



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 October 17, 2019

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 SEBM Representative: Shane Ryden

ND SEBM Representative: Brock Engstrom

Local President Jeff Larsen called the Executive Board to order at 10:31 a.m.

A review of the previous minutes from June 27th, 2019. A motion to accept the minutes by ND SEBM Engstrom and 2nd by MN SEBM Ryden, motion carried.

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

- Local 323 Compliment

Local Issues

- 2019 National Agreement
- Semi Annual Meeting of the Local Union (SAMLU)
- RI-399 settlement appeal procedures
- Open season seminar
- Local 323 dental plan
- 2019 Scholarship award

Branch Activities:

- Stewards seminar
- St. Paul withholding

Agenda Items

- Direct deposit for Officers and Stewards payments (issue was tabled to gather info)
- Credit card for ND SEMN (tabled)



- Delegates to the National Convention
- Judges of Election - A request of volunteers for election judges

Presidents expense report

Local President Jeff Larsen submitted for review his Expense Report and Time Sheet. Vice President Schultz moves to authorize the Local Presidents expenses for the time frame reported and was second by ND SEBM Engstrom. Motion carried.

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 Recording Secretary Abatte, motion carried.

Review of retirement checks (none provided this quarter)

Officers Report

ND SEBM reports

ND SEBM Engstrom is also the MHHBP representative. He would like to encourage all Mail Handlers to do their due diligence this open season and take a hard look at the Mail Handler Health Benefit Plan. The plan is extremely competitive, and the coverage is just as good if not better in some instances.

President Larsen opens the floor for general discussion, comments, questions.

ND SEBM Engstrom motions to adjourn the Local Executive Meeting.

The motion was seconded by Recording Secretary Abatte. Meeting adjourned at 12:31 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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October 17, 2019

Local President's Report Local Executive Board

Jeff Larsen
Local President

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Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 career complement as of Pay Period 17-19 is 655 (574 MN & 81 ND) and the MHA complement is 94 (81 MN & 15 ND). Combined Membership as of Pay Period 19-19 is 675.

Local Issues:

- **2019 National Agreement**

The 2016 National Agreement expired on September 20, 2019. Prior to this date the National parties renewed the bidding procedures of the National Agreement. This was done independently from contract negotiations and allows Mail Handlers to continue bidding during the ongoing negotiations and/or in the event of bargaining impasse.

While the 2016 National Agreement expired on September 20, 2019, neither party has, as of this date, declared impasse. This means that negotiations will continue until such time as one of the parties concludes that further negotiations are pointless. If that ends up being the case, the parties will move towards arbitration of the dispute.

Throughout the negotiations I was party to several requests from the National Union which sought information regarding the implementation of the National Agreement in the field. Consequently, I contacted many of our Officers and Representatives with specific questions pertaining to these issues. I would like to express my thanks to all of those who participated in providing information for this important purpose.

I still would prefer to see a negotiated agreement; although, I'm not sure if that is likely. Time will tell which route we will take on the road to securing the 2019 National Agreement.

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

In late September I traveled to Washington, DC for the second SAMLU of 2019. The first day was dedicated solely to discussing the results of contract negotiations. To say that these discussions lacked specificity might be an understatement; but, that's the nature of negotiations. It is well understood that successful negotiations happen at the bargaining table and not in the media, in newsletters, on web sites, or in Union meetings.

The subsequent days of the SAMLU were more informative. This involved reports from the National Officers, the MHBP, the Legislative Director, and the Contract Administration Department. Legislative Director Bob Losi announced that he will be retiring at the end of January 2020. In addition, agenda items submitted by the Local Unions were addressed.

- **RI-399 Settlement Appeal Procedures**

The long-awaited payment resulting from the National RI-399 settlement was included in the October 4th paychecks. The National Union has established a Union-run appeal procedure for claims by Mail Handlers who believe they should have been included or by Mail Handlers who believe they did not receive the proper number of shares.

Any Mail Handler filing an appeal is reminded to attach any available supporting documentation in support of their claim. It is strongly recommended that each appeal includes all PS Form 50's beginning with the time of appointment in the Mail Handler craft. The Local Union stands ready to assist any Mail Handler making a claim.

Appeals may be faxed to 202-833-0008 or mailed to the National office at:

National Postal Mail Handlers Union
Attn: RI-399 Monetary Payment Appeals
815 16th Street NW, Suite 5100
Washington, DC 20006

- **Open Season Seminar**

Local 323 is once again preparing up for another season of marketing the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan. ND SEBM Brock Engstrom and Health Plan Representative Brad Kaluza were recently in attendance at this year's MHBP seminar. They will be providing the information from this event to the other members of our marketing team as we continue preparations.

- **Local 323 Dental Program**

Local 323 will be continuing to offer our Dental Program to the Regular Membership as well as Postal and Federal employees who chose to affiliate as Associate Members. I will be reaching out to HealthPartners to review plan changes and discuss our marketing strategy.

- **2019 Scholarship Award**

The 2019 Local 323 Scholarship Matt Lopez has been awarded to Daniel Yi. Daniel is the son of Minneapolis Branch Member Hung Yi. The Members of the Local Union Council wish Daniel the best in the pursuit of his education.

Branch Issues:

- **Steward's Seminars**

Several seminars were recently held at the Local Office for Representatives of the metro area Branches. Specifically, each Branch spent two days covering our history, our duties as a Union, and specific aspects of grievance processing. Many Branch leaders help with the preparations and I'm grateful for their efforts in making these events successful. A final seminar will be held on the evenings of October 23rd and 24th for those who could not attend due to scheduling issues.

- **St. Paul Withholding**

By letter dated September 18, 2019, the Union was informed at the regional level of a Mail Handler withholding event at the St. Paul P&DC. Specifically, the letter stated:

This letter is with regard to the workload reduction at the St. Paul, MN Post Office. In order to minimize the impact due to the workload reduction we are authorizing the withholding of five (5) level 4 Full Time Regular and five (5) level 5 Full Time Regular residual vacancies at the same or lower level in surrounding installations (50 mile radius) within the Northland District. These positions include mail handler and custodial craft positions.

We have begun addressing this issue at both the Branch and regional levels. There doesn't seem to be any urgency on the part of management to implement this event and it may be possible that any impact may be eliminated by attrition. This type of event always rises to the top of the list and I'll be working with the Branch Representatives to address this issue.

Upcoming Events:

St. Paul Branch Meeting – October 19th – Local office
NDC Branch Meeting – October 26th – Local office
FEFA Retirement Seminars – October 27th and 29th
Fargo Branch Meeting – November 9th – Holiday Inn Fargo
FEHB Open Season – November 11th through December 9th

Fraternally,

Jeff Larsen
Local President

cc: All Branches
File