



AFSCME Council 5 executive director Eliot Seide (center), who is retiring, and president Judy Wahlberg welcome the new executive director, John Westmoreland (left).

Leadership Change at Council

AFSCME Council 5 has a new executive director.

John Westmoreland, the former assistant director, started his role Nov. 1.

He replaces Council 5's founding director Eliot Seide, who is retiring.

"Our union is in good hands," Seide says. "Under John's leadership, our union won't miss a beat as we continue our program with energy and discipline."

Westmoreland says he plans to meet with leaders of every local and build "a coalition of the willing."

"I want to empower people," he says. "If I can do it, there's no reason they can't. If someone asks me a contract question, even if I know the answer, let's look it up together. I'm not going to vend answers. I will help you find them. What do you need from me to

be able to accomplish that goal? I don't like fixing things – I like resolving them."

Westmoreland says he believes in building teams and relationships, good communication, methodical attention to detail and following through. He's dedicated to our mission.

"I've been a member for 32 years, I will always be a member," he says. "I believe in our union. It is who I am."

Before he was Council 5's assistant director, Westmoreland was the northern field director; a field representative for Council 5 and Council 6; and an elections project organizer. Prior to that, he worked as a correctional officer in Stillwater, where he served multiple roles in Local 600 from steward to president, served on the corrections Negotiations Master Team, chaired the Corrections Policy Committee and served on the Council 6 Executive Board.

Vote Tuesday!

Please don't forget to vote in the General Election **today**. There are numerous races that will determine the future of our cities and our school boards.

In Saint Paul, voters will elect a new mayor and three seats on the School Board.

In Minneapolis, voters will choose a mayor, all 13 City Council members, all nine Park and Recreation Board commissioners and two seats on the Board of Estimate & Taxation.

Duluth will elect four city councilors and four members of the School Board, and decide whether to move a 0.5 percent sales and use tax for street improvements forward. There are seats open in numerous cities.

AFSCME members have screened and endorsed candidates who support workers, our families and our communities. Find their endorsements at <http://afscmemn.org/vote>.

Polls are open until 8 p.m.

Not sure where to vote? <http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>.

Deadline for State Benefit Enrollment is Here

Open enrollment for important insurance benefits for state workers ends **Wednesday**. It includes guaranteed access to short-term disability, even with preexisting conditions. Enroll at: <https://mn.gov/mmb/segip/open-enrollment/>.

Judicial Branch Approves Contract

Local 3688 (state judicial branch) ratified a two-year agreement with a strong turnout, thanks to visits to every worksite, in-person voting and the identification of numerous new activists. The contract moves workers to a range system, with 3 percent raises for those who perform successfully according to annual evaluations, and a top range increase of 5 percent. It adds a second floating holiday, protects seniority language, provides more transparency around job postings, and improves language about how discipline is reflected in evaluations. It also requires the employer to give a timely response to vacation requests and to formally share guidelines before holding employees responsible for them. The employer would not agree to paid parental leave, a benefit available to workers in the state executive branch.

U Workers Present Petitions

AFSCME Locals 3800 and 3801 and Teamsters 320 delivered petitions to U of M president Eric Kaler last week, urging the administration to bargain in good faith and negotiate real wage increases. They collected hundreds of signatures.

AFSCME Locals 3800 and 3801 say the University is offering frontline workers a raise of just

1.5 percent the first year and 0 percent the second year, even though the U of M is in the middle of a \$4 billion fundraising campaign.

Helping Hurricane Victims

The Retirees United West Metro Subchapter is looking out for fellow AFSCME retirees and members hit hard by hurricanes in Puerto Rico.

They donated \$4,000 to the Fallen Heroes Fund, which helps members who continue to work on the front lines while recovering from natural disasters themselves.

“We simply thought it was the right thing to do,” says subchapter president Mike Nelson. “We’ve watched the lukewarm response at the federal level and thought that we could do better. I was so amazed and heartened by the response of our members and their compassion for our members and retirees so badly affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.”

Nelson says he initially suggested a \$1,000 donation to help Puerto Rico, which the Executive Board increased to \$3,000 and members upped to \$4,000 – with \$2,000 more in 2018 if needed.

You can still donate to the AFSCME Fallen Heroes Fund: <https://tinyurl.com/ydytssmk>.

Member Wins Award

Tabitha Mitchell, the vice president

of AFSCME Local 1842, won the 2017 Karl Neid Community Involvement Award, which honors a Saint Paul city worker who has a record of outstanding public service both inside and outside of work. Mitchell is the community recreation director for citywide programming.

“She doesn’t hesitate to advocate for youth,” parks and recreation deputy director Kathy Korum told the Pioneer Press. “She really is a committed public servant.”

Read more at <https://tinyurl.com/y8pt5m2c>.

Board Nominations Sought

The Council 5 Executive Board is asking for nominations to fill a private sector/special district employees seat, which is vacant due to the resignation of Travis Lenander.

Nominations should be sent to the AFSCME Council 5 Elections Committee, c/o Liza Allen, 300 Hardman Ave. S., South St. Paul, MN 55075. The deadline for nominations is **Monday, Nov. 13**.

Get in on the Action

Action Update comes out twice a month for locals and activists.

Download a copy to post on your workplace bulletin board at www.afscmemn.org. Share news by emailing Lynette.Kalsnes@afscmemn.org.

Mark Your Calendars

Event	Date	Place/details
Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation Blood Drive, with our AFSCME brothers and sisters from Red Cross Local 3931	Nov. 28, noon to 6 p.m.	353 W. 7th St., Saint Paul Call 651-222-3787 ext. 116 or email llwright@stpaulunions.org