



12/10/10

Issue #7

Operations

News you can use in maintenance, transportation & administration

Shelly's view

The busy holiday season is here!



I hope the season finds you surrounded by family and friends full of good cheer and in good health.

I would like to take a moment to encourage you to celebrate safely. When you attend holiday parties consider a designated driver, a cab, or better yet

let one of your co-workers drive you home on the bus or MAX. For those who work as transit professionals, loss of a CDL isn't just an inconvenience; it is a life changing event that can result in the loss of employment. More importantly, your health and safety and the safety of others are too important to take chances, so please celebrate safely.

Speaking of celebrations, the District is happy to partner with the various action committees to provide the annual holiday events. The action teams staffed by volunteer employees throughout Operations are busy making plans for these events, many of the teams work all year long to raise funds for the various holiday meals, then do plenty of shopping and food prep just to make the event happen. Thanks to each of the volunteers for your hard work, I look forward to stopping by some of the events to say hello and lend a hand.

Parking on Center Street

The backup of buses entering the yard has become quite a problem. The parking on Center Street next to the administration building street is clearly posted no parking after 6 p.m. If any of you are parking there and are not able to move your auto before 6 p.m., please park in a different location. The full width of the street is needed to stage returning buses and help keep 17th Street clear. Autos parked there after 6 p.m. will be towed.

Santa hats & TriMet sweatshirts permitted Dec. 16–Jan. 1

Operators may wear TriMet holiday sweatshirts and "Santa"-style hats as part of their uniforms from December 16 through New Year's Day, January 1.

The most up-to-date policies on uniforms (SOP B106 for bus; Rule A.1.5 for rail) are available on TriNET or from your manager.



A Message from the GM

Setting the facts straight: What you aren't hearing from ATU leadership

It's been alleged that I will no longer honor the contract: Not true. We are honoring the contract fully. But the contract does not require TriMet to pay increases in salary and medical insurance costs past the contract expiration date. In fact, the state law is quite clear that wages and benefits "shall remain frozen at the level last in effect before the agreement expired." Further, Fred Hansen [notified the ATU of this in October of 2009](#). My notice to the ATU of this was in September of this year.



It's also been alleged that the decision to freeze wages and health insurance premium contributions was to retaliate against the ATU for filing an unfair labor practice complaint: Again, this is not true. As noted above, Fred notified the Union of this provision of state law in fall of 2009. Although I'm disappointed the union's unfair labor practice (ULP) is blocking the arbitration and preventing us from resolving the underlying issues of salary and benefits, we would have frozen wages and benefits in accordance with state law regardless of whether the ATU had filed the ULP.

Finally, it's been alleged that TriMet is refusing to negotiate fairly: Not true. We recently offered to take off the table the issues the ATU raised in its initial ULP, i.e., the issues that the ATU contends we didn't raise in negotiations (that's not true either, but in our view, not worth arguing about). Unfortunately, this wasn't enough. The ATU also wanted us to grant additional wage increases and pay additional medical insurance costs that arose after the contract expired. I don't blame them; but, unlike the ATU, we don't see that as a prerequisite to talking about the real issues. If an employer was obligated to grant wage increases and pay additional insurance premium costs even after the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement, there would be no reason for negotiating!

So for now we are stuck while the parties muddle through the ULP case. I think the uncertainty of this is harmful to both sides. TriMet looks forward to resolving this either through negotiations or a speedy arbitration process.

(This was initially published in Neil's Notes on TriNET. A copy of the Oct. 2009 letter from Hansen to Hunt may be viewed on TriNET.)

See TriNET or your manager for the most up-to-date information.

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