



Mail Handlers Local Union No. 323

1602 Selby Ave., Suite 5 St. Paul, MN 55104
(651) 646-2827 Fax (651) 646-0991 www.local323.org

Minutes of the Local Union 323 Executive Board Meeting ST. PAUL, MN June 26, 2025

Jeff Larsen

Local President

Dean Abatte

Vice President

Aaron Kobes

Recording Secretary

Jarred Hoover

Treasurer

State Executive

Board Members

Shane Ryden

Minnesota

Brock Engstrom

North Dakota

Branch Presidents

Dean Abatte

Minneapolis

Edward Yun

St. Paul

Aaron Kobes

NDC

Brock Engstrom

Fargo

IN ATTENDANCE:

Local President: Jeff Larsen

Vice President: Dean Abatte

Recording Secretary: Aaron Kobes

Treasurer: Jarred Hoover

MN SEBM Representative: Shane Ryden

ND SEBM Representative: Brock Engstrom

St Paul P&DC Branch President (Guest): Edward Yun

Local President Jeff Larsen called the meeting to order at 09:58 A.M.

Recording Secretary Aaron Kobes took the roll call.

Report of Annual Audit

The Local Executive Board received the results of the annual audit and reviewed the financial reports with Larry Wood of Legacy Professionals. The Local Union continues to have a surplus each fiscal year, and our financial condition remains strong.

Following the report of Legacy Professionals, Local President Jeff Larsen made a motion to adopt a proposal concerning the accounting policy of the Local Union. Specifically, President Larsen proposed that the minutes include the following statement:

The Executive Board has discussed the options concerning the Local obtaining the capabilities of preparing financial statements that would not require significant changes by the auditor. The Board has decided that it would not be cost-beneficial to hire another employee to perform such a task or train current employees to be able to do so. The Board believes it is in the best interest of the Local to continue to retain the auditing firm to prepare the Local's financial statements in conjunction with the year-end audit.

This motion was seconded by Vice President Dean Abatte and passed unanimously.

Review of the Previous Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting on March 28, 2024. MN SEBM Shane Ryden made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by ND SEBM Brock Engstrom, the motion carried.

Local President's Report (see attached for full report)

- Local 323 Compliment
- Local activities
 - 2025 National Agreement
 - 2025 NPMHU Legislative Conference
 - 2025 Organizing Drive
 - Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU)
 - 2025 Matt Lopez – Local 323 Scholarship Program
 - Arbitration Activity
 - Voluntary Early Retirement (VER)
- Branch Activities
 - NDC Branch Steward and Branch Meetings
 - St. Paul L&DC Closure Meeting
 - Facility Visits and Activities

Upcoming Events

- Metro Area Picnic – July 13th
- SAMLU – August 11th – 13th
- Local Union Council – August 28th
- Local Executive Board – September 25th (tentative)

Local President's Expense Report

Local President Jeff Larsen submitted for review his Expense Report. NDSEBM Brock Engstrom motioned to authorize the Local President's expenses for the time frame given and was seconded by MN SEBM Shane Ryden. The motion carried.

Local President's Agenda Items

- USPS – 10-Year Plan
- Complement
- Organizing Drive
- MHBP- Associate Dues Revenue

Treasurer's Report

Local Treasurer Jarrad Hoover submitted the Local's Expenses and Profit and Loss Statements. Local President Jeff Larsen moves to authorize expense account for time given by Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Vice President Dean Abatte, the motion carried.

Executive Officer's Report

- Vice President Dean Abatte unveiled the designs for the new Mail Handler Local 323 t-shirt. There was a brief discussion regarding color, black was unanimously agreed upon. Turning to the Metro Area Picnic, Vice President Abatte outlined plans for food pick up and finalized prize selection.
- MN SEBM Shane Ryden states that discipline within the outstate facilities are moving to higher levels. Additionally, it was noted that the Mankato facility is hiring again, while the Duluth facility is still experiencing a high turnover rate. There is inventory for the LCUS and SDUS plus have been signed and are awaiting the APWU's final signature at the Duluth facility.
- St. Paul Branch President and guest Edward Yun remarks that grievance activity remains high at his facility (already over two hundred (200) grievances filed this year). Additionally, stated that MHAs are being moved to non-postal facility (THS) to work because of the contract having run out within that facility and that twenty-one (21) MHAs have been hired within the last three (3) weeks, with Plant Manager Tate claiming to continue this trend of hiring MHAs until compliment reaches thirty-eight (38). Branch President Yun is also working with Plant Manager Tate in resolving the GATS late-payment issue and believe it will be resolved by July 1st. Finally, though the Airport L&DC is closing, there remains two (2) Mail Handler at the facility on Tours 1 and 3 until closure is complete.
- Recording Secretary Aaron Kobes reporting as NDC Branch President stated that they have had a dozen (12) reversions within the facility over two (2) notices. Both notices have been grieved, with the first one being settled, resulting in three (3) of the (6) duty assignments slated to be reactivated within the next two (2) cycles of bidding as Level 5's and the second reversion notice still being discussed. There continues to be elevated grievance activity, with heavier focus on Article 1.6 and overtime violations. Additionally, it was noted that a grievance was filed against an SDO for improper conduct, with the grievance ultimately being resolved by the SDO taking a detail within the Maintenance Craft.

Open Discussion

Local President Jeff Larsen opened the floor for general discussion, comments, questions, and upon hearing none, ND SEBM Brock Engstrom motioned to adjourn the Local Executive Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice President Dean Abatte. The motion was carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:54 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,


Aaron Kobes, Recording Secretary
Mail Handlers Local Union No. 323

cc: All Branches
File



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June 26, 2025

Jeff Larsen
Local President

Local President's Report Local Executive Board

Dean Abatte
Vice President

Local 323 Complement:

The Local 323 bargaining unit complement as of Pay Period 12-25 is 695 (638 MN & 57 ND). Membership is at 685.

Aaron Kobes
Recording Secretary

Local Activities:

Jarred Hoover
Treasurer

- **2025 National Agreement**

State Executive
Board Members

As everyone is aware, the 2022 National Agreement will expire on September 20, 2025. One Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) remains under the terms of the 2022 National Agreement (the second full pay period after the release of the July 2025 Index). Formal bargaining over the term of what will become known at the 2025 National Agreement will begin this month.

Shane Ryden
Minnesota

The Field Negotiating Committee met to further discuss our proposals during the April Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions. Further discussions concerning our bargaining proposals were held during the meeting of the Committee on the Future early this month. I was present and participated in the discussions at both meetings.

Brock Engstrom
North Dakota

Branch Presidents

- **2025 NPMHU Legislative Conference**

The 2025 NPMHU Legislative Conference was held on May 13th and 14th in Wahington, DC. The Local 323 legislative team was comprised of myself, Vice President Dean Abatte, and ND State Executive Board Member Brock Engstrom. After a day of training, we went to Capitol Hill to lobby our Congressional representatives. Congress was in session and all but one of our meetings ended up being with Legislative Assistants. Additionally, there was one Congressional office that was unable to fit us into their schedule. That did not deter us, however, as we stopped in anyways and provided materials. Pictures of the Local 323 team at the Legislative Conference may be found in the Photo Galleries on our website.

Dean Abatte
Minneapolis

Edward Yun
St. Paul

Aaron Kobes
NDC

Brock Engstrom
Fargo

Our efforts at ensuring that the Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and is not subject to privatization, centers around House Resolution 70 (H. Res. 70) and Senate Resolution 147 (S. Res. 147). Both Resolutions are in support of this proposition and that determined our approach to the issue at each Congressional office. In offices where the Senator or Representative had not signed on as a cosponsor, we provided information and requested that the Senator or Representative become a cosponsor. Conversely, in Congressional offices where the Senator or Representative was a cosponsor, we thanked them for their support. It is worth noting that one Minnesota Representative became a cosponsor of H. Res. 70 the week following our meetings.

Turning to our battle to preserve the current retirement benefits of Postal employees, some context is necessary. During the early hours of May 15, 2025, the U.S. House of Representatives voted along party lines (215-214) to pass its budget reconciliation package (H.R. 1 (a.k.a., The Big Beautiful Bill) which includes proposed cuts to the retirement benefits of Postal employees.

The so called Big Beautiful Bill continues to face difficulties in the Senate and several provisions which we oppose are reportedly being removed. What exactly comes out of the Senate and whether the House can pass the version amended by the Senate remains to be seen. We continue watching the situation daily for developments.

- **2025 Organizing Drive**

Unfortunately, there are Mail Handlers and MHAs throughout Local 323 who have chosen not to join the Union. We have reached out to them personally and through the Mail, yet they still have not answered the call to Join the Union and Join the Fight. That's why the Local Union is asking the most important person in the Union, you the Member, to help us with our recruitment efforts.

During the March meeting of the Local Executive Board authorized an additional \$50.00 on top of the \$50.00 already provided for in the Bylaws of Local 323. Consequently, any Member who signs up a non-member will receive a check in the amount of \$100.00 for the duration of the 2025 Organizing Drive. A list of Mail Handlers and MHA's who are not Members of the Union as well as an 1187 form to sign them up is available from your Branch Union office or your Steward. An 1187 form is also available on the Local 323 website. Use this form to enroll a non-member and provide the completed form to your Branch Office or the Local Office. A \$100.00 check along with a thank you letter from the Union for each non-member enrolled. Payments will be sent once the dues withholding commences. So far, one new Member has been enrolled, and one Member will be receiving a check for \$100.00.

There is no good reason for not belonging to the Union.

- **Semi-Annual Meeting of the Local Unions (SAMLU)**

On April 7th, 8th, and 9th, I was in New Orleans attending the first SAMLU of 2025. Several reports were provided, including reports from the National Officers, the NPMHU Women's Committee, a litigation report from the general counsel, a legislative report, an MHBP report, the CAD report, and a report concerning RI-399 and the Article 12 Task Force. Not surprisingly, many discussions revolved around national negotiations and the then recently received arbitration award establishing the terms of the "2023" NALC National Agreement. The final day, as previously mentioned, included a meeting of the Field Negotiating Team to further refine our approach to national negotiations.

- **2025 Matt Lopez - Local 323 Scholarship Program**

The 2025 Matt Lopez – Local 323 Scholarship Program was announced, with materials being provided to the Branches, and materials provided on the website on May 19th. This Scholarship Program was established in the fall of 1995 and was renamed to honor Matt Lopez in 2018. Matt Lopez served the Local Union and the Minneapolis Branch for more than 25 years prior to his untimely passing in July of 2017. He was our coworker, our friend, our Steward, and he will forever remain our Brother.

The 2025 Scholarship Program provides a \$800.00 per school year award beginning in September of this year. Scholarship payments may continue for up to 4 consecutive school years.

Any graduating high school senior who is the son, daughter, or legal ward of a regular member in good standing may apply. Good standing is defined by Article V, Section 1, of the Uniform Local Union Constitution of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union. Applicants must complete an Official Application Form and provide the required information. All applications must be received at the Local 323 office by 5:00 P.M. on June 30, 2025.

- **Arbitration Activity**

Since an arbitration victory in the Minneapolis Branch earlier this year, the Local Union has been successful in resolving additional grievances during pre-arbitration discussions. Most recently, a Notice of Proposed Removal as well as a 14-Day Suspension issued to a NDC Branch Mail Handlers were combine for settlement purposed and reduced to a Letter of Warning.

The Local Union has recently received several favorable decisions from Step 3 of the grievance procedure as well. The Local Union and each Branch Offices continues to fight vigorously for all Mail Handlers who are the recipients of disciplinary action.

- **Voluntary Early Retirement (VER)**

The initial reports proved to be correct and twenty-five Mail Handlers within Local 323 decided to retire under the VER. Specifically, seven at the NDC, five in Minneapolis, eight in St. Paul, and five in Fargo. The Local Union has sent each of them congratulatory letters along with a check as a sendoff to this new chapter of their lives. You might see some of them at the picnic.

Branch Issues and Activities

- **Grievance Processing**

Grievance activity within the Branches remains elevated. Most of this activity involves disciplinary actions, cross craft assignments, or management performing our work. Mail Handlers continue to receive significant compensation for these contractual violations due to the efforts of the Branch Officers and Stewards.

- **St. Paul Changes**

By letter dated May 15, 2025, the Union was informed of the upcoming elimination of Mail processing operations at the Twin Cities L&DC (airport facility). A meeting was immediately scheduled with the St. Paul Plant Manager to discuss management's plan. In attendance for the Union were me, Branch President Edward Yun, and L&DC Steward Brian Lay. Management informed us of their plan, which represents a complete closure of the Mail processing aspect of the building; and, that they've made all the machinery and equipment available to other Postal facilities. Mail volume at the L&DC has been declining since the shift from air to ground transportation under the former Postmaster General. In subsequent meetings, management has stated that some (minimal) Mail Handler staffing would remain until the closure which is scheduled to occur in mid-July. In anticipation of the closure, the computer from that office has been relocated to the St. Paul plant, and the phone and internet service for the L&DC has been cancelled.

For several years I had been working with the National Union to insource work being performed by a subcontracted Terminal Handling Service (THS). It was my hope to see this work insourced to the L&DC. While we were successful in securing an agreement to have the THS work insourced, it is being insourced into the St. Paul plant. I guess that I'll have to be satisfied with knowing that work which had been subcontracted will soon be in the hands of Mail Handlers.

Management in St. Paul is preparing for these changes by adding MHA staffing and aligning the start times of all 3 tours. We' see how it goes and what happens next.

- **Branch Activities**

April 3rd – St. Paul Labor – Management Meeting

April 4th – NDC Labor – Management Meeting

April 19th – NDC Steward and Branch Meetings

April 24th – St. Paul Labor – Management Meeting

April 26th – St. Paul Steward and Branch Meetings

May 22nd – St. Paul – L&DC Closure Meeting

May 29th – St. Paul Labor – Management Meeting

June 11th – NDC Labor – Management Meeting

Several “Computer Task Visits” in the Minneapolis and St. Paul Branches

Upcoming Events:

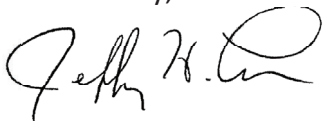
Metro Area Picnic – July 13th

SAMLU – August 11th through 13th

Local Union Council – August 28th

Local Executive Board – September 25th (tentative)

Fraternally,



Jeff Larsen
Local President

cc: All Branches
File