract. We thank you for your support on NWSEO and the work you do to keep our professional organization strong.

\*NWSEO is in the process of collecting input on CBA Articles 21-38. The NWSEO Negotiations Teams will continue to accept and review late input for Articles 1 -20.

-NWSEO-

**No one cares more for National Weather Service employees than  
National Weather Service employees.**

**No one works harder for National Weather Service employees than  
National Weather Service employees.  
We are NWSEO.**