



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 June 26, 2020

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

Edward Yun

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 SEBM: Shane Ryden

ND SEBM: Brock Engstrom

Local President Jeff Larsen called the Executive Board to order at 10:32 p.m.

The Local Executive Board received and reviewed the report of the annual audit from Legacy Professionals. This covered our overall financial position as well as the State and Federal filings required of the Local Union.

Internal operating procedures were reviewed. The Local Executive Board discussed the option of the Local Union obtaining the capability of preparing financial statements that would not require significant changes by the auditor. The Board continues to believe that it would not be cost effective to hire an additional employee or train current employees to perform this task. The Board believes it is in the best interest of the Local to continue to retain the auditing firm to prepare the financial statements in conjunction with the annual audit.

The previous minutes from March 19, 2020 were reviewed. ND SEBM Engstrom made a motion accept the minutes. That motion was seconded by MN SEBM Ryden. A Roll Call vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

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

- Local 323 Compliment

Local Issues

- Current Outlook
- Postal Service Leadership Change
- Congressional Lobbying
- 2019 National Agreement



- Local Elections
- Local 323 Dental Program
- Federal Employees First Alliance (FEFA) Retirement Seminars
- Local Website

Branch Issues

Upcoming Event: Installation of Officers – August 1, 2020

Presidents expense report

Local President Jeff Larsen submitted for review his Expense Report and Time Sheet. ND SEBM Engstrom moves to authorize the Local Presidents expenses for the time frame reported and was second by MN SEBM Ryden. Roll call vote to accept, 5 yes, votes one abstain (Pres. Larsen) Motion carried.

The Local President reported his Leave Hours

Review of retirement checks Copies of retirement checks were review.

Review of Letters to the Legislative Branch and their responses

Arbitration on Subcontracting USPS E16M-1E-C 19056325 NPMHU 18-G444-C3

Discussion on 1187s not being processed by HRSSC

Local 323 complement

GAO Report

USPS Processing Network Optimization and Service Impacts

Treasurer's report:

Local Treasurer John Frey submitted the Local's Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statements. Recording Secretary Abatte motioned to authorize the expenses of the Local Union for the time frame enumerated. That motion was seconded by ND SEBM Engstrom, Roll call vote to accept, motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Items:

- **Postal Issues**
- **Membership review**
- **MHA Issues**
- **Contract Issues – Local Negotiations**
- **Monthly Rent Payable to Building Corporation**
- **Memorial Rates – Per Article 12, Section 12.2 of the Bylaws**

- **Compensation Rate for MHBP Marketing Employee**
- **Delegate Compensation – ZOOM Election Session**
- **Delegate Per Diem – 2020 National Convention**
- **Board Member Agenda Items**

Proposals

Submitted for consideration were four (4) proposals

Monthly Rent Payable to Building Corporation

Proposal

That Local 323 make monthly rental payments to the Local 323 Building Corporation in the amount of \$1500.00. Any additional rental payments needed, will be reviewed quarterly by the Local Executive Board.

A motion was made by President Larsen to accept the proposal and was seconded by Treasurer Frey. A roll call vote was unanimous in favor, motion carried.

Memorial Rates – Per Article 12, Section 12.2 of the Bylaws

Proposal

That the Local Executive Board set the rate for the death memorial amount to \$100.00 applicable to floral arrangements or donations.

A motion was made by President Larsen to accept the proposal and was seconded by MN SEBM Ryden. A roll call vote was unanimous, motion carried.

Compensation Rate for MHBP Marketing Employee

Proposal

That the Local 323 Executive Board continue to employ Kathy Schultz to market the MHBP following her retirement; with compensation to be set at the Level 4, Step P Mail Handler rate in effect at the time.

A motion was made by President Larsen to accept the proposal and was seconded by Recording Secretary Abatte. A roll call vote was unanimous in favor, motion carried.

Delegate Compensation – ZOOM Election Session

Proposal

That the Local 323 Executive Board authorize up to 4 hours of pay for Delegates to

participate in the nomination meeting for National Officers.

A motion was made by President Larsen to accept the proposal and was seconded by Vice President Schultz. A roll call vote was unanimous in favor, motion carried.

Upcoming Events

- **2020 Local Union 323 Picnic** – Postponed Until Further Notice
- **Installation of Local Officers** – August 1, 2020 (via Zoom)

Vice President Kathy Schultz - Well wishes and congratulations were given to Vice President Kathy Shultz as her Postal career and term on the Local Executive Board of the Local Union draws to an end. Her dedication to the membership of this local was beyond reproach. Always upbeat and cheerful, she will be greatly missed.

Fargo Branch President Gary Tollefsrud – President Larsen thanked Gary Tollefsrud for his many years of service as Branch President of the Fargo facility. President Larsen also expressed his hope that Gary would continue as a representative of the branch.

Vice President Schultz made a motion to adjourn the Local Executive Meeting. The motion was seconded by Recording Secretary Abatte. Meeting adjourned at 2:04 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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Local President's Report

Local Executive Board

Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 career complement as of Pay Period 12-20 is 598 (524 MN & 74 ND) and the MHA complement is 107 (95 MN & 12 ND). Combined Membership is currently 651.

Local Issues:

- **Current Outlook**

It has been slightly more than three months since the last meeting of the Local Executive Board. But the world, our country, and our workplace, has changed to such a degree, that it almost seems like a lifetime ago. The primary change of course, revolves around the impact being felt from the COVID-19 pandemic. The April SAMLU was held virtually, the 2020 National Convention has been postponed, and within the last couple of days, the MHBP Seminar scheduled for October has been cancelled. A virtual event is being developed in its place. We wait to see how open season health fairs will be conducted this year. The National President has granted a waiver concerning Branch and Steward meetings which remains in effect. Finally, the Local 323 picnic was postponed, and it is likely that it will not be held until 2021.

Members and Representatives throughout the Branches and facilities which comprise Local 323 continue to deal with the impact of COVID-19. This is true regarding additional COVID-19 benefits and temporary contractual exceptions as well as regarding personal impacts being felt by our Members and Representatives. Many have tested positive or have been required to quarantine. Not a week goes by without additional positive tests or quarantines affecting Mail Handlers within the Local Union. Indeed, it does not appear that the COVID-19 pandemic will be going away anytime soon.



The Local Union has supported compliance with CDC guidelines both on the work floor and on our website. That support continues to this day. Now is not the time for anyone to drop their guard.

The civil disorder resulting from the death of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police has impacted several installations and the Local 323 office. In some cases, Postal operations were curtailed or relocated, while others involved protests affecting Postal premises and employee access to those premises. In addition, the front of the Local 323 office building was covered with plywood for a week at the height of the unrest. Unlike several other business in the area, our building did not suffer any damage. It is also worth noting, that the AFL-CIO building in Washington, DC was damaged during the unrest. This is where the National office is located, although they were already working remotely due to COVID-19.

Across the country and throughout the Local Union, Members, Representatives, and Officers, continue forging ahead in difficult times. I would like to express my thanks to all those putting forth the effort to keep things moving forward. We have survived the difficulties of the past, we will survive the difficulties of the present, and we will prepare for the difficulties of the future.

- **Postal Service Leadership Change**

On June 15th Louis DeJoy was sworn in as the seventy-fifth Postmaster General. There has been much speculation and some trepidation over what direction he will take the Postal Service. PMG DeJoy is a billionaire and top GOP donor who comes from outside the Postal Service. The last so called “outsider” was Marvin Runyon who served as PMG from July 6, 1992 to May 16, 1998. The conventional view is that an outsider is brought in to make significant changes to an organization; and the actions of PMG Runyon while in office, support that view. PMG DeJoy may restructure managerial ranks, realign mail processing networks, realign delivery networks, or require realignment of the workforce. Most of the far-reaching changes to the Postal Service as an establishment require Congressional action. We will be keeping an eye on that front.

- **Congressional Lobbying**

The last couple of months have seen significant efforts on the legislative front. I have personally contacted the Minnesota Congressional delegation on multiple occasions and North Dakota State Executive Board Member Brock Engstrom has similarly contacted the North Dakota Congressional delegation. This involved sending letters to each representative and requesting their support for relief to a Postal Service struggling under the strain of the COVID-19 pandemic. We do not approach our advocacy on a partisan basis, rather we contact all representatives and asked for their help. As a Local Union our advocacy goals are clear and simple. We only advocate on issues that are in the interest of all our Members and that includes a secure future for the Postal Service. There are

times when the interests of the Membership and the Postal Service diverge, although right now they are pretty much aligned. In any case, our letter writing campaign produced some commitments of support and some acknowledgments of the issues. A couple letters remain unanswered.

Follow up continued through email and phone calls. Every request from the National Union resulted in calls to Congressional offices and the Capital switchboard. Our designation as essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic has created a heightened interest toward Postal issues in Congress. So, this is a time to remain focused on those issues. We will continue our efforts to ensure that the voice of our Members is heard by both the Minnesota and North Dakota Congressional Delegations. Copies of correspondences are included with this meetings material.

- **2019 National Agreement**

The ratification vote on the 2019 National Agreement was delayed due to COVID-19. The ratification of this agreement became official on April 7th with the results showing 96% Membership approval. The final vote tally was 7,003 in favor of ratification and 255 against ratification. We were already operating under the premise that the 2019 National Agreement would be ratified; so, we were well prepared to begin implementation. The National and Local levels continue the on-going implementation of our new National Agreement. The first National level grievance arising under the terms of this contract was recently filed. It involved MHA health benefits.

- **Local Elections**

On May 1st, the Judges of Local Elections held the nomination meeting for the election of Officers. This resulted in all positions being filled by acclamation. I would like to thank Jonta McPherson, Nicole Rodriguez, Tony Stickler, Jarred Hoover, and Kathy Schultz, for serving as judges. Congratulations to all the newly elected and re-elected Officers. Installation of Officers will occur on August 1st and details will be decided by the Local Executive Board.

- **Local 323 Dental Program**

Local 323 continues to offer our Dental Program to the Regular Membership as well as Postal and Federal employees who chose to affiliate as Associate Members. This dental plan is available to all Members including MHA's. Any newly hired or newly converted Members who are interested in this plan should contact me at the Local Office. I continue to serve as the plan administrator for this program.

- **Federal Employees First Alliance (FEFA) Retirement Seminars**

FEFA seminars continue to be held on the internet. There is a link to seminar information on the Local 323 website. Any Member requiring immediate assistance with their retirement may contact the Local or Branch office for a direct referral to FEFA.

- **Local Website**

The Local 323 website is designed to be an informational resource for Members and a tool for Representatives. The website subscriptions have recently been renewed and it continues to receive monthly updates. Some additional changes will be implemented as time permits. It is not real fancy, but it does have a Mail Handler feel. I do like looking at pictures of Mail Handlers better than being blasted with pop-ups and advertisement.

Branch Issues:

- **Branch Activities**

Since the last meeting of the Local Executive Board, my visits to the metro-area Branches have been brief and usually limited to Union offices. On two occasions I visited a couple of old friends in the Minneapolis Branch to congratulate them on their upcoming retirements.

Upcoming Events:

Installation of Officers – August 1, 2020

Fraternally,

Jeff Larsen
Local President

cc: All Branches
File