



Mail Handlers Local Union No. 323

1602 Selby Ave., Suite 5 St. Paul, MN 55104
(651) 646-2827 Fax (651) 646-0991 LocalOffice@local323.org

Minutes of the Local Union 323 Executive Board Meeting ST. PAUL, MN September 22, 2015

Jeff Larsen

Local President

Kathy Schultz

Vice President

Dean Abatte

Recording Secretary

John Frey

Treasurer

State Executive

Board Members

Shane Ryden

Minnesota

Brock Engstrom

North Dakota

Branch Presidents

Dean Abatte

Minneapolis

Gerald LaBarre

St. Paul

Mike Straiton

NDC

Gary Tollefsrud

Fargo

IN ATTENDANCE:

Local President: Jeff Larsen

Vice President: Kathleen Schultz

Recording Secretary: Dean Abatte

Treasurer: John Frey

MN State Representative: Shane Ryden

ND State Representative: Brock Engstrom

Local President Jeff Larsen called the Executive Board to order at 10:04 a.m.

The Local Executive Board reviewed the previous meeting minutes from June 29, 2015. MNSR Shane Ryden motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Vice President Kathleen Schultz. No objections, the motion carried unanimously.

Local President Jeff Larsen reports: (see attached for full report)

- Scholarship Awards
- Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU)
- National Negotiations – Contract Proposals
- Mail Handler Benefit Plan Seminar
- Local 323 Dental Program
- District Labor Management Meeting

Branch Activities

- Metro Branches
- Out-State Branches
- North Dakota Branch Issues

Local President Jeff Larsen submitted for review his Expense Report and Time Sheet. Vice President Kathleen Schultz moves to authorize the Local Presidents expenses for the time frame reported. Recording Secretary Dean Abatte seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Local President Jeff Larsen submitted for review his Leave Hours and Time Sheet for 2015.



Treasurer's report:

Local Treasurer John Frey submitted the Local's Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statements. NDSR Engstrom motioned to authorize the expenses of the Local Union for the time frame enumerated. The motion was seconded by MNSR Ryden, motion carried.

Discussion regarding compensation package for the 2016 National Convention. Proposal of \$600 to cover all transportation expenses to include Flight, 40 hours of paid wages to include night differential and Sunday premium as applicable and \$250 per diem for the week. Proposal subject to Board approval.

The Executive Board discussed and approved the purchase of three (3) \$50 gift visa cards to donate to the Minneapolis Veterans Day display to be used for a drawing for those that attended.

President Larsen solicited proposals for the 2016 contract negotiations.

President Larsen opens the floor for general discussion, comments, questions, hearing none, Vice President Schultz motions to adjourn the Local Executive Meeting.

The motion was seconded by Treasurer John Frey. Meeting adjourned at 1:36

Respectfully Submitted,

Dean Abatte
Recording Secretary Local 323
National Postal Mail Handlers Union

cc: **Local Union Council**
Branch Leaders
File



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September 22, 2015

Local President's Report

Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 career complement as of PP-18-15 is 618 (551 MN & 67 ND) and the MHA complement is 80 (71 MN & 9 ND). Combined Membership is 621.

Local Issues:

- **Scholarship Awards**

Jacob Vitek was selected as the recipient of the 2015 Local 323 scholarship. Jacob is the son of Saint Paul Branch Member Doug Vitek. The entire Local Union Council wishes Jacob the best in his pursuit of higher education.

In addition, I would like to offer congratulations to Haley Chinander on being awarded the Arthur S. Vallone scholarship sponsored by the National Union. Haley is the daughter of Saint Paul Branch (L&DC) Member Royal Chinander.

There can be no question that the Saint Paul Branch ran the table when it came to scholarships this year.

- **Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU)**

In early August I was in attendance at the SAMLU which was held in Boston, MA. This was the first SAMLU under our new National President Paul Hogrogian. The agenda included reports from the National Officers, a Legislative and Political Report, a Litigation Report, the Mail Handler Benefit Plan Report, an update on the MHBP Partial Reimbursement Program, and the report of the Contract Administration Department.

The second evening was dedicated to our retiring National President John Hegarty who has been awarded the title of President Emeritus by the National Executive Board. John headed the National Union since July of

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Local President

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Fargo



2002 and made it a more formidable organization. Those who truly understand the challenges that we faced and those of us who have also had to lead an organization through difficult times will always be grateful for his commitment. We wish John all the best in his retirement.

The third day consisted of a brain storming session regarding proposals for the 2016 National Agreement. This is going to be an extensive endeavor for which we are going to be well prepared.

- **National Negotiations – Contract Proposals**

As everyone is aware, the first step in determining the proposals which will be submitted at the bargaining table is the solicitation of ideas from the Membership. That solicitation went out in August with a due date of September 30, 2015. Local 323 will be discussing and formulating its proposals at a meeting of the Local Executive Board and at a subsequent General Membership Meeting.

It should also be noted that I've been appointed by National President Paul Hogrogian to serve as a Member of the Field Negotiating Committee. So, give me your ideas and proposals. I can't guarantee that they'll all make it to the bargaining table. But I will guarantee they get heard by the committee.

- **Mail Handler Benefit Plan Seminar**

In October the Local 323 marketing team will be in attendance at the 2015 Mail Handler Benefit Plan Seminar which will be held in Atlanta, GA. Specifically, Vice President Kathleen Schultz, Minneapolis Branch Steward Brad Kaluza, and North Dakota State Executive Board Member Brock Engstrom, will participate in the training to prepare for marketing the plan during this year's open season.

Kathleen Schultz and Brad Kaluza serve as our primary Health Plan Representatives in the State of Minnesota. Brock Engstrom performs the same functions in the State of North Dakota. The Mail Handler Benefit plan should be more competitive this year and we are committed to ensuring that it receives maximum exposure throughout both States.

From an administrative standpoint, Local Treasurer John Frey and I have begun the process of enrolling Local 323 in the 2015 Partial Reimbursement Program. This program allows us to receive compensation for approved health fair and serves to offset our marketing expenses.

- **Local 323 Dental Program**

Local 323 will continue to offer dental insurance to our Regular Membership as well as Postal and Federal employees who choose to affiliate as Associate Members. It should

be noted that this program is available to MHAs as soon as they enroll in the Union. We will be working with HealthPartners once again to roll out this year's plan. Plan information will be available around the same time as open season.

- **District Labor Management Meeting**

Recently Vice President Kathy Schultz, Minneapolis Branch President Dean Abatte, and I, attended the Northland District Labor Management Meeting. Much of the discussion concerned the district's financial performance as well as mail delivery standards; although, there were also discussions regarding what seems to be the never ending game of musical chairs being played with operations among the metro facilities. This operation is going to be performed in that building. When? We don't know. When will you know? We'll have to get back to you...

Minnesota Branches:

- **Metro Branches**

Anyone that's been watching the bulletin boards knows that a controversy has ensued concerning the implementation of the Small Parcel Sorting System (SPSS). Specifically, craft jurisdiction. The determinations made (and the re-made) have occurred at the national level. Consequently, the National Union has taken several actions to protest this unprecedented reversal of position by the Postal Service. An SPSS is currently in the process of being installed in the Saint Paul plant; so, Branch President Jerry LaBarre and I have been coordinating with the National and Regional levels concerning the implementation of the machine. There's going to be a lot of paperwork created.

In late August I joined Branch President Dean Abatte and Vice President Kathy Schultz for a Labor – Management meeting in the Minneapolis Branch. Conversion of MHAs and the filling of residual duty assignments topped the agenda. Of course no Labor – Management meeting would be complete these days without an episode of this machine is coming here and that machine is going there. Branch President Abatte is continuing to press for answers on these issues and we all know that El Gato can be quite tenacious.

More recently, and along with Branch President Mike Straiton, Chief Steward Keith Unterseher, and Steward John Frey, I attended a Labor – Management meeting at the NDC. Staffing, MHA conversions, Safety, and believe it or not, the relocation of operations, were among the topics of discussion. It should also be noted that Keith is retiring at the end of October. He has served as our Chief Steward at the NDC for many, many, years. If you should come across him during the next few weeks please express your thanks and congratulations. He deserves both.

In all of the metro Branches the conversion of MHAs remains a permanent industry. So far this year we have seen 53 MHAs converted to career in the Northland District. All of those conversions occurred at the NDC, Saint Paul, and Minneapolis Branches. I could say, based upon my dialogue with other Local Unions that we are doing better than average, even significantly better than average; but, I doubt that would be of any consolation to those awaiting conversion. Moreover, I'm reasonably sure that the conversion of all MHAs nationwide will be pursued during National negotiations; but, that's quite a ways away and may not come to fruition. So, in the mean time we must continue plugging away at our level. Retirements, resignations, and other personnel actions will continue to provide us with opportunities. If at some future time there is a nationwide conversion of MHAs then that would be great. They will be back filled with new MHAs and the process will start all over again. That's why it's a permanent industry.

- **Out-State Branches**

I'm continuing to work with the outstate Branches, primarily Duluth and Mankato. In Duluth, Chief Steward LeeAnn Johnson has been successful resolving the myriad cross craft grievances resulting from management's recent antics and is now addressing management's plan to realign the Mail Handler duty assignments.

In Mankato, Chief Steward Sean Kelly has recently resolve a backlog of cross craft grievances which resulted in a substantial monetary remedy to the Mail Handlers. In addition, Sean and I just finished perfecting a step 3 appeal concerning spreading the mails.

While I'm regularly contacted by one of the St. Cloud Mail Handlers, that Branch as well as the Rochester Branch are being handled primarily by Minnesota State Executive Board Member Shane Ryden.

North Dakota Branches:

ND State Executive Board Member Brock Engstrom continues pursuing grievances in Bismarck, Grand Forks, and along with Branch President Gary Tollefsrud, in Fargo. The Bismarck facility has recently seen a significant increase in complement, at least on a percentage basis. MHA conversions continue due to Brock's efforts. In fact, the first MHA conversions seen in Local 323 happened in North Dakota. We continue seeking Stewards for the facilities of Bismarck and Grand Forks. Anyone who is interested may contact Brock in Fargo or me at the Local Office.

Upcoming Events:

Saint Cloud Branch Meeting – Pending
General Membership Meeting – September

MHBP Seminar – Atlanta, GA – October
Fargo Branch Meeting – October 24th
Field Negotiating Committee – Washington, DC - October

Fraternally,

Jeff Larsen
Local President

cc: All Branches
File