

Contract negotiations 2009

By Lynn Stetler, president

Here we are again about to enter into contact negotiations with our employer with the eye on the prize for a contract agreement. What's important to note is that we have never entered into a negotiation process like this before. We will work our hardest to get the best contract agreement that we can. These are unprecedented times for AFSCME and Hennepin County. So the union has taken this very seriously and has been meeting all summer with our Master Negotiation Team to try and come up with the best process for entering negotiations with our employer.

I believe that this will be our toughest bargaining session in Local 2822's 30 year history with Hennepin County. In the past, the union and the employer met regularly from August through November working toward a tentative agreement. This year, the union will enter into bargaining, for the first time, by sending our proposal directly to Management on September 8 without a face to face meeting. The union and the employer have agreed on a shorter process with fewer people involved. Local 2822 bargains with the other five AFSCME locals at Hennepin County: Local 34, Social Work, Local 552, Probation, Local 1719, Adult Correctional Facility, Local 2864

Professionals, and Local 2938, County Attorneys and Public Defenders.

Your 2822 Table Team will be a broad group representing the wide spectrum we represent in Hennepin County with veteran members and first time members. Our team consists of: Molly Malecki, Taxpayer Services, Paul Kuechenmeister, the Sheriff's Department, Theresa Smith, Human Services Public Health Department (HSPHD), Genae Nicole, MHP (formerly Metropolitan Health Plan), and I will represent the Library.

The first time the six AFSCME Table Teams and the employer meet together is Monday, September 14 from 2:30-8 pm when we expect to receive Management's response and to hear their proposal. We have scheduled two more meetings directly with the employer on Tuesday, September 29 from 2:30-8pm and Monday, October 19 from 2:30-8 pm. The final meetings of negotiations are scheduled with a mediator from the Bureau of Mediation Services, who will work with the union and the employer to obtain an agreement. These meetings will be Monday, November 2 beginning at 9 am and Monday, November 16 beginning at 9am. We hope to finish on November 16.

Throughout this process, there are many opportunities for you to help. In another part of the newsletter, you will see a form that you can complete to help us and show our employer that we are **doing our part**. Please sign up to attend County Board briefings on setting the maximum levy, and be there when the Board adopts the maximum levy and budget. We also need to see you during the budget process with all the county department presentations during October and November with Commissioner Amendments and the Truth in Taxation hearings in December. It's your chance to see how the county that you work for does their work. This all culminates with the County Board adopting the 2010 budget on December 15, 2009. Let them know again and again that we're all **doing our part** to make Hennepin County the great county that it is with the great county workers that we're.

**WE DO GOOD WORK—
THE COUNTY WORKS
BECAUSE WE DO AND
WE'RE DOING OUR
PART.**

Membership survey

Many great ideas were received. They will be forwarded to County Administrator Richard Johnson and to the County Board. It was a fantastic way to get people to participate anonymously. Thanks to all who participated.

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

September Membership Meeting

Wednesday, September 2
7:00 p.m.
Ridgedale Library

Special Order of Business:

- Election of delegates to Council 5 Convention.
- Vote on Letter of Understanding regarding APEX

October Membership Meeting

Wednesday, October 14
7:00 p.m.
Southdale Library

For our members who are physically challenged, please let us know if special accommodations are needed.



Visit Local 2822 website:
<http://www.afscme2822.org>

AFSCME at the State Fair



Look for the AFSCME booth in the Labor Building at the State Fair—some Local 2822 members will be there.

Furloughs averted for 2009

52% of Local 2822 members **did their part** to avert furloughs for 2009 by taking voluntary special leave without pay. AFSCME at Hennepin County pressed the County Board to allow employees to **voluntarily** take special leave in order to avert furloughs for all employees. The County Board needed to save four million dollars by furloughing employees. That goal was reached by employees doing this voluntarily.

The union encouraged members, who **could afford** to, to take the leave so that those who could not afford to lose up to thirty-two hours by being furloughed could be spared. The members of Local 2822, with some of the lowest paid employees in the county, are to be congratulated for their generosity of spirit and for pulling together to spare their union brothers and sisters. That is what the union is about.

Council 5 Convention – Election of delegates

Delegates to the AFSCME Council 5 Convention will be elected at the September membership meeting on September 2 at 7:00 PM at Ridgedale Library. The Convention will be held in Duluth from October 8 through October 10.

Local 2822 Executive Board recommended and the membership, at the August membership meeting, approved sending nine delegates, paying mileage, housing and per diem. Lost time will not be paid: delegates will have to take their own time, either vacation or voluntary leave without pay—“doing our part”. Because workshops begin early morning on October 8, the local will pay housing on Wednesday night, the 7th. Delegates are encouraged to share rides and to share rooms in order to save the local money. Our local is entitled to send 56 delegates. More than nine delegates may be elected to go to the convention but any over nine will have to go at their own expense.

The highlight of the convention will be the **Gubernatorial forum**. Candidates, who have thrown their hats in the ring for governor, will be invited to the forum so that AFSCME members can meet them and hear how they propose to work for a

The totals for **Local 2822** are:

Of 1373 members, 712 took (or committed to) 19,542.8 hours of voluntary special leave without pay for a savings of \$357,328.00.

The grand total for **all of Hennepin County** is:

Of 7494 employees, 3771 took (or committed to) 103,308 hours for a savings of \$3,080,255.00. That represents 50% of all employees.

At the August membership meeting, some members wanted to know how these figures broke down for management. Their figures are:

Of 1120 **directors/managers/supervisors**, 740 took (or committed to) 18,622.5 hours for a savings of

better Minnesota. There will not be an endorsement at that time, although feedback from those members attending will be sought. The forum will be on Friday afternoon of the convention.

On Thursday morning the delegates will be able to choose 2 of 12 workshops. Some of the workshops include one on retirement with a presenter from PERA, one on the progressive dues, one on precinct caucuses, one on resources in tough times by the AFL-CIO Community Services, and one called “Defend Minnesota and Your Paycheck”. The complete list will be available at the membership meeting.

Shar Can Do It!

Congratulations to AFSCME member Shar Knutson, who will be the first woman to lead the Minnesota AFL-CIO, a federation of 300,000 members from 1,000 local unions. Shar was elected by the federation’s Executive Board on August 17 and will fill the remaining term of Ray Waldron, who retires Sept. 4. Knutson, a member of Local 1842, currently is president of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation.

\$747,182.00. That represents 66% of those in that group.

In a respectful work place we should all be rejoicing at this success. We should not be second guessing our co-workers or supervisors. We are to only look in the mirror and ask if we did what we could. If you couldn’t because of family issues, then don’t let others make you feel bad. That is their bad if they are judging others. Until you have walked a mile in another’s shoes...Also MYOB (mind your own business).

APEX redux

Last month’s newsletter reported that a vote would be taken at the August membership meeting regarding the letter of understanding as relates to the new APEX payroll system. The vote was not taken as the employer sent more information the day before the meeting, and members did not have time to study it.

The original information and letter led us to believe that all seniority would be changed in October when APEX begins. Now there is a formula to determine each member’s seniority, based on hours worked, on the day that APEX begins. From then on seniority will be determined by years worked.

Now the vote on this change to our contract will be taken at the September 2 membership meeting. Questions can be asked at that time for clarification.

Gubernatorial Candidates Screening

Saturday, October 24 – 10 a.m.
Ramada Plaza Minneapolis
1330 Industrial Blvd.

The Council 5 Executive Board will interview candidates for possible endorsement.

Council 5 members are welcome to observe.

Questions? Contact Jim Niland at jim.niland@afscmemn.org or 651-287-0547.

Good contracts are not won at the bargaining table

Good contracts are won by those who are not at the table, by the involvement, the enthusiasm, and the support of the members.

Members cannot put their heads down and think if they just shut up everything will be OK. There needs to be a racket!!! There needs to be noise!!!! Members need to be talking about negotiations and what they are doing to help get a decent contract.

Two contracts ago there was tremendous noise. People were talking about striking after taking two years of zeros. They were mad and not about to be shut up. And we prevailed. We got a decent contract.

This year we need to be loud and tell the employer how we have **done our part** to help Hennepin County with the mess it is in. We are all working harder with less help. The work hasn't gone away—just a lot of folks who used to help us have gone away. Do we deserve a reward for our efforts? Or are we going to settle for, “things are rough all over”? Or are we going to go out and make some noise? Are we going to let the county commissioners know what we are working against and what the cost is to us?

This page contains two opportunities to make some noise. This first one is a **Hennepin County Levy Phone Bank**. AFSCME members will be calling AFSCME members who live in Hennepin County. The message will be to raise revenue to protect needed services. We will connect them instantly to their county commissioner's answering machines.

The times for these four phone banks are: (feel free to come at any time during these hours—no time clock)

Tuesday August 25 at 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Thursday August 27 at 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Tuesday September 1 at 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Thursday September 3 at 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The phone banks will be at the

Minneapolis Labor Federation (formerly the Central Labor Union)
3312 Central Ave SE,
Minneapolis
(follow the signs to the 2nd floor IBEW 292 office)

The second opportunity involves being seen. AFSCME wants to be a presence at the County Commission meetings that relate to setting a high enough maximum levy for us to be able to do our jobs. Members are simply being asked to attend these meeting and **wear green** (green t-shirts will be handed out). We will not be

speaking, but our presence is noted—this is quiet noise.

You don't have to attend the whole meeting—maybe come up to the 24th floor on your lunch break or coffee break or take an hour of voluntary special leave without pay. Show your commissions and your negotiating team that you want to help.

If you can commit to any of these meetings fill out this form and send to Molly Malecki, Brookdale Service Center, Mail Code N710. We want to have enough shirts for everybody.



I'm doing my part to protect the services I provide. That's why you can count on me attending a budget hearing:

- Thu 9/3 - 9:30 AM (Maximum Levy Briefing)
- Tue 9/8 - 1:30 PM (Maximum Levy Adoption)
- Thu 10/8 - 1 to 4 PM (Health)
- Fri 10/23 - 9 AM to 12 PM (Medical Examiner, Library)
- Mon 11/2 - 1 to 4 PM (Human Services)
- Mon 11/16 - 1 to 4 PM (Human Services, cont.)
- Thu 11/19 - 1 to 4 PM (Public Safety)
- Mon 11/30 - 1 to 4 PM (Commissioner Amendments)
- Wed 12/2 - 1 to 4 PM (Commissioner Amendments)
- Tue 12/15 - 1:30 PM (Budget Approval)

Name _____ **Local** _____
Building _____ **Floor** _____
Home e-mail _____
Cell Phone _____

New to Hennepin County?

If you haven't been approached by a union representative yet, please fill out this form and send to our membership secretary.

To sign up as a full union member or for Delta Dental Insurance, or to get answers to questions about AFSCME and membership benefits, please fill out this coupon and send to:

Dirk Schot
East Lake Library
Mail Code 760

Name _____

Job Title _____

Work Location _____

Mailcode _____

Phone _____

I want to sign up as a full member.

I want to sign up for Delta Dental.



Help us remember your co-workers with a card. Let us know to send a sympathy card, get well or congratulations. We will send a card, hand-made by President Lynn Stetler.

Contact Heather Clark, our Good and Welfare Coordinator at :952-847-8523 or by e-mail: hclark@hclib.org. The request should include the name of the member, the reason for the request and home address, if possible."



With Delta Access, you can find out about your Delta coverage without even opening your mouth.

Delta Access
651-406-5900 or 1-800-862-6042.

Always refer to your group number 538.

Council 5 Contact person:
Cindy Pince, 651-287-0564

A New Voice deadline is September 2.

Articles will be accepted up to and including the day of the monthly Membership Meeting for inclusion in the following month's newsletter. Send your written contributions to Molly Malecki.



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