

# SOLIDARITY *News*

FROM OUR STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE WITH ASARCO

Vol. IV, #2



February 8, 2024

## Unified Bargaining Committee Continues Creative Work

The unions' Unified Bargaining Committee (UBC), provided Asarco a revised comprehensive economic proposal on Feb. 6 at approximately 9:15 a.m. The proposals trimmed our wage demands, but would have still raised wages by more than 25% on average.

The UBC also proposed replacing the company pension plan with a multi-employer pension in 2025 to address the company's demand to freeze the Asarco pension plan. Our proposal honors the three-legged stool of retirement security (Social Security, pension and 401k savings). Because the company's proposal eliminated the Copper Price Bonus, we proposed a profit sharing plan that would result in meaningful payouts tied to realistic profit margins with safeguards.

Asarco took the rest of the morning and the remaining day to fashion 48 questions and complaints about our proposals. We stayed up until nearly 1 a.m. to give the management meaningful responses, hoping they were taking our proposals seriously.

Unfortunately, Asarco rejected every single one of our proposals. Instead of seeking common ground, they presented their 2nd comprehensive economic proposal that once again came as an all-or-nothing package proposal. Acceptance would delete successorship (a buyer could refuse to hire any worker or recognize the union), chop seniority rights and leave us with no wage increases in years two or three - instead offering a one-time lump sum payment that would average \$1,000 per employee before taxes. Their proposal would also eliminate the valuable Copper Price Bonus and replace it with a profit sharing plan that we need more information to evaluate, but it's proposed as a plan that Asarco can change after 2025, leaving it effectively meaningless.

We ended the day by proposing a USW Healthcare plan that would preserve insurance benefits for members and would lower healthcare costs by approximately \$1 million dollars the first year.

Your Unified Bargaining Committee continues to work hard to find creative ways to reach an agreement. We remain cautiously optimistic. We resume bargaining in late March and will keep you updated.

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