



# 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 Council Meeting ST. PAUL, MN December 29, 2014

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*

Local President, Jeff Larsen called to order the Local Union 323 Council at 11:17 a.m.

Recording Secretary Dean Abatte took roll call.

### IN ATTENDANCE:

**Local President:** Jeff Larsen

**Vice President:** Kathleen Schultz

**Recording Secretary:** Dean Abatte

**Treasurer:** *Absent*

**MN State Representative:** Shane Ryden

**ND State Representative:** Brock Engstrom

**NDC Branch President:** *Absent*

**St. Paul Branch President:** Gerald LaBarre

**Minneapolis Branch President:** Dean Abatte

**Fargo Branch President:** Gary Tollefsrud

Review of the Previous Minutes:

The Council reviewed the minutes from the last meeting on December 27, 2013. NDSR Brock Engstrom motioned to accept the minutes of the previous meeting and was seconded by Vice President Kathy Schultz. The motion carried.

### Presidents Report:

President Larsen provided the Council a copy of the President's report. (See attached copy).

### Local Activities

- Open Season Activities
- Local 323 Dental Program
- USPS Data Breach
- Lead Clerk Arbitration Decision
- "4 Walls" Concept

## **Branch Activities**

- Fargo Workplace Environment Meeting
- Minnesota Branches
- North Dakota Branch Issues
- Labor Management Meetings

## **Treasurers Report**

The Members of the Council were provided a copy of the Treasurers report.

## **Officers Reports**

### **Fargo Branch President Tollefsrud Reports:**

Target compliment of 40 FTRs, 8 MHAs and 2 Casuals.

Fargo Annex may be in line for a new Annex to process Flats, Parcels and Priority Packages. Service Standards Change “4 Walls” reviewed and discussed changes and impact to the Mail Handlers in Fargo to begin January 5<sup>th</sup>.

Last Branch Meeting October 25<sup>th</sup> 2014. Attendance down.

### **St. Paul Branch President Gerald LaBarre Reports:**

Ongoing issues with fulfillment of RFI’s. Unable to develop and resolve grievances at the lowest possible level due to Management non-compliance of requests for information. Similar compliance issues across the Local reported by all Branches.

### **Minneapolis Branch President Dean Abatte Reports:**

Continued discussions with Management regarding the “4 Walls” concept and the impact on the Minneapolis Mail Handlers. Management maintains that nothing will change in the foreseeable future for Mail Handler bids other than possible start time adjustments. They have a wait and see approach. First up are employee meetings discussing the concept. Clerk movement and how it impacts Mail Handler bids. Management updates continue. The Union will monitor the situation and give input.

Ongoing issues regarding PIV in Minneapolis. The Union has requested discussions with Management to address the many issues related to PIV.

## **Open Discussion**

Issues related to the Local Bylaws were discussed, specifically Art.6 (Salary). The current language only allows for a LV 5 Step “O” pay structure. New language addressing the Step “P” level was discussed. The issue was tabled for future discussion giving the Council an opportunity to mull over what the new language should be before presenting it for consideration.

NDSR Brock Engstrom motioned to adjourn, Vice President 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, motion carried and meeting adjourned at 1:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dean Abatte  
Recording Secretary Local 323  
National Postal Mail Handlers Union

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



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December 29, 2014

## Local President's Report

### Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 career complement as of PP-25-14 is 607 (543 MN & 64 ND) and the MHA complement is 92 (82 MN & 10 ND). Combined Membership is 618.

### Local Activities:

- **Open Season Activities**

Following updated training at the Mail Handler Benefit Plan Seminar, the Local 323 Health Plan Representatives embarked upon another open season attending health fairs throughout the States of Minnesota and North Dakota. Kathy Schultz, Brock Engstrom, and Brad Kaluza, have made every effort to provide the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan with extensive exposure. The open season health fairs have now been completed and we will be receiving the results of our efforts sometime after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.

- **Local 323 Dental Program**

In addition to the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan, Local 323 continues to offer our Dental Plan to the Regular Membership as well as Postal and Federal employees who chose to affiliate as Associate Members. The 2015 plan was offered without a change in benefits or an increase in premiums. I continue to serve as the plan administrator.

- **USPS Data Breach**

The announcement of the data breach indicated the compromise of files containing employee names, social security numbers, dates of birth, addresses, beginning and end dates of employment, and emergency contact information for current employees. In response the Postal Service initiated service talks and provided handouts which informed employees of this situation and described how it would be handled.

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*NDC*

Gary Tollefsrud

*Fargo*



In addition, by November 20th everyone should have received a letter from the PMG which included an enrollment code for a credit monitoring service that can be utilized free of charge for one year. While the action taken appears to be decisive and timely in this regard, some members of Congress have been highly critical of the Postal Service for not informing employees sooner.

Recently, the Postal Service confirmed the expansion of the data breach to workers compensation files.

This situation is continuing to be monitored and the National Union has requested that we inform them of any Mail Handler or Mail Handler Assistant who believes they have been the victim of any malicious activity resulting from this data breach. In addition, there is an on-line story on the National Unions web site which contains links to informational web sites.

- **Lead Clerks Arbitration Decision**

In early November, it was announced that the National Union prevailed in the arbitration protesting the Postal Service's use of lead clerks to supervise, assign, or direct members of the Mail Handler craft. This decision seems to have put this matter to rest throughout the Local; however, should anyone be experiencing any exceptions they should contact the Local Office.

- **"4 Walls" Concept**

"4 Walls" is the name of management's concept for 24 hour plant operations. Primarily, this concept represents a change in operational windows which has the potential for a future impact to existing duty assignments. Implementation of this concept is contingent on the elimination of service standards which is scheduled to occur on January 5, 2015.

While this will have to be addressed based upon the specific circumstances of each Branch, this is nonetheless a nation-wide initiative. As of the date of this report, I have been in attendance at meetings in the Minneapolis and St. Paul Branches concerning this matter. No immediate impact has been identified and the Officers as well as the Representatives are prepared to address this matter as the situation develops.

### **Branch Activities:**

- **Fargo Workplace Environment Meeting**

In mid-November I traveled to Fargo to attend a meeting concerning the workplace environment in Fargo. This meeting occurred as the result of a grievance settlement by one of our sister Unions and included Area as well as District management personnel.

There were thorough discussions concerning the issues; although, in my opinion it all boiled down to local management taking responsibility for the operation of the facility. Whether anything will change remains to be seen.

- **Minnesota Branches**

Next year's proposed consolidations of Duluth, St. Cloud, and Mankato is still on the table. The Local Union remains prepared address these issues and to ensure that the Mail Handlers in these Branches are afforded all of the contractual rights to which they are entitled.

- **North Dakota Branch Issues**

Management in the Dakotas District has been utilizing some creative measures to provide holiday staffing for the facilities in western North Dakota. This includes temporarily detailing employees within the District, as well as employees from outside the District, to the facilities needing additional staffing. This novel approach to staffing raises several contractual issues. ND State Executive Board Member Brock Engstrom will be assessing each situation and grievances will be filed as warranted.

The Minot facility remains slated for consolidation in 2015 and we are prepared to address that issue when appropriate.

- **Labor-Management Meetings**

I'm still attending most of them. This includes the monthly meetings at the NDC, weekly meetings in Saint Paul, and one meeting in Minneapolis.

**Upcoming Events:**

Fiscal Year Change – January 1<sup>st</sup>

SAMLU – February 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>

Annual Audit – March 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>

Fraternally,

Jeff Larsen  
Local President

cc: All Branches  
File