End of Bargaining Checklist.

Before you attempt to close a negotiation:

1. What do the ground rules, if any, say about closure issues?
    Note: If you're unhappy with them, there's no prohibition on reopening ground rules unless you've agreed not to do so. You'll just have to pay for it.
2. What EXACTLY is still on the table?
    a. Proposals, yours or theirs?
    b. Counterproposals, yours or theirs?
    c. Packages, trades, etc.?
3. Are there any negotiability issues outstanding?
    a. If so, will their determination affect the completion of bargaining?
    b. If not discussed in ground rules, don't close unless you cover or you'll end up with single issue bargaining if the FLRA finds one or more to be bargainable.
4. Are any unfair labor practices involving bargaining outstanding?
5. Are any information requests outstanding?
6. Have you considered ratification?
    Note: Most unions don't ratify since the Panel took away the clout of a failure to ratify by deciding bargaining was in essence void and the parties either submitted the entire agreement to the panel or went back to square one. In other words, a "line item veto" by the membership is a non-starter. They may use it in an attempt to delay.
7. Have you considered Agency Head Review?
    Note: I take the (perhaps arrogant position) that if the union wants to ratify, the Agency Head Review timeline begins when the Agency is presented a ratified contract.
8. Who will sign (execute) the contract?
    a. For the union?
    b. For the Agency?
    c. Will there be a ceremony?
9. What time lag do you want/need between execution date and effective date?
    Note: There's lots to do in this period so don't set a date you won't want to meet.
10. Who's doing the proofreading on the contract before execution?
    a. For You?
    b. For the Union?
11. Which version of the contract is official?
    a. Used at arbitration?
    b. Used at reopening, renegotiation, etc?
12. Are you going to print it or post it on the inter- or intranet?