



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 September 17, 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

BMC

Brock Engstrom

Fargo

IN ATTENDANCE:

Local President: Jeff Larsen

Vice President: Dean Abatte

Recording Secretary: Brian Newhouse

Treasurer: John Frey

MN State Executive Board Member: Shane Ryden

ND State Executive Board Member: Brock Engstrom

Local President Jeff Larsen called the meeting to order at 10:39 A.M.

Recording Secretary Brian Newhouse took the roll call.

Review of the Previous Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes from previous meeting on June 28, 2021. Vice President Abatte made a motion to accept the minutes. That motion was seconded by MN SEBM Ryden, motion carried.

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

- Local 323 Compliment

Local Issues

- Career Conversions
- COVID-19 EFEL
- Call for Contract Proposals
- Arbitration Activity
- Local Website
- 2021 LIUNA Convention Delegate Election
- Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU)
- Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP)

Branch Activities:

- Branch Visits

Upcoming Events

- Virtual LIUNA Convention – September 21 and 22
- St. Paul Branch Meeting
- Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions – November 15 - 17

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 Recording Secretary Newhouse. The motion carried.

Local President's Agenda Items

- Membership Review – Organizing Efforts
 - Proposal made by President Larsen: That the Local Executive Board authorize an additional \$25 payment to Members signing up a new Member between October 1st and December 2021.
 - Motion to authorize made by President Larsen, seconded by MN SEBM Ryden. Motion carried.
- Steward Dinner(s)

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 Unassigned Regular scheduling issues, LDRC issue, and the ADUS machine is fully staffed with Mail Handlers.

Agenda Items

ND SEBM Rep. Engstrom 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 1:13 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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Local President's Report

Local Executive Board

Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 career complement as of Pay Period 17-21 is 756 (671 MN & 85 ND) and the MHA complement is 39 (24 MN & 15 ND). Combined Membership is currently 746.

- **Career Conversions**

Representatives throughout the Local Union continue to address issues lingering from the most recent round of career conversion. In several instances, managerial missteps or downright refusals to comply with the MOU, have resulted in the filing of grievances. These grievances will be pursued to their conclusion in order to secure compliance. The Representatives have been diligent in monitoring the developing situation and taking the steps necessary to address issues.

- **COVID-19 – Emergency Federal Employee Leave**

The Postal Service has reinstated the face covering policy for all Mail Processing and Logistics, Retail and Delivery, and Vehicle Operations facilities. This is the result of uncertainty related to the Delta Variant of COVID-19. All employees are required to wear face coverings regardless of their vaccination status in situations where social distancing in the workplace cannot be maintained.

The window of availability for emergency paid leave under the American Rescue Plan is scheduled to close on September 30, 2021. The OPM website indicates that approximately 45% of the original \$570 million remained in the fund as of September 10, 2021.

- **Call for Contract Proposals**

National President Hogrogian recently issued the call for contract proposals to be submitted for next year's bargaining over the terms of the

2022 National Agreement. Proposals must be received at the National Office by January 28, 2022.

The 2019 National Agreement is set to 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 of Member with drafting their proposals.

A meeting of the Local Union Council will be scheduled early next year, and this matter will be in the agenda.

- **Arbitration Activity**

Arbitration had been scheduled for the NDC Branch on August 17th. The grievance involved the alleged violation of a Last Change Agreement by an NDC Branch Mail Handler. This grievance was discussed among me, Vice President Abatte and NDC Branch President Straiton prior to discussions with management. Vice President Abatte served as our advocate and secured a settlement which allowed the Grievant to return to duty.

Local 323 currently has one contract case and no removals on the arbitration docket.

- **Local Web Site**

The initial phase of adding materials to the “Training and Reference” section of the Steward’s database is nearing completion. Once this is completed, the focus will shift to the creation of a guidebook for understanding TACS and working with TACS reports. Further development of the “Training and Reference” section will continue after that is completed. The second phase will include specific grievance topics for step 1 and resources for Stewards processing grievance at step 2. There’s still a lot to come.

- **2021 LIUNA Convention Delegate Election**

The process of electing a Delegate to the 2021 LIUNA Convention was completed on June 28th. Local 323 Treasurer John Frey was elected to serve as Local 323’s second Delegate to the Convention. Congratulations, JPF. I would again like to thank to Tony Stickler of the NDC Branch, Nicole Rodriguez of the St. Paul Branch, and Jarred Hoover of the Minneapolis Branch, who served as Judges for this election.

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

In early August I attended the SAMLU which was held in Las Vegas. This was the first in-person meeting held since the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic. There were extensive reports concerning the financial condition of the Postal Service, mail volume, and Postal operations. In addition, there were reports from the National Secretary –

Treasurer as well as the contract administration department. The final day consisted of training on Article 12 of the National Agreement. Materials from that training are included in the file for this meeting.

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

The MHBP seminar scheduled for October was cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns. I anticipate that a virtual seminar will be held and I'm currently awaiting additional information. The Health Plan Representatives will be provided an update when further information is received.

Per the request of NARFE Chapter 140, I have scheduled a Health Plan Representative to attend their October 25th meeting. Where we go from there remains on the other side of the horizon.

Branch Activities:

As always, I continue to work with the Representatives from all Branches as needed to address specific issues. I have recently attended two Labor-Management meetings in the St. Paul Branch; and additionally, several meetings at the NDC related to the Postal Support Annex.

Upcoming Events:

Virtual LIUNA Convention – September 21st and 22nd
St. Paul Branch Meeting – September 25th
Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions – November 15th through November 17th

Fraternally,

Jeff Larsen
Local President

cc: All Branches
File