



A NEW VOICE

a monthly newsletter for the members of AFSCME Local 2822

HSPHD Administrative Services Petition

Ali Fuhrman, President, Hosmer Library, and Sam Gutierrez, Co-Chief Steward, HSPHD

A frank discussion about what happened in 2015 is long overdue. To be brief, workers in our department were upset. We were tired of being bullied by our supervisors and managers. We were tired of favoritism dividing our teams. We were tired of being disrespected, and finally, we decided to take action.

So we collected notes, emails, and talked to each other. We gathered all our evidence to substantiate our claims. Most importantly, we took direct action AND supported each other. Due to our Union's efforts management was held accountable. Unity and solidarity made this possible, and this how we as the union will continue to win!

Despite these efforts, we are now observing that favoritism and harassment have returned. **We as workers must re-unite. Together we will stand up against management's attempts to divide us. We will not participate in departmental favoritism, bullying, harassment, or discrimination!**

What we are seeing now:

In 2015 and 2016, Sam Gutierrez, Co-Chief Steward and union leader, was issued excessive discipline for unsubstantiated allegations while being an outspoken opponent of workplace harassment.

Last year, Juanita Hubbard came forward and filed a complaint about the behavior of her supervisor Carole Kroening. After only four months on probation as a POS, Ms. Kroening demoted Juanita to her former OSIII position. Many of Juanita's co-workers had similar concerns about Ms. Kroening.

We have also seen workers on Derek Sadowski's team harassed via public coaching in front their team, targeted for discipline based upon their race, with excessive supervision tactics ending in yelling at workers and making them cry.

Actions We've Taken So Far:

We have sent a letter to HSPHD management regarding Juanita's demotion and workplace harassment. After nearly a week with no response to our letter, our AFSCME 2822 Union leaders and workers visited Labor Relations. Check out our Facebook page to see the live footage!

We have filed a grievance for Sam and Juanita.

Now we are now completing a petition to show unity about what we want:

1. **Juanita Hubbard be reinstated to POS position under a different supervisor**
2. **Sam Gutierrez's discipline in 2015 and 2016 be rescinded**
3. **Derek Sadowski & Carole Kroening given training to address issues**
4. **For management to let us do our work and stop harassing us.**

Your Story Matters

Lindsey Fenner, Editor, Penn Lake Library

Thank you for all of the input and suggestions for the newsletter! Some ideas are: more color, pictures, comics, fun things to do, a Safety column, a membership meeting summary, "things the County doesn't want to tell us," crossposting articles on the website and social media. What else would you like to see? I know that I want to see YOUR stories, of struggles and successes at work. But I also know it can be hard to get that story written down. If you have something you need to say and you don't know where to start, contact me! We can work together so your story gets told.

March 2017

March						
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**March
Membership Meeting**
Wednesday, March 1, 2017
Brookdale Library
7:00 PM

**April
Membership Meeting**
Wednesday, April 5, 2017
Ridgedale Library
7:00 PM

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



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facebook.com/AfscmeLocal2822

Subscribe to our email list! From your personal email address, send a blank message to 2822-open-forum-subscribe@lists.riseup.net

Election Results!

Because there were no contested races, all nominated members were elected by acclamation at the February Membership Meeting.

President: Ali Fuhrman (Library)

Vice President: Jayne Mikulay (Library)

Recording Secretary: Susan Rose (Library)

Membership Secretary: Rita Watson (County Attorney's Office)

Treasurer: Tykesha Crouch (HSPHD)

Co-Chief Stewards (2): Sam Gutierrez (HSPHD), Genae Nicole (MHP)

Executive Board At-Large (4): Shane Clune (Library), Lindsey Fenner (Library), Amy Stark (Public Safety Facility), Valerie Wiggins (Public Safety Facility)

Trustees: Three-year term: Dari Kolstad (HSPHD) Two-year term: DJ Hooker (Library) One-year term: Vacant

Minneapolis Labor Federation Delegates (5): Ann Baird (Service Center), Shane Clune, Sam Gutierrez, DJ Hooker, Brett Schlosser (Library)

St. Paul Labor Federation Delegates (2): Rita Watson, Vacant

Our Ongoing Struggles

Ali Fuhrman, President, Hosmer Library

Hello All,

I am happy to announce my presidency. As I discussed in my article last month, our Local's focus for the coming year is increasing member participation and engagement to fight for respect in the workplace, and our rights as unionized workers. Here are some ongoing struggles in our Local:

- **Samuel Gutierrez**, Co-Chief Steward of our Local and OSIII for HSPHD, was suspended for three days last year for unsubstantiated claims regarding work performance. After upholding the discipline through Step 2 of the grievance process, the employer has now agreed to join the Union in mediation. We will be pushing for removal of discipline from his record and for reinstatement of lost wages.
- **Susannah Olson**, OSIII in the Department of Community Corrections, spoke publicly last fall about the dangers—to staff, to clients and the courts--of cutting FTE in her department. Now Sue is being investigated for the very thing she predicted! Because of understaffing, electronic files are piling up, court dates are being missed, and she's being blamed. **Local 2822 says BACK OFF SUE.** We will fight any retaliatory discipline.
- **Juanita Hubbard** is an OSIII in Human Services Public Health Department. In January, Juanita failed her promotional probation as a Principal Office Specialist after speaking with upper management about concerns she had with her immediate supervisor. Juanita is one of many workers in HSPHD with concerns about supervision and management. Our Local responded to these concerns by marching on Labor Relations for canceling a scheduled meet and confer, and by distributing a petition within HSPHD.

AFSCME Day on the Hill

Susan Rose, Recording Secretary & Steward, Franklin Library

This year's AFSCME Day on the Hill (DOTH) is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 28, 2017**. DOTH is a day for AFSCME members from all over the state to go in masse to the State Capitol to talk to their personal legislators about issues of importance to them as union workers. It is very important that AFSCME make a good turnout for DOTH, so that legislators perceive the strength of our numbers and our commitment to our issues.

The day begins with AFSCME members assembling at the RiverCentre in St. Paul. Everybody wears their green AFSCME logo shirts. It is vitally important to be dressed in AFSCME logo and colors for this event, so that legislators and their staff members can see our strength. If you don't already have a green AFSCME logo shirt, please contact Ali Fuhrman to request a shirt.

In the morning, there is an address to the entire group, with advice on how to talk to legislators and issues of importance to the union. Then, we will break into smaller groups based on our legislative districts, and plan who will speak to the legislators, and who will take notes.

After the morning's planning, we eat a boxed lunch. Afterward, we travel to the State Capitol and begin our lobbying. After the lobbying, we again return to our small groups to report the legislators' responses to our questions. There is a social event in the early evening, and then DOTH is done!

AFSCME will pay lost time for attending DOTH, so I urge everyone reading this article to request time off to attend. You will mark your timesheets as "Special Leave Without Pay" for this absence, and AFSCME will pay your lost wages for attendance. If you are feeling shy about talking to legislators, don't worry. There will be others in your group who will be comfortable addressing the legislators. The most important thing is to bring a huge and visible presence to this important day of lobbying. See you there!

If you are interested in attending Day on the Hill, contact Ali Fuhrman, afuhrman13@gmail.com or afuhrman@hclib.org
The deadline for registration is Friday, March 17

What Is to Be Done?

Shane Clune, E-Board At-Large & Steward, East Lake Library

This month hasn't gone very well, has it? Things aren't going to get easier. There's a court case coming up that's likely to bring back the threat of right-to-work. This is the same thing we feared last year from the *Friedrichs* case. Not only that, an emboldened anti-labor political class is going to hurt our ability to collectively bargain wherever and whenever it can. In these times we need to ask the question: what is to be done?

We face, really, two challenges: right-to-work and contract negotiations. Depending on the result of *Janus v. AFSCME*, a court case in Illinois that will most likely go before the U.S. Supreme Court, our union may be unable to collect fair-share dues from workers who benefit from union activity but do not wish to join. **What is to be done to defend ourselves against right-to-work? Our best hope is to have the biggest union membership possible.** The fewer fair-share payers we have, the less we will suffer from losing their dues. To that end, we must organize as aggressively as possible. Anything that helps us build our numbers will protect our union's ability to do the work it needs to do. What else is to be done? We must use our size, our activist members, and our righteous indignation to make it clear to state and federal lawmakers that any support of right-to-work disqualifies them from receiving our support. So, what is to be done is to build our numbers and develop our skills as activists and organizers.

Our second challenge is the predictable one: negotiating a new contract. Every contract negotiation carries with it the potential to lose ground. If we negotiate poorly, we can lose out on wage growth, benefits, and the respect that we fight for in the workplace. We need to make sure that we stand united, and that we can negotiate aggressively for our next contract. **So what is to be done? Once again, we need as wide a membership base as possible.** Though the union represents everyone in contract negotiations, a union with a high percentage of membership can much more credibly claim that its demands are the workers' demands. Again, we must also develop our skills as activists and organizers. If the union displays agility, a willingness and ability to quickly respond to every threat it receives, then that union is much more likely to be taken seriously in contract negotiations. We must also develop our ability to efficiently share information across the spectrum of our membership. A union cannot negotiate effectively if it does not know what its members want. A union that fails to communicate both the content and the stakes of a proposed contract to its members is unlikely to receive useful input. **Thus, we must take action to develop our ability to circulate information from the leadership to the rank-and-file, and back again.**

We know what is to be done. **We must build our membership, develop our skills as organizers and activists, and promote the quick and efficient flow of information. To this end, we are organizing a Member Action Team, or MAT Structure.** A MAT is a team of ten union members who collaborate with and are organized by a MAT Leader. Ten MAT Leaders are organized by a single MAT Captain. Thus, a handful of activist MAT Captains can comfortably organize and coordinate with the entirety of our membership. This structure makes it easy for leadership and rank-and-file to communicate. It encourages the participation in union action, and provides our members with opportunities to develop as activists. In spreading out to organize the entire membership, it also forces us to sign up new members. While organizing a MAT is not the end, it is clear to me that it is a necessary weapon in the fight for the survival of the labor movement. If you are interested in becoming a MAT leader, please contact me.

MAT Leader Trainings are held quarterly, on the second Thursday, and last all day. They are held at the United Labor Centre in Minneapolis. The Union will pay for lost time and parking. The next training is Thursday, April 13. Please contact Shane Clune if you're interested: shaneclunefscme@gmail.com or sclune@hclib.org

Help Wanted: We Need YOU!

Trustee Needed!

We need one more person to step up to be a union trustee. Our trustees play crucial roles in assuring the financial well-being of our Local by doing an annual audit of our Union's finances and reporting back to the membership. Training is provided! The vacant position is for a one-year term. **Contact a member of the Executive Board if you are interested.**

Card Writer!

We are looking for folks to write and send welcome cards to our new members. We provide the cards and names of new employees. You provide the love and penmanship. No epistolary experience necessary! Be active in your union without ever attending a meeting!

If interested, contact Rita Watson, rita.watson@hennepin.us

Calling All Stitchers!

We are the Union Stitching Group, and we are going to make green hats (similar to the Pussy Hats of recent note) to sell at the AFSCME Council 5 Convention in September. Also, we are accepting donations of green yarn for this project. Any green is fine. It will be fun to see what we come up with using various shades of green! **Please contact Ashley Lokensgard, AFSCME Local 668, to be put on our e-mail list: ashley.lokensgard@gmail.com**

Upcoming Events

AFSCME STRONG Organizing Day in South Region: Wednesday, March 15

On March 15, we will be visiting worksites in the South Region of the County. If you work in a South region building, contact us and help coordinate our visit! **You can email Ali, afuhrman13@gmail.com or contact any of our officers or stewards. Contact info on back page of newsletter.**

Day on the Hill, St. Paul: Tuesday, March 28

Every year AFSCME members from across the state gather in St Paul to lobby our elected officials to support our work as public employees. **If you are interested in attending, contact Ali Fuhrman, afuhrman13@gmail.com or afuhrman@hclib.org. The deadline for registration is Friday, March 17.**

Member Action Team Quarterly Meeting: Thursday, April 13 Participants in the Member Action Team will be meeting for an all-day training and planning day at the United Labor Centre in Minneapolis. **Contact Shane Clune if you are interested: sclune@hclib.org or shaneclunefscme@gmail.com**

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:

Rita Watson
County Attorney's Office
Mail Code 510

Na.m.e _____

Job Title _____

Work Location _____

Mailcode _____

Phone _____

I want to sign up as a full member.

I want to sign up for Delta Dental.



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Contact Heather Clark, our Good and Welfare Coordinator at :612-543-8523 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."



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

Always refer to your group number 538.

For an application or if you are retiring and want to continue Delta Dental contact Deb Cassidy at AFSCME at 651-287-0508



A New Voice deadline is March 1

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 Editor, Lindsey Fenner at lindseyafenner@gmail.com

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