

July 2008 News

Monday, July 14th, 2008: As most of you know, July 14th marked the start date of a major change in Maxi-B. The new outside “dog runs” for those inmates serving disciplinary time as well as the new outside recreation area for ADM inmates held in Maxi-B, have opened. This marks a major change in the working conditions for those officers assigned to Maxi-B. Per our collective bargaining agreement, any changes that have a significant impact on officers or their working conditions are subject to the bargaining process. On July 11th, 2008 a letter was sent to the administration requesting a formal meeting so that the NEPBA Local #550 could be afforded an opportunity to bargain before the implementation of the new “Maxi-B Outside Recreation Guidelines”, however we have not yet received a response. The Local #550 E-Board has been in contact with the NEPBA attorneys to research any options for compensation we may have for the administrations failure to bargain with the union. We will keep you informed of any updates.

Friday, July 18th, 2008, 10:00 a.m.: Today marked the first day in the arbitration/termination hearing for Officer Shelia Fortin. Officer Fortin was terminated for actions that allegedly occurred during the early morning hours of Sunday, September 16th, 2007. After laying down all the ground rules with the arbitrator, all parties toured the Work Release building entry way and booth where Officer Fortin was located during those early morning hours. Afterward all parties returned to the Crown Plaza and the proceedings began. For the remainder of the day, Kim Rozack counsel for the Sheriff’s Department and NEPBA attorney Diane Byrnes questioned the first witness called to the stand, Assistant Deputy Superintendent Peter D’Elia. After completing the first round of questioning it was decided by the arbitrator that all parties would adjourn for the day. It was agreed that the proceedings would begin again at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 12th, 2008 and would continue until Tuesday August 13th, 2008 if needed. At 5:30 p.m. all parties were released for the day. It should be noted that NEPBA attorney Diane Byrnes has done a phenomenal job thus far, having spent the better part of the previous week with Officer Fortin. Special thanks to Sergeant Steve Hart, Officer Steve Benson, Officer Paul Salvadore and Officer Michael Hampton, all of whom showed up on the side of Officer Fortin and the NEPBA.

Monday, July 21st, 2008: There have been a lot of questions lately about our vision and dental benefits afforded to us through the NEPBA. Allow us to take a moment and hopefully answer any questions you may have. On April 19th, 2008, MCOFU did what they do best and screwed the entire membership by canceling, without advanced notice, our dental and vision insurance. Effective June 1st, 2008, the entire Local 550 membership is officially covered through the New England PBA Dental & Vision Trust. All members who are enrolled in will be covered by, MetLife (Dental) and MetEye (Vision). Furthermore, as a show of good faith, the NEPBA has agreed to cover all out-of-pocket expenses (keeping in line with your previous coverage) for those members who had any work done from the date we were cut off through the implementation of our new

policies. However, all bills must be submitted to the New England PBA Health & Welfare trust no later than August 31st, 2008. Also, under MCOFU's pathetic representation, the amount you had to pay for your vision and dental actually increased so you ended up paying more out-of-pocket while every other Sheriff's Department in the state, as well as the DOC, covers 100% of the employee's premium. Those members pay nothing. The NEPBA, as promised, has agreed to cover 100% of our premium until they are able to bargain a substantial increase in the amount the Sheriff's Department pays into our dental and vision.

If you plan to use these benefits please know that you will NOT be receiving any cards for these plans. Instead, you will need to give your dentist or optometrist your social security number, as well as the name of the carrier, so they can look you up in their system. That is all you need to do. If you have any questions feel free to contact any E-Board member or steward.