RAAS Bargaining Update #1: July 21, 2023

"Where are we at now and what happens next?"

Where are we at with negotiations right now?

- Negotiations are ongoing, but have slowed down for the summer: our next negotiation sessions are scheduled for July 26 and August 29.
- We have not yet begun negotiating compensation, as there are a few non-financial items to settle first.
- Any salary increases we negotiate will be retroactive to May 1, 2023.

What happens next?

- If the negotiating teams reach an agreement on all proposals for the new Collective Agreement (early fall?), this "tentative agreement" will be brought to RAAS members (and the Board of Governors) for a ratification vote.
- There will be opportunities for questions and discussion of the tentative agreement before you cast your vote.
- With a majority vote to ratify the agreement, both sides sign the agreement and the new Collective Agreement comes into effect.

What *if* we reach an impasse?

The RAAS Negotiating Team is still hoping and planning to work out an agreement at the negotiating table.

For those who are wondering what happens if negotiations do break down and we reach an impasse, please refer to the chart.

- Conciliation: If we are not able to reach an agreement at the negotiating table, either party may request that the Labour Board appoint a conciliator to help us iron out the remaining points of disagreement.
 - An tentative agreement negotiated through conciliation will be brought to RAAS members for ratification.
- No board report: If conciliation does not work, either party can take job action (strike or lockout) or the two parties can agree to go through binding arbitration and have the outstanding articles of the Collective Agreement decided by an arbitrator.

Bargaining Basics for RAAS Members

Information Gathering

Our Negotiating Team gathered information through members' surveys and meetings in Fall 2022. We reviewed Memoranda of Understanding, past negotiations files, notes and queries from RAAS members, and our current Collective Agreement.

Priority & Mandate Development

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Based on a review of information gathered, our Negotiating Team identified our top priorities and needs, and we took them to you for your approval. With positive feedback and a strong majority affirmative vote from RAAS members, the Negotiating Team now a mandate.

Language Development

With a commitment to achieving their mandate, our Negotiating Team identified Collective Agreement editorial changes and refinements to be made, and has been creating proposals, developing specific language, and developing supportive rationales.

Protocol

Our Negotiating Team and Administration set out meeting frequency and dates, proposal exchange logistics, and who each team can communicate with and what can and cannot be shared.

At the Table

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We have been exchanging proposals and counterproposals on various items. As we negotiate, Articles and clauses are tentatively agreed to and set aside. If we can reach agreement on everything in this step, the Negotiating Team will bring the agreement for your approval ("ratification").

Bargaining Impasse

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We are here

If we cannot agree to everything at the table and impasse is reached, we will need to start talking about the possibility a strike enabling vote (aka "strike vote"). If successful, the RAAS executive can call a strike if a deal isn't reached by a certain date. If it fails, our Negotiating Team's power is drastically reduced. Talks between the two negotiation teams can continue regardless.

Bargaining Impasse: Conciliation

Conciliation involves a provincially appointed conciliator who tries to assist both sides to work towards an agreement. Job action (strike or lockout) cannot happen until conciliation has been tried. If an agreement is reached through conciliation, the Negotiating Team will bring the agreement for your approval ("ratification"). If no agreement is reached, the conciliator files a 'noboard' report to the Minister of Labour.

Bargaining Impasse: No-Board

Once the no-board is filed, the strike clock starts to tick - 17 days from a noboard, we would be in a legal strike position and Administration in a legal lock-out position. Talks usually continue during this time but a job action (a strike) could take place at any time after the 17 day countdown.

Bargaining Impasse: Voluntary Arbitration

If both sides agree, a paid, professional arbitrator can be brought in with the agreement of both parties. The decision of the arbitrator is final and is binding on both parties. We may not get all that we want.

Bargaining Impasse: Strike

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If there is no agreement reached between the parties by the deadline established by our Negotiating Team, a strike will be our clearest path to securing an agreement.



RENISON ASSOCIATION OF ACADEMIC STAFF