



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

afscmemn.org

Did You Get Our Text?

Council 5 is launching a text message alert network.

Messages will update members about legislative action they can take – and help us coordinate our actions and locations during rallies and other events.

To sign up: Text MN5 to 237263, then follow the prompts.

Delegate Deadline is Jan. 16

Friday Jan. 16 is the deadline to register for this year's first state Negotiations Assembly. Delegates will meet 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. Jan. 30 at the Ramada Airport Mall Hotel in Bloomington. The day includes meetings of the full Assembly and break-outs into unit caucuses.

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

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

Presidents to Gather in Bloomington

Thursday Jan. 22 is the deadline to register for the first Council 5 Presidents Meeting of 2015.

Presidents of local unions will meet Thursday Jan. 29, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at the Ramada Airport Mall Hotel, Bloomington. 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. Lunch is included.

Events Sneak Up On Your Calendar

Introduction to the Labor Movement: Jan. 17 is the last day to register for an online course being taught throughout February by the Labor Education Service. Call 612-624-5020 or e-mail les@umn.edu. \$50.

Women's Economic Security Summit: Jan. 29, 8 a.m.-noon, St. Paul (Kelly Inn). Register at <https://wess2015.eventbrite.com>. Free.

Precinct Caucuses: Feb. 3, 7 p.m., all seven wards in St. Paul.

Fix Transportation for Good

The differences are clear. Some legislators want long-term, sustainable solutions for Minnesota transportation. Others just want to keep patching over the problem. In fact, they see it as an opportunity to raid education and health care, and to cut costs at MnDOT. In other words, they want to pay for it with our wages, benefits and jobs, and with the services we provide.

Call your legislator today. Urge them to:

1. Fix transportation now with new revenue for roads, bridges, transit, bike, and pedestrian infrastructure.
2. Budget for maintenance workers who plow snow, patch potholes, and inspect bridges.

To reach your state senator: Call 651-296-0504 (or 1-888-234-1112 toll-free)

To reach your state representative: Call 651-296-2146 (or 1-800-657-3550 toll-free)

You Can Still Vote in Pension Election

County and local government employees can vote now for trustees on the PERA board – the Public Employees Retirement Association. AFSCME recommends voting for these candidates to safeguard your pension:

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

Voting: Members can return their ballot by mail; vote by phone at 1-800-838-3873; or vote online by going to www.mnpera.org and clicking the "Vote" icon.

The last day to vote is Saturday Jan. 31.

3 Win Photo Contest

Congratulations to Natalina Kustrich, of Department of Public Safety Local 3142; Aleathea Modlin, of Brainerd DHS Local 1574; and Joseph Sockel, of Metro DOT Local 221.

Their entries won our winter photo contest on Facebook.

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Film Tells Farmworkers' Story

A new film about labor and civil rights leader Cesar Chavez kicks off Labor Movie Night for 2015.

The drama chronicles Chavez's fight to organize farmworkers against subhuman working conditions; the union's ground-breaking strike and grape boycott; and the United Farm Workers' fight to end second-class treatment for all immigrant workers.

Details: Labor Movie Night begins at 6 p.m. Friday Jan. 16 at the Minneapolis Labor Center, 312 Central Ave. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated.

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, which covers lunch and materials.

To register: Contact Council 5's Jackie O'Shea at 651-287-0524; toll-free at 1-800-652-9791 x524; or by email at jackie.oshea@afscmemn.org.

Future trainings: Financial training also will be held June 4 in Duluth and Sept. 24 in South St. Paul.

Correctional Plan Vote Ends Jan. 30

Members of PERA's Local Government Correctional Service Retirement Plan must vote by Friday Jan. 30 on whether to keep their Social Security coverage. The retirement plan covers correctional officers in county and regional adult and juvenile facilities.

Council 5 believes AFSCME members should vote "Yes." Ballots that are not returned count as a "no" vote, which means Social Security benefits will cease.

Find out more: PERA has a fact sheet that explains the impact of voting "Yes" or "No." For the Q&A information, go to: afscmemn.org; under the "Resources" tab, click "Benefit Plans," then read the PERA notice and update.

Locals Ratify Contracts

Duluth Public Schools. Paraprofessionals in this unit of Local 66 ratified a three-year contract through June 30, 2016. The agreement raises pay by 2 percent, retroactive to July 1, 2014; by another 2 percent on July 1, 2015; and adjusts how members progress through the pay grid.

It lets members accumulate 20 more days of sick leave; allows them to use sick leave to compensate for late starts due to weather; increases the retirement cash-out option; and gives up spring break "make-up time" in exchange for adding one paid snow day and making Labor Day a paid holiday. The contract also reaffirms the primacy of seniority to fill vacancies.

City of Savage. Members of Local 3378 ratified a contract for 2015 and 2016. The agreement raises pay by 2 percent in January 2015, 1.5 percent in January 2016, and another 1.5 percent in July 2016.

It also holds the line on health insurance in 2015 and splits any premium increases 50/50 in 2016; allows members to double the amount of time in their comp bank; expands their ability to cash out unused vacation or comp time; expands the hours covered by weekend call-back pay; adds an additional break for employees who work four 10-hour shifts; makes more employees eligible for premium pay when they obtain job certifications; makes all employees eligible for the city's wellness program; allows probationary employees to use vacation and sick time beginning the pay period after they accrue it; and expands the definition of family for leave purposes.

Western Lake Superior Sanitary District. Members in this unit of Local 66 ratified a contract for 2015, 2016, and 2017. The agreement raises pay by 2 percent each January, increases the shift differential by 25 cents an hour; converts a floating holiday to a personal day off (which gives members more flexibility); increases the safety boot allowance to \$200 per year; and doubles the maximum long-term disability payment to \$4,000 a month. It does all this while avoiding concessions on health insurance, sick leave, and other benefits.