



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, December 23, 2014

afscmemn.org

Negotiations Assembly Meets Jan. 30

Delegates from state locals will meet for the first time on Friday Jan. 30 to begin crafting proposals for their 2015-2017 contracts with the State of Minnesota.

The Negotiations Assembly begins at 9 a.m. at the Ramada Airport Mall Hotel in Bloomington. Check-in begins at 8 o'clock. The day includes meetings of the full assembly and break-outs into unit caucuses.

To register: Contact Jackie O'Shea no later than Friday Jan. 16. Call 651-287-0524, fax 651-455-1311, or email jackie.oshea@afscmemn.org.

Lodging: Rooms are available the night of Jan. 29 for \$89 (plus tax). For reservations, call the Ramada at 952-548-3600; ask for the AFSCME rate.

Presidents Gather Jan. 29

Presidents of local unions will meet Thursday Jan. 29, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at Council 5's South St. Paul office. Presidents who cannot attend should send another elected officer in their place.

To register: Contact Gail Grant at 651-450-4990 or council5@afscmemn.org. The free event will include lunch; the registration deadline is Jan. 22.

Local Payments Increase on Jan. 1

Monthly minimum payments for Council 5 locals increase to \$44.79 per member on Jan. 1.

The increase includes the \$5 per capita boost approved by delegates at Council 5's convention in September, and an automatic 75-cent increase under formulas in the AFSCME Constitution. In 2015, 55 cents of the increase will be rebated to locals.

The increase may or may not translate into dues increases for individual members; that depends on your local's dues structure.

Scholarship Deadline is Dec. 31

Wednesday Dec. 31 is the deadline to apply for AFSCME's Family Scholarship. Current high-school seniors who will graduate in 2015 are eligible.

Details: For application materials and full scholarship requirements, go to www.afscme.org/family.

How Do We Keep the Dream Alive?

Council 5 is organizing a Day of Service in April to celebrate the life of Martin Luther King Jr.

AFSCME members are invited to help decide what those activities could be and where they should take place.

Details: The first planning meeting is Tuesday Jan. 6, from 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Council 5's office in South St. Paul. RSVP to Jennifer Munt at jennifer.munt@afscmemn.org or 651-287-0575.

We Can Magnify Nellie's Legacy

The legacy of Nellie Stone Johnson – a pioneering leader in Minnesota unions, education, and civil rights – is about to reach a new level. This year, Gov. Mark Dayton and the Legislature authorized placing a memorial bust in the halls of the State Capitol.

To make it happen: The memorial needs outside supporters to raise matching funds. You can write a check to "NSJ Capitol Fund" at Union Bank and Trust, 312 Central Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414.

Labor Chorus Invites New Members

The Twin Cities Labor Chorus is inviting newcomers to explore membership during an open house on Tuesday, Jan. 13. Events begin at 7 p.m. at the Carpenters Hall, 730 Olive St., Saint Paul.

The chorus is a no-audition group that sings at rallies and picket lines, at labor events, and in support of justice campaigns throughout the Twin Cities.

Correctional Plan Vote Begins Jan. 1

Members of PERA's Local Government Correctional Service Retirement Plan will vote in January on whether to retain their Social Security coverage. The plan covers correctional officers in county and regional adult and juvenile facilities.

Details: Go to afscmemn.org; under "Resources," click "Benefit Plans," then read the PERA notices.

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Pension Board Holds Elections

County and local government employees can vote in January for trustees on the board of PERA – the Public Employees Retirement Association.

AFSCME recommends these candidates to safeguard your pension:

- Active (General Fund and Corrections Fund): **Paul Bourgeois, Clinton Schumacher, Thomas Stanley**
- Retiree: **Ross Arneson**

Ballots will be mailed to members' homes by Jan. 10. Members must vote by Saturday Jan. 31; you can vote online, by phone, or return your ballot by mail.

Handle Dues Money the Right Way

Financial Responsibility Training for local officers takes place on Friday Feb. 6, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at Council 5's South St. Paul office. The specialized training makes sure locals handle dues and expenses legally and transparently.

The training is recommended for any officer who signs checks or conducts audits. Cost is \$20 per person.

To register: Contact Jackie O'Shea at 651-287-0524 or by email at jackie.oshea@afscmemn.org.

Learn Basics of the Labor Movement

A wide-ranging, global look at unions – including their past, present and potential futures; successes and challenges; structures; and lasting impact on and off the job – is the promise of an online course from the University of Minnesota's Labor Education Service.

"Introduction to the Labor Movement" will be taught throughout February. Students can participate from anywhere they have internet access, at times convenient to them.

Details: The registration deadline for the noncredit course is Saturday Jan. 17. Tuition is \$50. To register, call 612-624-5020 or e-mail les@umn.edu.

Locals Get New Year Started Right

Minnesota Judicial Branch. Members in Local 3668 ratified a wage reopener. Between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, employees who are not yet on a step equal to their years of service receive a step increase on their anniversary date. In addition, they receive a 5 percent lump-sum payment this month. Employees who are at or above a step equal to their years of service receive a 7 percent lump-sum this month.

New Horizon Foods at Scenic Shores. Members in this unit of Local 2032 ratified a one-year contract for 2015. It raises pay by 1.75 percent on Jan. 1, and allows members to cash out any and all paid personal leave at any time, in chunks of at least 10 hours.

City of Prior Lake. Members of Local 3884 ratified a three-year contract through 2017. The agreement raises pay by 2.5 percent in January 2015, 3 percent in 2016, and 0.5 percent in 2017. It adds a paid floating holiday; retains fully paid individual health insurance; and increases pay to triple time for being on-call or for working on designated holidays.

Ramsey County. Members of Locals 8, 151, 707, 1076, and 1935 ratified three-year contracts through 2017.

The agreements raise pay by 2 percent in January 2015, 2.5 percent in 2016, and 2.6 percent in 2017. They hold the line on individual health, dental, and retiree insurance contributions in 2015; require the employer to increase contributions to workers' Health Care and Deferred Compensation accounts in 2017; and let workers hang onto twice as many sick leave hours when they collect short- or long-term disability.

City of Shorewood. Members in this unit of Local 224 ratified a contract for 2015 and 2016. The agreement raises pay by 2 percent each January; increases the employer's insurance contribution by \$50 a month in 2015; adds a vacation cash-out option when employees retire; and allows new employees to move more quickly through the pay grid.