



ACTION UPDATE

One Strong, United Voice for Minnesota Workers

Tuesday, December 11, 2012

www.afscmemn.org

Locals Ratify New Contracts

City of Champlin: Members in this Local 2454 unit ratified a three-year contract. They will receive pay raises of 3.2 percent on Jan. 1, and an additional 2 percent in 2014 and in 2015. The city will increase its insurance contribution by \$25 a month in 2013.

City of Hermantown: Members in this Local 66 unit ratified a one-year contract for 2013. It includes a pay raise of 2 percent on Jan. 1; provides a one-time, lump-sum payment of \$200 in January; and shortens some steps so members get longevity pay sooner.

Duluth Airport: Members in this Local 66 unit ratified a one-year contract for 2013. It includes a pay raise of 1.5 percent on Jan. 1, and extends how long employees will receive supplemental pay if they can't work because of a work-related injury.

City of Elko New Market: Members in this Local 2440 unit ratified a two-year contract through 2014. It includes pay raises of 1.75 percent on Jan. 1, 2013, and on Jan. 1, 2014; continues to cap what employees pay for health insurance; and increases the city's contribution into health savings accounts by 2.76 percent in 2013 and 1.75 percent in 2014.

City of Lauderdale: Members in this Local 2725 unit will receive a 2 percent pay raise on Jan. 1 after ratifying the wage reopener for the final year of their contract.

Minnetonka School District: Members of Local 1877 ratified a two-year contract through June 30, 2014. It includes pay raises of 45 cents an hour, retroactive to July 1, and another 45 cents an hour on July 1, 2013.

The contract also adds a paid holiday for full-time employees; adds three days of paid family illness leave per year; caps the district's contributions for insurance premiums; and increases how much unused leave employees can cash out each year.

Spirit Mountain: Members in this Local 66 unit ratified a three-year contract through June 30, 2015. The agreement includes pay raises of 2 percent on Jan. 1, 1 percent next July 1, and 1.5 percent on July 1, 2014.

The settlement continues to cap what employees pay for health insurance, and raises starting wages by an average of more than \$1 an hour.

Tell Congress: Cut the Nonsense
Negotiations continue in Washington as Congress tries talking its way out of the Jan. 1 fiscal mess it created. We've got to let them know their final settlement must focus on jobs, not cuts.

What you can do: Contact your Congressional officials directly. Go to the AFSCME website www.usJobsNotCuts.com and tell them: Don't make another bad deal.

The best way to attack the deficit is to make sure people are working. Instead, Congressional Republicans want to cut Social Security, cut Medicare, and make extreme budget cuts that will destroy jobs and programs that make a real difference for working families and retirees.

They want to do all this so they can give more tax cuts to the rich and tax breaks to corporations.

Voters rejected this failed strategy in November. Congress needs to reject it now.

Make Christmas Happen

You can donate gifts, toys, household goods, or cash for families of locked-out sugar workers as part of labor's Operation Christmas Solidarity.

Donations can be mailed or delivered by Dec. 17 to the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation, 411 Main St. #202, St. Paul, MN 55102.

Make checks payable to Labor Studies and Resource Center (put "Operation Christmas Solidarity" in the memo line). Gifts should be new and unwrapped.

Save the Dates

- **Jan. 19:** MnSCU Local 4001 presents a Martin Luther King Jr. Observance, Minneapolis, 4-8:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 4:** State Negotiations Assembly, Bloomington
- **Feb. 8:** Local Presidents Meeting, South St. Paul, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 26:** Council 5 Day on the Hill, St. Paul

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Don't Forget: Boycott Crystal Sugar

This baking season, remember to boycott Crystal Sugar.

In addition to its name brand, the sugar-beet co-op also produces private-label brands for many major grocery chains, including Target. Don't buy these store brands, either.

The best way to avoid buying any Crystal Sugar product is to buy cane sugar instead (such as C&H or Domino).

The nationwide boycott continues until American Crystal Sugar ends its 16-month lockout of 1,300 workers.

SEPC Seeks Trustee Candidates

Nominations are being accepted until Dec. 21 to fill the rest of a two-year term for trustee on the State Employee Policy Committee. The term lasts until spring 2014.

Send nominations to Council 5 state director Jo Pels at jo.pels@afscmemn.org, or to SEPC president John Hillyard at johnhillyardj@aol.com.

Reminder: Dec. 14 is the deadline for locals to submit updated lists of delegates and alternates to the State Employee Policy Committee. Credential forms are available at www.afscmemn.org; click "Bargaining Updates," then "State of Minnesota 2013-15."

Scholarship Deadline is Dec. 31

Dec. 31 is the deadline to apply for the AFSCME Family Scholarship, which provides \$2,000 a year for full-time students.

Applicants must be graduating high-school seniors who have a parent, legal guardian, or financially responsible grandparent who is a full, dues-paying AFSCME member.

Details and applications: Go to www.afscme.org/family.

Another Chance to Fix Another Deficit

The newest state projection says Minnesota faces another \$1.1 billion budget deficit. The deficit proves – again – that the tea-party strategy of massive spending cuts and disinvestment isn't working.

Minnesota cannot continue to raid middle-class wallets to protect tax breaks for millionaires and corporations. Instead, Council 5 is calling on the Legislature to set a goal of raising \$6 billion in revenue, in part by making millionaires pay their fair share.

The new revenue not only will dig the state out of its budget hole, but pave the way for real progress by investing in the things Minnesotans care about: brainpower schools, middle-class jobs, a safe and efficient transportation system, and relief from the property tax burden.

And they lived happily ever after? A new animated cartoon shows why we need to tax the rich. Go to www.cft.org; search for "An Animated Fairy Tale."

Corporate Giveaways Cost Billions

A New York Times investigative series shows how state and local taxpayers give away more than \$80 billion a year nationwide in corporate tax breaks.

In Minnesota, our state, counties and cities bankroll private companies in more than 1,000 different ways. These tax giveaways to corporations cost taxpayers at least \$239 million a year, according to the Times, while basic services get cut and property taxes rise.

You can find details at www.nytimes.com; search "The United States of Subsidies." The interactive web package includes a searchable database for Minnesota that tells exactly who gives away how much to whom.