# APWU: Contract Mediation Ending

*June 4, 2019* — On Monday, June 3 President Mark Dimondstein and Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman informed the National Executive Council (NEC) that the mediation process was unsuccessful in leading to a voluntary collective bargaining agreement. The NEC was provided a full update and given the opportunity to question the Chief Negotiator and Spokesperson fully about the mediation and negotiation process.

The APWU began the mediation process by meeting with the mediator, appointed by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS), to receive an overview of the mediation process.  The meeting, held at APWU headquarters, included all the members of the APWU core negotiating committee (President, Vice-President, Industrial Relations Director, and the three Craft Directors) as well as the Secretary-Treasurer and the Assistant Craft Directors. Anyone who could not physically attend the meet at headquarters could participate via teleconference and some did so.

Mediation then began with joint meetings with the mediator and the chief spokespersons of both the USPS and the APWU present. The mediator would meet independently with each party as necessary during the sessions. Following these day-long meetings with the chief spokespersons, the individual Craft Directors and their assistants met in separate day-long sessions with their Postal Service counterparts and the mediator.

After five full days of mediation, the mediator declared that the two parties were too far apart in their demands and positions. Since the parties were so far apart, the mediator did not believe further discussions would lead to a new collective bargaining agreement and further mediation would prove to be unsuccessful.

The APWU, while hopeful that mediation would have been successful, has been vigorously preparing for interest arbitration. The APWU team of your national officers, attorneys, staff members, and members-from-the-field have and are working hard to develop the case and supporting evidence to support our demands.

The USPS and the APWU will now move into the next stage of the process of jointly selecting an arbitrator to chair the three-member panel who will hear the case for a new contract. Once the arbitrator has been selected and appointed, the parties will ask the chairperson to provide dates she or he has available to begin hearing the case.