



# ACTION UPDATE

**One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers**

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

afscmemn.org

## State Gets Good Budget News

State economists say Minnesota will have a budget surplus of more than \$1 billion to work with in its new two-year fiscal cycle. That means there is no need to cut jobs or state services. Even after putting part of the surplus into a reserve fund, legislators will have money available to meet priorities when they convene in January.

Despite the good news, it doesn't change the fact that state employees still will have to lobby for a salary supplement in their next two-year contract, which begins July 1, 2015.

## Local Presidents to Meet 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:** Email [council5@afscmemn.org](mailto:council5@afscmemn.org) or call Gail Grant at 651-450-4990. The free event will include lunch; the registration deadline is Jan. 22.

## Put Your Best Photo Forward

Council 5 is hosting a photo contest. You can submit your best Minnesota winter photo to our Facebook page through Dec. 31. Then, between Jan. 1 and Jan. 5, Facebook fans will be able to vote for their favorite. Three winners will receive an AFSCME swag bag.

**Submit a photo:** Go to [www.facebook.com/AfscmeCouncil5](http://www.facebook.com/AfscmeCouncil5). Click the "Winter Photo Contest!" tab, click the "Enter" button, then submit your photo by clicking the "Browse" button.

## They Don't Know Their Own Strength

The final Labor Movie Night of 2014 features "Antz," an animated feature about a working ant not satisfied with his station in life.

**Details:** The free movie begins at 6 p.m. Friday Dec. 19 in Room 467 of the Minneapolis Labor Center, 312 Central Ave. Snacks and beverages are available. Labor Movie Night is sponsored by AFSCME Locals 34, 1164, 2822, and 3800, and by Council 5 Next Wave.

## Delta Fires Minimum Wage Activist

Delta Airlines fired 26-year employee Kip Hedges for speaking out publicly in support of a \$15 minimum wage for workers at Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport.

Delta claims Hedges made "disparaging" remarks about the company when he said "close to half" of Delta workers at MSP make less than \$15. Hedges, a baggage handler, was an activist in the Machinists Union before Delta bought out Northwest Airlines and busted the union.

**Take action:** Urge Delta and the Metropolitan Airports Commission to reinstate Hedges and to stop intimidating workers.

Go to [www.coworker.org](http://www.coworker.org); type "Kip Hedges" into the search field, and sign the petition.

## Former Council 6 President Dies

Roger Dahlquist – longtime leader in Moose Lake DHS Local 1092, former president of the old Minnesota Council 6 from 1992-1998, and an active AFSCME retiree – died Nov. 29 at his home in Cloquet after a long battle with lung cancer. He was 74.

There is no funeral; Roger held a "living wake" in October.

## Mankato Unions Join Food Drive

The annual "Unions United" food drive is accepting donations through Monday Dec. 15 at Minnesota State University-Mankato and the South Central College campus in North Mankato.

Donations from members of Local 638 and six other unions will go to ECHO Food Shelf of Mankato.

Collection sites at MSU-Mankato are:

- Career Development Center (WA209)
- Faculty Association Office (MH240B)
- ITS break room (ML3010)
- Library Administration (ML3104)
- Lobby of Wiecking Center

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## Locals Ratify New Contracts

**City of Dayton.** Members in this unit of Local 2454 ratified a two-year contract through 2016. The agreement provides pay raises of 2 percent in January 2015 and again in January 2016. It increases the employer's dollar contribution to health insurance, and provides – for the first time – on-call pay for public works employees on weekends and holidays.

**Roseville Area Schools.** Paraprofessionals and information technology assistants in Local 1129 ratified a two-year contract through June 30, 2016.

The agreement advances pay by one step (retroactive to July 1, 2014), then advances pay another step on July 1, 2015. In addition, steps increase by 1 percent each year. Members at the top of their pay range get a pay raise of 3 percent each July 1.

The contract also adds a paid personal day off and retains fully paid individual health insurance.

**United Way of Greater Duluth.** Members in this unit of Local 3558 ratified a wage and health-insurance re-opener. For five job classifications, the deal gives “market adjustment” pay raises of 11.7 percent to 27 percent; for the four other job classifications, pay raises range from 5.3 percent to 6.5 percent. All pay raises are retroactive to July 1.

In addition, the employer is increasing its insurance contribution in 2015 to cover increases in deductibles.

**Women of Nations.** Members in this unit of Local 8 ratified a new three-year contract through 2017. The deal comes after members worked nearly three years under a contract extension while they built strength, fought off employer attempts to restrict their collective bargaining and representation rights, and won reinstatement or back pay for five co-workers.

The new deal includes step increases of 3.5 percent throughout the agreement. Changes in language shorten the maximum probationary period, mandate annual performance reviews, address use of accrued paid vacation, and strengthen collective bargaining by requiring employees to pay dues or fair-share fees as a condition of employment.

## Scholarship Deadline is Dec. 31

Wednesday Dec. 31 is the deadline to apply for AFSCME's Family Scholarship. The renewable, \$2,000 scholarships are for current high-school seniors who will graduate in 2015.

**Details:** For application materials and full eligibility requirements, go to [www.afscme.org/family](http://www.afscme.org/family).

## E Board Seeks to Fill Vacancy

Council 5 is accepting nominations to fill a vacancy on the Executive Board from District 4.

Nominees must live in one of these counties (or work in one of the counties if they do not live in Minnesota): Aitkin, Benton, Cass, Chisago, Crow Wing, Douglas, Hubbard, Isanti, Kanabec, McLeod, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Renville, Sherburne, Sibley, Stearns, Todd, or Wadena. The term runs through fall 2016.

Nominations are due by Monday Jan. 5. Submit names to: Council 5 Elections Committee, c/o Michelle Stein, 300 Hardman Ave. S, South St. Paul, MN 55075.

## Here's Something to Tweet About

Interested in maximizing your social media skills? Sign up for Council 5's Social Media Workshop. The free, hands-on training will help you get the most out of using Facebook and Twitter for union goals.

**Details:** The workshop is Friday Jan. 23, from 1-4 p.m., at Council 5's South St. Paul office. To register, call 651-287-0524 or email [jackie.oshea@afscmemn.org](mailto:jackie.oshea@afscmemn.org).

## Keep Your Calendar Up to Date

**Legislature Convenes:** Jan. 6, St. Paul

**Women's Economic Security Summit:** Jan. 29, 8 a.m.-noon, St. Paul (Kelly Inn)

**State Negotiations Assembly:** Jan. 30, Bloomington (Ramada Airport Mall Hotel)

**Day on the Hill:** March 24, St. Paul

**Minnesota Union Women's Retreat:** April 22-24, Brainerd (Rutger's Bay Lodge)

**Council 5 Convention:** Oct. 1-3, Duluth (DECC)