



# 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](http://www.local323.org)

## Minutes of the Local Union 323 Council Meeting

St. Paul, MN

October 26, 2023

Local President, Jeff Larsen called the meeting of the Local Union 323 Council to order at 10:34 A.M. Recording Secretary, Aaron Kobes took Roll Call.

### IN ATTENDANCE:

**Local President** - Jeff Larsen

**Vice President** - Dean Abatte

**Recording Secretary** - Aaron Kobes

**Treasurer** - Jarred Hoover

**MN State Representative** - Shane Ryden

**ND State Representative** - Brock Engstrom

**Fargo Branch President** - Brock Engstrom

**St. Paul Branch President** - Ed Yun

**Minneapolis Branch President** - Dean Abatte

**NDC Branch President** - Aaron Kobes

### Review of the Previous Minutes:

The Council reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting held January 13, 2022. Fargo Branch President/ND SEBM Engstrom motioned to accept the minutes of the previous meeting and was seconded by VP/Minneapolis Branch President Abatte. The motion carried.

### President's Report:

President Larsen provided the Council a copy of the President's report (See attached copy).

- Local 323 Complement
- Local Activities
- Metro Area Steward Appointments
- Membership Recruitment
- Grievance Activity

Jeff Larsen  
*Local President*

Dean Abatte  
*Vice President*

Aaron Kobes  
*Recording Secretary*

Jarred Hoover  
*Treasurer*

State Executive  
Board Members

Shane Ryden  
*Minnesota*

Brock Engstrom  
*North Dakota*

Branch Presidents

Dean Abatte  
*Minneapolis*

Edward Yun  
*St. Paul*

Aaron Kobes  
*NDC*

Brock Engstrom  
*Fargo*

- Dispute Resolution Procedures
- Postmaster General's 10-Year Plan
- Moving Forward

**Upcoming Events:**

- FEFA Retirement Seminar - November 12th
- FEHBP Open Season - November 13th through December 11th
- NDC Branch Steward Training – November 16th
- 2023 Steward Dinner – December 2nd
- Labor Notes Internal Organizing Seminar – December 7th
- Local Executive Board – December 28th

**Officer Reports:**

**Treasurer's Report** – Review of the Profit and Loss Statement, Year to Year Comparison.

**Minneapolis Branch/Vice President** – Light Duty assignment issues/Resolution to SIPS and ADIUS disputes with signed inventory at the St. Paul Branch.

**NDC Branch President** – Reversions, plant-wide class action concerning improper record keeping by management.

**MN SEBM** – NDC: Signing of FRS Inventory at the NDC Branch.

**Fargo Branch President/ND SEBM** – Signed Bismarck Inventory, Fargo Inventory signing is imminent/ Grievance work.

**St. Paul Branch President** – Light Duty, FRS moved up to RDRC, Grievance work, loss of MHA's due to lack of hours, Mail Handler's moving out of craft.

**Those items reserved for the Local Union Council:**

- **Determination of the number of Delegates to send to the 2024 NPMHU National Convention**

Local President Larsen initiated a discussion regarding the number of Delegates to send to the 2024 NPMHU National Convention. He pointed out that the Local Union Council sent a total of six (6) Delegates to the last Convention, the Local President and five (5) elected Delegates. Minnesota State Executive Board Member Shane Ryden stated that he saw no reason to deviate from this practice, as it has been in place for several conventions. Local President Larsen concurred. Local President Larsen subsequently made a motion to send a total of six (6) Delegates to the 2024 NPMHU National Convention, the Local President and five (5) Delegates to be elected. Vice President Abatte seconded that motion and it carried unanimously.

- **Further Convention Discussion**

A brief discussion followed concerning the compensation of the to-be-elected Delegates. There appeared to be a consensus that Delegates should be compensated up to forty (40) hours for attending the Convention. President Larsen noted that this was a matter for the Local Executive Board to decide and that he would conduct a poll to finalize this determination. President

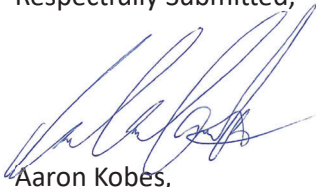
Larsen further stated that the Local Executive Board poll would be conducted soon as it is the practice of Local 323 to place this information on the Notice of Nomination Meeting.

- **Proposal to amend Article 12, Section 12.3 of Local 323 Bylaws**

Local President Larsen initiated a discussion regarding the \$25.00 being provided to Members who enroll non-members into the Union. After some discussion, it was decided to keep this amount in place considering that the Local Executive Board supplements it during Membership drives. No proposal was made to amend the Bylaws in this regard.

Vice President Dean Abatte made a motion to adjourn. This motion was seconded by Treasurer Jarred Hoover. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 12:55 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Aaron Kobes,  
Recording Secretary Local 323  
National Postal Mail Handlers Union

cc: All Branches  
File



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October 26, 2023

## Local President's Report Local Union Council

Jeff Larsen  
*Local President*

Dean Abatte  
*Vice President*

Aaron Kobes  
*Recording Secretary*

Jarred Hoover  
*Treasurer*

State Executive  
Board Members

Shane Ryden  
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Brock Engstrom  
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Branch Presidents

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Edward Yun  
*St. Paul*

Aaron Kobes  
*NDC*

Brock Engstrom  
*Fargo*

### Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 career complement as of Pay Period 21-23 is 720 (648 MN & 72 ND) and the MHA complement is 78 (73 MN & 5 ND). The Bargaining Unit total is 798 and Membership as of Pay Period 21-23 is 759.

### Local Activities:

- **Mero Area Steward Appointments**

The process of appointing and reappointing Representatives in the Metro Area installations has been completed. While most Representatives chose to reapply, a couple decided to call it a day. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for the service they provided to the Members of Local 323. In addition, there have been several new appointments. Specifically, I have appointed Nick Tanberg as an Alternate Steward in the Minneapolis Branch as well as Charmeesha Sherrod and Fong Vue as Alternate Stewards in the NDC Branch. Welcome aboard and thank you for stepping forwards to assist in the representation of your fellow Members.

- **Membership Recruitment**

Local 323 is continuing to monitor new hiring and making every effort to enroll new hires during orientation. In addition, individual letters and mailings which invite non-members to join the Union continue to be sent by the Local Office; and Branch Representatives continue pursuing the enrollment of non-members on the workroom floor.

Local 323 ranks high among the NPMHU Local Unions in terms of Membership percentage, however, there is always room for improvement. I am currently planning our participation in an internal organizing seminar which will be conducted by Labor Notes and held on zoom. This seminar will take place on the evening of December 7<sup>th</sup> at the Local Office. Further

information will be provided to the Branches and the solicitation of attendees will occur during November. The current plan is to follow up the seminar with an organizing drive commencing in early January of 2024.

- **Grievance Activity**

Branch Representatives continue processing a high number of grievances in both States. Most are being resolved at the first two steps of the grievance – arbitration procedure with bargaining unit members receiving the requested relief. Still, there remain several cases which must be appealed to Step 3 and, if denied at that level, placed on the arbitration docket. Most of these grievances involve higher level disciplinary actions or significant contractual violations. The Local Union remains committed to ensuring that the rights of Mail Handlers and MHAs are protected at these last steps of the grievance – arbitration procedure. The scheduling of arbitration hearings is awaiting the negotiation of arbitrator contracts following the ratification of the 2022 National Agreement.

- **Dispute Resolution Procedures**

The Local Union is continuing to support the Branch offices in ensuring that Mail Handler work is being performed by Mail Handlers. As new equipment is being deployed, we are aggressively pursuing disputes to secure written jurisdictional inventories with the Local Dispute Resolution Committees in each installation. Our goal is to secure binding agreements which may be used to enforce our rights should management assign another craft to our work. We have made significant progress on this front, and we will not hesitate to appeal unsatisfactory results to the Regional Level or jurisdictional arbitration.

- **Postmaster General's 10-Year Plan**

As everyone is aware, the Postmaster General's 10-year plan is being rolled out in numerous locations throughout the country. This plan turned its gaze toward Local 323 in late September. On September 27, 2023, the Postal Service announced that it would be conducting an MPFR at the Minneapolis P&DC. According to the Postal Service and under Handbook PO-408 an MPFR determines the feasibility of changing mail processing operations to improve operational efficiency and/or service.

The result of the MPFR was provided to the National Union by letter dated October 17, 2023. It indicated that according to the Postal Service, the initial results of the review conducted support the business case to keep this facility open and modernized as a Local Processing Center.

It is encouraging to hear that the Minneapolis facility will remain open, but there is no indication of what it will look like as Local Processing Center, nor what will constitute it being "modernized." It is also unknown what impact, if any, the modernization will have

on the other facilities in the metro area. The only thing we know for certain is that we must be prepared.

- **Moving Forward**

The Local Union remains committed to ensuring that every Member is afforded the rights to which they are entitled under the provisions of the National Agreement. We will continue our efforts to accomplish this goal in both the grievance procedure and the dispute resolution procedures. The Local Union will continue to be an organization which embraces the diversity of its Membership and encourages a robust culture of Membership engagement.

**Upcoming Events:**

FEFA Retirement Seminar – November 12<sup>th</sup>

FEHBP Open Season – November 13<sup>th</sup> through December 11<sup>th</sup>

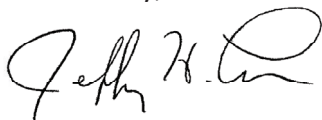
NDC Branch Steward Training – November 16<sup>th</sup>

2023 Steward Dinner – December 2<sup>nd</sup>

Labor Notes Internal Organizing Seminar – December 7<sup>th</sup>

Local Executive Board – December 28<sup>th</sup>

Fraternally,



Jeff Larsen  
Local President

cc: All Branches  
File