

The New NAATS

Sunday, 18 June 2006

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What happens if NAATS wins the NLRB Election?

A discussion of some of the things that will happen if NAATS wins.

What happens if NAATS wins the NLRB Election

A number of people have inquired what NAATS will look like in the future if it wins the upcoming election and gets certified to represent the Flight Service bargaining unit at Lockheed Martin. There is no way to respond with any certainty because our members will, themselves, be responsible for drafting and approving a new constitution structured to accommodate our new relationship with Lockheed Martin, as well as our continuing relationship with the FAA. However, I can offer some projections.

Officers and Elections

In all likelihood, the number of officers will be pared down and we will have a smaller Executive Board, or Board of Directors. I would envision that we will continue to have a Vice President elected by our Alaska members along with any other FAA or "public employees." In addition, we may have just three Vice Presidents elected by the Lockheed Martin employees associated with each of its three hubs and their affiliated AFSS's, along with a President elected by everyone. And, I would expect that once the new constitution has been adopted that new officer elections would be conducted soon thereafter. And I am confident that each facility will elect one or more representatives who would be responsible, at a bare minimum, for handling employee grievances.

Responsibility for collective bargaining

If NAATS wins the NLRB election and is certified, we will want to begin the collective bargaining process with Lockheed Martin promptly and attempt to put into place at least an interim agreement ASAP. Under the current constitution, and in all likelihood under any amended constitution, members will be entitled to ratify any and all collective bargaining agreements. And even before negotiations are begun, I would expect that members would be consulted to insure that our bargaining demands will reflect their needs and wishes, such that the resulting agreement would be one that would meet with their approval. And I would expect that the amended constitution would provide some mechanism for the selection by members of a bargaining committee to assemble bargaining proposals and supervise, if not participate actively in, the bargaining process. For starters, I would expect that we would ask Lockheed Martin to agree to most of the provisions in the agreement we had with the FAA.

Dues and Initiation Fees

Never in its history has NAATS charged an initiation fee. There is no requirement that new members pay such a fee in our current constitution and it is unlikely that an amended constitution would require payment of an initiation fee. As for monthly dues, that amount will be set in the new constitution and it will have to be approved by secret ballot vote of the membership; in other words, they will set their own dues; it will not be imposed by some executive fiat. Presumably, it will be enough to cover the projected costs of negotiating and administering agreements, i.e., handling employee grievances and arbitrating those that cannot be settled. I'm quite certain that no one would be willing to fund a bloated treasury, or pay anyone a fancy salary or anything other than bare out-of-pocket expenses or fees for necessary expenses. Together, we will analyze our projected expenses and then calculate what dues will be needed to cover them.

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Every union should, and NAATS will most certainly, belong to its members. There will not be some group of individuals who will dictate anything. It will be whatever you want it to be, and are willing to make it become. We will all of us want to, and need to, apply ourselves to build and support a union structure that will enhance and protect our workplace security and welfare by forming a constructive and mutually respectful relationship with Lockheed Martin management at every level.