

General Membership Meetings

Union Members are welcome to attend the monthly General Membership meetings.

Dinner starts at 5:30 pm
Meeting starts at 6:00 pm

HILTON DOUBLETREE HOTEL

2540 Cleveland Avenue
Roseville, MN 55113

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Fourth Thursday of the Month

- ▶ Thursday, March 27, 2025
- ▶ Thursday, April 24, 2025
- ▶ Thursday, May 22, 2025

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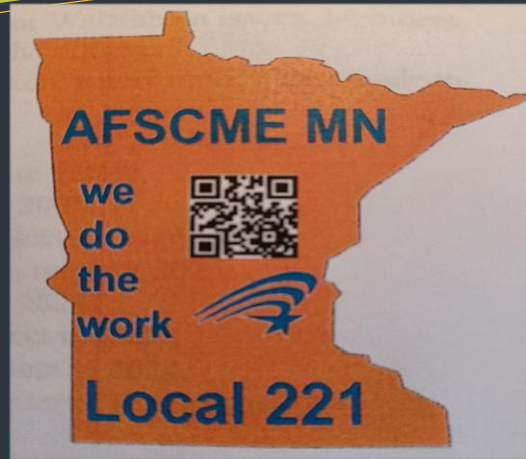
[Facebook](#)

Local 221 Website

<https://www.afscmemn.org/local-221-mndot-central-office-metro>

AFSCME Council 5 Website

<https://www.afscmemn.org/>



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Maintenance Machinist Kevin Rosaasen Retires

After 40-plus years of service to the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Kevin Rosaasen retired in January 2025.

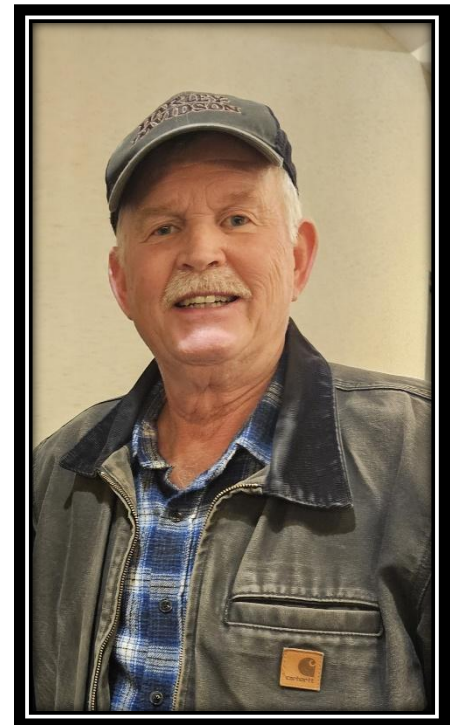
Kevin started with MnDoT as a temporary employee in July 1984. He worked under Ed DeSmith who hired Kevin full time in November of that year. Kevin has worked with all MnDoT offices and lab personnel within the Materials and Road Research testing facility to include Research, Foundations/State-wide Drill Crew, Geotechnical, Chemical Lab, Concrete and Metals Lab, Receiving, Aggregate Lab, Trial Mix Lab, Soils and Cement Lab, and the MNRoad Research Facility.

His knowledge as a Maintenance Machinist for MnDot was invaluable. He fabricated multiple projects throughout his career, enabling labs to complete their research.

Kevin also served Local 221 as a Steward at Maplewood Fleet for many years.

In retirement, Kevin plans to spend more time with his family, especially his four grandchildren who call him "Papa." Traveling and hunting are also on his To-Do list.

Thank you, Kevin, for your craftsmanship, ingenuity, and dedication of service for 40 years to the people of Minnesota.



Line Officers

PRESIDENT

Afscmeprs1221@gmail.com

Darren Trast TG Maryland Days

VP HEPC

VICE PRESIDENT 1

Afscmevp11221@gmail.com

Drew Sykes TG Maryland Nights

VICE PRESIDENT 2

Afscmevp21221@gmail.com

Jean Zimmerman TGS Waters Edge

Traffic Engineering / Sign Design

TREASURER

AfscmeTrsL221@gmail.com

Bryan Kirsch TG Eden Prairie Days

SECRETARY

Afscmesec1221@gmail.com

Louis McNutt HEM Maple Grove Days

Executive Board

Joe Sockel TG Forest Lake

Scott Zellmer TG Oakdale Days

J. Hinrichs TGS TAPP Arden Hills

Louis McNutt HEM Maple Grove Days

Mike Novlan TGS Spring Lake Park

Rebecca Haflund TG Camden Nights

Trustees

Kelly Chirpich TG Golden Valley

Leslie Vaughn TG GV Sign Shop

Web Administrator

Crystal Gaebler TG Cedar Nights

Victory for Organized Members Taking Action

Union members in the Fargo-Moorhead area became aware last Fall that the **Essentia Health System** had decided to increase their office visit co-pay status from cost-level 2 to cost-level 3. They announced that the increase from \$40 to \$70 would become effective as of January 1, 2025 and would affect state employees enrolled in SEGIP (State Employee Group Insurance Program).

Essentia in the Northwest region was approached about this cost increase but would not agree to a deal with SEGIP that would have kept the cost at level 2 for 2025.

The state employee Unions – **MAPE, AFSCME, MSUAASF, and IFO** – negotiate health care insurance as a coalition. Together they stepped up in response to this issue and organized their members across the State to contact Essentia directly. Many from among our Unions called Essentia and voiced their concerns, explaining how the financial increase would negatively impact state employees.

Their voices were indeed heard. Essentia and the State recently reached an agreement whereby the cost will now return to level 2 starting March 1, 2025. However, those employees affected must pay the level 3 cost but only for January and February. Health Partners and Blue Cross Blue Shield are in agreement with the deal reached by Essentia and the State.

Congratulations to all of the Union members who took action and helped make this Victory happen.

As one Local 221 member commented, *"This situation may not directly impact our 221 members today; but when we have to try and fight for the same here in the cities, it is good to know there is precedent to compel insurance providers to make amends."*

Local 221 Leadership

Stewards

Chief Steward Central Region

PRS Darren Trast Maryland

Chief Stewards

VP2 Jean Zimmerman Waters Edge

TRS Bryan Kirsch Eden Prairie

SEC Louis McNutt Maple Grove

Joe Sockel Forest Lake

Scott Zellmer Oakdale

Stewards

VP1 Drew Sykes Maryland

J. Hinrichs Arden Hills

Chad Curtis Camden Nights

Terry Kapfer Forest Lake

Informational Stewards

Mike Novlan Spring Lake Park

J. Hinrichs Arden Hills

Kelly Chirpich Golden Valley

Leslie Vaughn Golden Valley

Ken Kogler Oakdale

Dan Trog Oakdale

Rebecca Haflund Camden

Crystal Gaebler Cedar

Joe Anderson North Branch

Brian Johnson Roseville

Email general or grievance
questions to:

AfscmeLocal221Steward@gmail.com

the UNION difference

Corporate-funded organizations are trying to get AFSCME members to give up their membership and lose their voice on the job. Declare: I'm Sticking With My Union!

By giving up your Union membership, they know you lose member-only benefits such as:

- A powerful, unified voice in your workplace.
- Ability to vote on your contract.
- Ability to participate and vote for your local Union leadership.
- Collective power to get the strongest wage increases and benefits as possible.
- Solidarity and "people power" in the halls of power to fight for working people.

Corporate-funded organizations like the Freedom Foundation want you to give up your rights in the workplace, so corporations and our employers can take advantage of us as workers. The Freedom Foundation, and its allies, work across the country to reverse policies and laws that benefit working people and directly benefit employers' being able to take advantage of workers.

With your Union membership, you are protected by a collective bargaining agreement with due process rights, the right to representation, and a work family that has your back!

Our Union Membership Proves

The **Union** Difference !

Jean Zimmerman
Vice-President 2, Local 221
Chief Steward

TGS, Traffic Engineering : Sign Design
Waters Edge



Contract Negotiations Corner

Council 5 and the Locals continue to prepare for the upcoming contract negotiations. Last Fall members from all of the Locals were asked to submit their proposal ideas, including additions and changes to the current contract language. **Thank you to all who participated!** Council 5 received excellent feedback from several dozen proposals.

Members were also asked to submit information and data regarding wage inequities between state employees and employees doing the same or similar job in other public or private economic sectors. Again, Council 5 received nice feedback on wage inequity data.

Delegates from all of the Council 5 Locals recently convened at the first Delegate Assembly in Minneapolis. The delegates reviewed and considered each proposal based on criteria for support, and whether a supported proposal would advance to the Master Negotiation Team or to the Supplements Team. Delegates also elected members who will serve on the Master Negotiation Team.

Delegates recently convened at the second Delegates Assembly to review and consider the inequities data, and elect members to serve on the Supplements Negotiation Team.

**Members, we need YOU to now step up and participate in the process.
Here's how you can help:**

Attend the upcoming **Fund Our Future Rally** on Tuesday, Feb 18, 2025

Bring YOUR voice to the Capitol in St. Paul and tell our elected officials that the citizens of Minnesota expect them to step up for state employee working families and to fund our future.

► Register at bit.ly/afscme2025



Attend the upcoming **Day on the Hill** event on Tuesday, April 1, 2025

We need members just like YOU, from every Local, to show up at the Capitol in St. Paul where you can meet with your state lawmakers and voice your concerns about the upcoming contract. Together we will also hold a rally to show our numbers and our solidarity for better wages and working conditions. For more information and to sign up for this important event, please attend your February and March Local 221 general membership meetings. See page 1 for meeting details.

► Feb Meeting: Thursday, Feb 27, 2025

► March Meeting: Thursday, March 27, 2025

NASHTU

National Association of State Highway & Transportation Unions

The NASHTU organization began in 1999 and is now a non-profit association headquartered in Sacramento, California. They are comprised of multiple Unions who serve in the highway and transportation industry. NASHTU provides their members with legislative advocacy, research, education, and networking services.

NASHTU is comprised of 38 Unions and associations from 20 states representing hundreds of thousands of state and locally employed transportation engineers, construction managers and inspectors, technical workers and related public servants from throughout the United States.

The mission and focus of NASHTU is to ensure that Federal transportation dollars are spent on cost-effective and safe projects that serve the public interest.

Each year NASHTU hosts a conference in Washington D.C. Member Unions have the opportunity to discuss directly with decisionmakers in Congress the transportation-related issues which impact their Union members.

NASHTU has become an important voice in Washington D.C. speaking on behalf of public sector transportation Unions and workers. NASHTU has won important legislative victories by working together to stop wasteful outsourcing mandates and incentives in the federal transportation authorization and other transportation-related legislation.

Their report entitled *Highway Robbery*, published in 2002 and updated in 2007, shines a light on the problem of Outsourcing, which has become a common tactic used by transportation agencies. The report demonstrates the fraud, inefficiency and waste associated with outsourcing transportation projects.

NASHTU worked with several other groups to oppose legislative language that would mandate and incentivize the outsourcing of engineering and design services on federally funded projects. Their position is that outsourcing mandates or incentives are an inappropriate use of federal authority. They continue to work towards commonsense public interest protections for public-private construction project funding authorization.

NASHTU also fights to prioritize safety in transportation legislation to better protect public employee highway maintenance workers.

NASHTU supports its Union members in their fight with State and Local DOT's to be fully staffed with publicly employed professionals rather than over-priced consultants.



New issues on the horizon include increasing electric vehicle registration fees to offset the fact that EV owners do not pay gas tax. Some of the revenue from gas taxes go toward funding state highway projects.

The Highway Trust Fund, which is based on a user fee model, is projected to remain solvent through 2028. But with stagnant 1993-era gas tax structures still in place, and the advent of more fuel-efficient vehicles, the fund value is decreasing. The trust fund will be up for reauthorization next year, and proponents are finding ways to overcome the growing loss of funding.

New York State is experiencing a loss of state workers. They are looking at pension plan improvements, and pay increases to retain and attract workers.

Oregon is facing budget cuts and lay-offs, and their DOT is especially hard-hit by the funding shortfall.

Minnesota has lost a substantial number of plow drivers in the Metro. The state will also need to address ways to retain its current workforce and attract new qualified workers.

Local 221 is a member of NASHTU. Leadership believes that this organization can provide valuable networking with other DOT's across the country. NASHTU has influence where it matters in Washington D.C., and the opportunity for us to discuss our concerns with those in Congress who can be influential at the state level is invaluable to our contract negotiation efforts.

This Month's Q&A Contract Tips

Q : I think I have a dispute with my employer; what do I do next?

A : Article 17 lays out the requirements of the Grievance Procedure between the Employer and the Union.

To qualify as a grievance under the contract, your dispute or disagreement MUST pertain to the interpretation or application of the terms of the contract. In other words, your grievance must be about *contract language* and how it was interpreted or implemented.

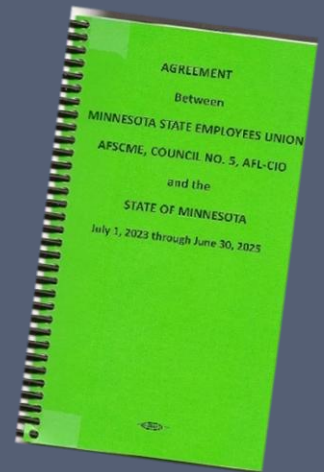
When this condition is present, then a Union Representative, typically a Union Steward, is allowed to assist you through the grievance process. If you accept Union representation, you also agree that the Union will have *exclusive representation*. You cannot bring in a third-party, such as a lawyer, to also represent you.

Union representation is available to all State employees under AFSCME regardless whether you are a union member. Your first move is to contact a Union Steward as soon as possible to discuss whether or not your situation involves a dispute over contract language. Time is of the essence when dealing with a grievance so do not make the mistake of hesitating to talk to a Steward as soon as you recognize that there might be a problem. Your inaction could prevent you from ever filing your case.

If it turns out that your dispute is about MnDOT or State policy, such as workplace violence, harassment, employment discrimination, or data privacy (just to name a few), and none of the facts in your situation relate to language in the contract, then the Union is not permitted to assist you. You will need to obtain appropriate legal advice.

But if your dispute relates to contract language, then a Union Steward will initiate the grievance process for you. The next step after talking things over with the Steward is to try and resolve the matter with your supervisor within a specified time of the event that gave rise to the grievance. A Steward will assist with this process. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the Local Union, then the next steps require a written grievance be submitted to the next level or levels of supervision. If the matter remains unresolved at this point, then you may have the opportunity to take the matter to Arbitration. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding upon the parties.

Refer to Article 17 if you're interested in knowing more about the steps involved. And please reach out to a Union Steward who can fully explain the grievance process and answer your questions or concerns.



Upcoming Events

Day on the Hill

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Locals Annual Group Picnic

Saturday, May 3, 2025

