



# 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 December 13, 2017

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 1:00 p.m.

Review of the September 29, 2017 minutes. A motion was made to accept the minutes by NDSR Engstrom and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Vice President Schultz. Motion carried.

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

- Local 323 Complement reports 671 FTRs and 115 MHAs.

### Local issues:

- Scheduling and Staffing Impacts
- NPMHU National Scholarship
- Open Season Activities
- Local 323 Dental Program
- Federal Employees First Alliance (FEFA) Retirement Seminar
- District Labor Management Meeting

### Branch Activities:

- Arbitration- Fargo Branch
- Saint Paul Intervention
- Additional Activities

### Upcoming Events:

Fiscal year change -January 1<sup>st</sup>  
Annual Audit -February 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>



**Article 12 Issues:**

Excessing/withholding notices for clerks and the impact to the Mail Handler craft.

National Letter on Board charges against the USPS for the F-1 scheduler.

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

**Treasurer's report:**

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

Review of the Local Presidents leave hours

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

Vice President Schultz motions to adjourn the Local Executive Meeting.

The motion was seconded by NDSR Engstrom. Meeting adjourned at 2:43 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 13, 2017

## Local President's Report Local Executive Board

Jeff Larsen  
*Local President*

Kathy Schultz  
*Vice President*

Dean Abatte  
*Recording Secretary*

John Frey  
*Treasurer*

State Executive  
Board Members

Shane Ryden  
*Minnesota*

Brock Engstrom  
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*St. Paul*

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*NDC*

Gary Tollefsrud  
*Fargo*

### Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 career complement as of Pay Period 24-17 is 671 (596 MN & 75 ND) and the MHA complement is 115 (99 MN & 16 ND). Combined Membership is 696.

### Local Issues:

- **Scheduling and Staffing Impacts**

Management's implementation of the Function 1 Scheduler continues to be at the forefront of much activity. We have made progress in some Branches, while others remained mired in this management created chaos. Quite frankly, the logic behind continuing to make changes during the peak season is unfathomable.

The implementation of the Function 1 Scheduler is also resulting in actions being taken by the National Union. This began with the filing of an unfair labor practice against the Postal Service at the National Labor Relations Board and most recently a National Level grievance alleging violation of Article 34 of the National Agreement. The unfair labor practice concerns management's failure to provide information, while the Article 34 grievance contends that the Function 1 Scheduler constitutes a change in work measurement systems or time or work standards.

No one seems to be able to rationalize the decisions being made; although, the consensus seems to be that these decisions are management's overreaction to declines in mail volume and revenue. It is ultimately not our job, however, to try and attribute some rationalization to management's decisions, it is our job to enforce the contract. We will continue our discussions with management over their actions and we will continue to file grievances where the rights of Mail Handlers are being violated. We are in this for the long haul.



- **NPMHU National Scholarship**

The National Union recently announced the 2018 Arthur S. Vallone National Scholarship Program. The purpose of this Program is to provide financial assistance to Mail Handlers and/or their family members who are seeking to further their education beyond high school. The program will award a minimum of 15 scholarships (3 per Region) in the annual amount of at least \$1,000, renewable for up to four (4) years or until the completion of the undergraduate degree, whichever occurs first (for a maximum of \$4,000 per recipient over 4 years). The deadline for the submission of an application is March 15, 2018, and applications are available at the National Union's website.

- **Open Season Activities**

The 2017 open season gave us another opportunity to provide exposure to the Mail Handler Benefit Plan. Following their attendance at the open season seminar in Nashville, TN, our marketing team of Kathy Schultz, Brock Engstrom, Brian Blatchford, and Brad Kaluza attended health fairs throughout the States of Minnesota and North Dakota. The marketing phase has now been completed and we look forward to seeing the results of our efforts.

Treasurer John Frey and I will be providing our submission for the partial reimbursement program after the first of the year.

- **Local 323 Dental Program**

The Local 323 Dental Program continues to be offered to the Regular Membership as well as any Postal or Federal employee who chose to affiliate as an Associate Member. The 2018 plan has a higher annual benefit; but, was offered at the same monthly rate. I continue to serve as the plan administrator for this program. This dental plan is available to all Members including MHA's. Any newly hired Members who are interested in this plan should contact me at the Local Office.

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

In November, Local 323 sponsored two days of retirement seminars which were conducted by FEFA. This organization is relied upon by several Local Unions as an informational resource for their Members who are approaching retirement. The feedback received from the Members in attendance was generally positive and the Local Executive Board will be discussing the possibility of additional seminars in the future. NDC Mail Handler Paul Heidtke won the Vikings tickets.

- **District Labor Management Meeting**

On October 24<sup>th</sup> I was in attendance the Northland District Semi-Annual Labor Management Meeting in Minneapolis. Also, there were: Vice President Kathy Schultz, Recording Secretary Dean Abatte, NDC Branch President Mike Straiton, and St. Paul Branch President Jerry LaBarre. There were several presentations concerning issues such as safety, delivery scores, personnel changes, and Postal finances. One interesting point which stuck with me is that management has declared that 2018 will be the year of communication. Some might suggest this seems to indicate that there is currently a problem with communication; but, I'll just let that issue go.

**Branch Activities:**

- **Arbitration – Fargo Branch**

On November 20<sup>th</sup> a regular regional arbitration hearing was held in the Fargo Branch. Regional Director David Ross served as the Union's advocate and ND SEBM Brock Engstrom played the role of star witness. The case concerned scanning and several of the Branch Mail Handlers provided testimony at the hearing. Post hearing briefs will be filed soon and a decision will be rendered approximately 30 days later.

- **Saint Paul Intervention**

The National Union intervention initiative began in the Saint Paul Branch remains open. While there was initially some improvement in the situation, it was short lived, and the subject problems quickly resurfaced. After the first of the year I'll be discussing our options with Branch President LaBarre and deciding if we'll elevate this process to the next level. The next level seems likely.

- **Additional Branch Activities**

I'm continuously working with the Representatives of all Branches concerning a wide gamut of issues. Most recently I've been assisting the Mankato Branch with an eReassign issue as well as the Duluth Branch with a Step 3 appeal.

**Upcoming Events:**

Fiscal year change – January 1<sup>st</sup>  
Annual Audit – February 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>

Fraternally,

Jeff Larsen  
Local President

cc: All Branches  
File