

Local 602 "*Chairman's Report*" for July 2011

Respectfully submitted by Rick Martinez / Shop Chairman

Local Contract Negotiations Update:

The Local 602 bargaining team will begin negotiations the week of July 18th. Your elected shop-committee has spent a great deal of time collecting and organizing all the demands that have been received from our membership. The entire "Committee Body" (all committee-persons) will be at our local union hall on Tuesday of this week to review all of your demands with the shop-committee. ***The last day to submit a demand is July 15th.***

Representation during negotiations:

As I had communicated at our June union meeting there could be issues with shop floor representatives being available during negotiations if we don't plan ahead. For example: if the alternate committee-person from a district is out...how does that position get covered? Understanding this, we have put together a plan and reviewed it with local management to provide representation on the shop floor during these negotiations. As I write this report we still are not satisfied with a couple of issues surrounding Zone coverage. I fully expect that this gets worked out.

Communications during negotiations:

Due to the nature of the negotiating process, there should be very little communications from the shop-committee to the membership as we bargain our local contract. I will fully expect that both the union and management members of their respective bargaining teams maintain a high level of confidentiality during the negotiating process. We cannot afford to allow news media reports that are unfounded to hamper our talks with management.

National Contract Negotiations Update:

On June 28th President Reed and I attended a meeting in Detroit to review National bargaining issues and speak with our leadership. UAW President, Bob King, and Vice President Joe Ashton presided over the meeting that was for all UAW/GM Chairman, Presidents, and International representatives. Our servicing representative, Melvin Coleman, was in attendance with us. The national bargaining resolutions/demands were shared with the representatives of each plant and the proper motions and approvals were made to carry those demands forward into National negotiations.

There was a significant amount of discussion from the floor at this meeting surrounding some key and emotional issues that are present during these negotiations. Issues such as buyouts, retiree health care, document 8, two-tier employment, and skilled trades related concerns were all brought to our leadership's attention.

Our International UAW leadership spoke to the fact that they believe that these negotiations are very important and very cumbersome at the same time. Our membership gave up a significant amount of contractual items in order for the company to stay sound. These sacrifices are, and always will be, a testament to the commitment that we all shared to maintain a competitive work environment here in the US. Coming out of the bankruptcy our plants are producing high quality vehicles that are well received in the marketplace. Consumer confidence is high and sales are good. To maintain this customer confidence and the sales and job security that go along with it, we were directed by International President King *"to do everything possible to work with local management on all initiatives to insure that a high quality vehicle is produced at each of our factories"*.

Quality is not the only driving factor for sales, recognizing that the buying public, here in the US, are the tax-payers whose money was used to help us survive, both our International UAW and GM do not want these negotiations to create a perception that labor and management are going back to "business as usual" in regards to running the business. Bad perception could equal bad sales....Summing this message up UAW Vice-President Ashton stated "General Motors is gaining market share for the first time in a long time and we must forge a fair agreement that allows this to continue to be the case".

UAW Vice President Aston closed his portion of the meeting by confirming that he is very aware that our factories have been under a high amount of pressure to produce and these pressures have created issues between local union leadership and the local management. He stated "I'm not naïve to the fact that just because there are good relationships at the top between union and management that is not necessarily the case at the plant level".

Local Union Communications:

President Reed and I have a mutual desire to provide the best, up to the minute, communications to our entire membership. We are working thru all the issues that prevent these types of communications from happening. There are many mechanisms to communicate, but the best way, to get to the most members in the shortest amount of time, is the Local 602 website. **In order to gain access to "members only" information on the 602 website each member must register on the website. Please inform your fellow workers to register if they haven't.**