



# Mail Handlers Local Union No. 323

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

## Minutes of the Local Union 323 Executive Board Meeting ST. PAUL, MN December 6, 2021

Jeff Larsen

*Local President*

Dean Abatte

*Vice President*

Brian Newhouse

*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*

Brock Engstrom

*Fargo*

### IN ATTENDANCE:

**Local President:** Jeff Larsen

**Vice President:** Dean Abatte

**Recording Secretary:** Brian Newhouse

**Treasurer:** John Frey

**MN SEBM Representative:** Shane Ryden

**ND SEBM Representative:** Brock Engstrom

Local President Jeff Larsen called the meeting to order at 10:17 a.m.

Recording Secretary Brian Newhouse took the roll call.

### Review of the Previous Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes from previous meeting on September 17, 2021. Treasurer Frey made a motion to accept the minutes. That motion was seconded by ND SEBM Engstrom, motion carried.

**Local President's Report:** (see attached for full report).

- Local 323 Compliment

### Local Issues

- Organizing Drive
- 2022 National Agreement – Contract Proposals
- Career Conversions
- 2021 LIUNA Convention
- PMG Visit
- District Labor-Management Meeting
- Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU)
- Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP) Seminar
- Open Season Activities
- Dental Program
- Local Website

## **Branch Activities:**

- Branch Visits
- Branch Planning meetings
- Branch Labor-Management meetings
- PSA Visit

## **President's Expense Report**

Local President Jeff Larsen submitted for review his Expense Report. ND SEBM Engstrom moved to authorize the Local President's expenses and was seconded by Vice President Abatte. The motion carried.

## **Local President's Agenda Items**

- SAMLU Materials
  - Review of SAMLU minutes
  -
- Membership Review – Organizing Efforts
  - Compliment down
  - Membership up – organizing efforts are working.
- Fiscal Year Change – Taxes
- 2022 Picnic Discussed

## **Treasurer's Report**

Local Treasurer John Frey submitted the Local's Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statements. ND SEBM Engstrom motioned to authorize the expenses of the Local Union for the time frame. The motion was seconded by Vice President Abatte. The motion carried.

## **Executive Officer's Report**

- Vice President Abatte spoke about representing St. Paul Branch at monthly RI-399 meetings, issues with newly converted Mail Handlers receiving clothing allowance, Peak Season issues, and mask policy issues.

## **Agenda Items**

Vice President Abatte made a motion to adjourn the Local Executive Board Meeting. That motion was seconded by President Larsen. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 12:38 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Newhouse  
Recording Secretary Local 323  
National Postal Mail Handlers Union

cc: **Local Union Council**  
**All Branches**  
**File**



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*Fargo*

## Local President's Report

### Local Executive Board

#### Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 career complement as of Pay Period 23-21 is 743 (665 MN & 78 ND) and the MHA complement is 74 (54 MN & 20 ND). Combined Membership as of Pay Period 24-21 is 760.

#### Local Activities:

- **Organizing Drive**

The 2021 Local 323 organizing drive is well underway and will continue through the end of the year. The Local Executive Board has temporarily added \$25.00 to the \$25.00 already provided by the Local 323 Bylaws; so, during this campaign any Member enrolling a new Member outside of orientation will receive a check in the amount of \$50.00. Checks will be sent directly from the Local Union once the dues withholding has started.

In addition to the \$50.00 check, your name will be entered into a drawing to win an Apple iPad Air 4 along with AirPods Pro from the LIUNA Convention. Each Member will receive a \$50.00 check and one (1) entry in the drawing for every new Member they enroll. An updated list of your coworkers who are not Members of the Union is available in your Branch Union office.

- **2022 National Agreement – Contract Proposals**

The 2019 National Agreement will expire on September 20, 2022. All Members are encouraged to contact their Branch Representatives or the Local Office with any proposals or ideas they have for our next contract. As always, the Local Union stands ready to assist any Representative or Member with drafting their proposals. Proposals must be received at the National Office by January 28, 2022.

The Local Union Council will be meeting on January 13<sup>th</sup> to finalize the proposals which will be submitted by Local 323.

- **Career Conversions**

Career conversions are continuing; although, most locations have returned to utilizing the National Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Filling of Residual Vacancies. Residual vacancies are being placed into eReassign according to the 1 in 4 ratio. December's eReassign posting lists 10 residual vacancies from the Branches within Local 323. Specifically, 4 from St. Cloud, 3 from St. Paul, 2 from Fargo, and 1 from Minneapolis.

The National parties have agreed to increase the career Mail Handler complement in Grand Forks beyond the number from the last conversion MOU. All newly hired employees in this installation, or any other installation, will be required to serve a minimum of one pay period as an MHA prior to career conversion.

- **2021 LIUNA Convention**

On September 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Local Treasurer John Frey and I served as the Local Union's Delegates to the LIUNA Convention. The Convention was held virtually via Zoom. Both days were rather short. The first day consisted of video presentations and speeches. On the second day, the Delegates voted on proposed amendments to the LIUNA Constitution. This event was a vast departure from the traditional LIUNA Convention.

- **PMG Visit**

On October 4<sup>th</sup> I attended a presentation given by Postmaster General DeJoy at the Minneapolis P&DC. I was accompanied to this event by Vice President Dean Abatte. During his speech, PMG DeJoy addressed the market position of the Postal Service and opined regarding its structural and operational shortcomings.

- **District Labor-Management Meeting**

On October 28<sup>th</sup> I was again at the Minneapolis P&DC for the MN – ND District Labor Management Meeting. Also present for this meeting were Vice President Dean Abatte, MN State Executive Board Member Shane Ryden, and ND State Executive Board Member Brock Engstrom, who participated via Zoom. There were several detailed presentations related to retail and delivery; unfortunately, when it came time for the presentation regarding mail processing, management's presenters had to leave.

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

From November 15<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup>, I attended the second SAMLU of 2021 which was held in Washington, DC. Rather than summarizing the activities, I've included the minutes as well as other materials from this meeting.

The final day was quite interesting and consisted of a brainstorming session regarding proposals for the upcoming contract negotiations.

- **Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP) Seminar**

Similar to last year, the in-person MHBP seminar was cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns. A virtual seminar was held via Zoom on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Participating in this seminar were Dean Abatte, Kathy Schultz, Brock Engstrom, Brian Blatchford, Delicia Johnson, and Mike Alvarez. I participated in this event intermittently as my activities permitted.

- **Open Season Activities**

This year's open Season began on November 8<sup>th</sup> and runs through December 13<sup>th</sup>. Again, similar to last year, many health fairs which had been scheduled as in-person events were converted to virtual. There were several instances in which we weren't informed of the conversion until our representative arrived for the event.

- **Dental Program**

Local 323 continues offering our dental plan for 2022. This plan is available to Regular Members as well as Postal or Federal employees who become Associate Members. The 2022 plan is being offered without any changes to rates or benefits.

- **Local Website**

The Local 323 website continues to make a vast array of information available to the Membership. From pay scales to the National Agreement, and from governing documents to Branch Memoranda of Understanding, the Local 323 website remains the go to place for information.

The Steward's area continues to receive updates and the initial round of informational components is nearing completion. We are beginning to see the benefits of assembling Steward resources in one central location. In addition, the grievance processing and administrative forms have been recently updated. While these updates were relatively minor, any problems encountered should be reported to the Local Office.

**Branch Activities:**

My schedule has included numerous Branch activities since the last meeting of the Local Executive Board. In addition to working with the Branch Representatives, and in a couple of instances Branch Members, Branch activities from my calendar include:

- PSA Implementation Meeting – September 21<sup>st</sup>
- St. Paul Branch Meeting – September 25<sup>th</sup>
- NDC Branch Planning Meeting – September 27<sup>th</sup>
- NDC – LDRC Meeting – September 28<sup>th</sup>
- Minneapolis Branch Planning Meeting – October 4<sup>th</sup>
- St. Paul Branch Labor Management Meeting – October 8<sup>th</sup>
- NDC – LDRC Meeting – October 8<sup>th</sup>
- St. Paul Branch Planning Meeting – October 10<sup>th</sup>
- PSA Visit – October 14<sup>th</sup>
- NDC Branch Stewards Meeting – October 27<sup>th</sup>
- St. Paul Branch Labor Management Meeting – November 5<sup>th</sup>
- NDC Branch Labor Management Meeting – December 2<sup>nd</sup>
- St. Paul Branch Labor Management Meeting – December 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Upcoming Events:**

Fiscal year change – January 1, 2022

Fraternally,

Jeff Larsen  
Local President

cc: All Branches  
File