



## 10/04/20 General Membership Meeting Minutes

- It should be noted that due to NY restrictions, two meetings were held on this day, back to back with the same exact agenda and topics. Any questions asked from either meeting were then rolled into these minutes. Times used were from the first meeting as that was the primary meeting.

In Attendance: Jason Johnson, Jose Taveras, Chuck Brein, Jason Dornford, Heather Duby, Dave Buchholz, members of local 81408 and special guest.

10:10AM-Meeting Called to Order

10:10AM-Pledge of Allegiance

10:10AM-Review of Agenda

Conniebeth Myers, Election Committee Chair, made a motion to add election information to the Agenda. The executive board ruled to allow Connie to speak on the matter and her comments would be captured in the minutes of the meeting, however since this was not brought to the boards attention within the proper time to be added as an item on the agenda as governed by constitution, the Executive Board would not officially add it to the agenda. After Connie agreed to those terms, and after a first and second motion on the floor was heard, all members agreed to let Connie speak on the matter.

10:15AM-Conniebeth reported that the during the nomination period of the general election, only the current members of the executive Board requested petitions. Proper signatures to be nominated were provided and verified and as a result of being unopposed those that were nominated were elected as of 1/1/21. Those positions include:

President: Jason Johnson

Vice President: Jason Dornford

Financial Secretary / Treasurer: Chuck Brein

Recording Secretary: Ron Taylor

Trustees:

Jose Taveras

Heather Duby

Dave Buchholz

10:25AM-Agenda Adopted

10:25AM-Introductions

President Jason Johnson introduced the members of the Executive board, Diversity Committee, Women's Committee, all the Shop Stewards of each bargaining unit in attendance and also special guest Union Legal Counsel, Mimi Satter and IUE Staff Rep Kendall Bell.

10:35AM-Ice Breaker Exercise

10:46-State of the Union: President Jason Johnson went over all that has happened in the local over the last year and what the plans for 2021 were.

Visionworks Arbitration: Arbitration was held over the use of apprentices in October with a judgment issued in February, which can be found on the union website.

**Point of Order:** Dave Buchholz, Visionworks. Explained were to find a complaint form online that can used to file complaints with the State regarding known acts of violations.

Balester Contract: Ratification took place in November with 100 % ratification and nearly 100% participation, Highlights included change to vacation process and increases to COLA and more money allotted to medical coverage.

Visionworks Lab Journey Layoffs: over 100 members were permanently laid off in May, this included previous shop stewards and presidents such as Mary Dado and Sue Cowart. They were commended for their years of dedication to the union.

Balester Layoffs: 8 members were permanently laid off in May, this included members with over 30 years in the union.

NTS Contract Ratification: Ratification took place in August, and while the COLA was down from previous contracts, the company was seeking multiple cuts, including 12% pay cuts. In the end very little was cut and signing bonus and pay increases were still introduced, including changes to mandatory OT and the use of vacation time.

Latham Contract Negotiations: The company and the union are engaging in contract negotiations. Talks are very slow with nothing significant to report currently. An extension of the current contract was agreed to until 10/31/20. When there is more to report the union will keep all the members of that bargaining unit informed and to please look for updates on the union boards or the Facebook page. Some of the items on the table include sick time and attendance policy, mandatory OT and Permanent partial work from home.

**Question:** Denise Drake, Latham. Is the overtime limitation specific to NTS or a general rule for all shops? **A** Specific to NTS, Latham Contract Negotiations Ongoing.

**Question:** David Solomonoff, Latham. Is work from home being negotiated in Latham contract and is the company inclined to have members work from home? **A** Permanent partial work from home is on the table and the union can't speak for the company.

**Question:** Sandi Pecchio, Latham. Would any negotiated overtime limitations take effect on ratification or beginning of the year? **A** Usually at Ratification or shortly after.

Pandemic Effects: A discussion was held about how the pandemic has affected our local and the individual bargaining units, the local has had to drastically cut its budget as a result of a 20 percent reduction in size and another 20% on furlough for long periods. As it stood over 125 members were still on furlough at the time of the meeting and at one point only 100 union workers were working. To date the local cut over 80k out of its budget in 2020.

Additionally, the Local has also had to enter temporary MOU's for each bargaining unit which included some temporary adjustments to the contract, while also gaining special circumstances. Largely the gains outweighed any of the temporary adjustments.

The biggest impact of the pandemic is how overwhelmed each person is at their respective bargaining unit. None of that goes unnoticed and the union is fighting everyday with the companies to provide everyone with relief. The union have been in conversation with the companies and relief is coming.

**Question:** Dave Buchholz, Visionworks. Can you please explain the rules regarding occupancy due to Pandemic? **A** N.Y state currently requires companies to reduce volume by 50%. At Visionworks, they have a company policy that no more than 15 patients on the retail side and 6 patients on the doctor side. Violation of company policy should reported to your steward, Violations of state law, need to be filed with the state and reported to your shop steward. Other States have similar laws and the same process applies to each.

11:09AM-2021 Budget Proposal

Visionworks contract Negotiations: \$50,000  
CWA Convention/Training: \$16,000  
2021 GMM: \$12,000  
Retail Location visits: \$12,500  
Quarterly Lab visits: \$4,000  
Quarterly Executive Board Meetings: \$10,000  
Supplies: \$5,000  
Steward Training: \$5,000  
Women's Committee: \$2,000  
Diversity Committee: \$2,000  
Administration and Contract Services: As needed

11:17AM-Budget Adopted

11:17AM-Moment of silence: Was held for the union members and coworkers lost this year.

Kareem Devore, Newtown Square Lab  
Jeffery Dado, Spouse of Former President Mary Dado  
Charles Garrett, Visionworks  
Melanie Alexander, Latham Call Center  
Kalene Sanderson Optical Assistant, Visionworks, Auburn  
Richie Davis Owner, Davis Vision  
Gene Silbersweig Licensed Optician, Visionworks, Rockville Center  
Stephan Cuyler Licensed Optician, Visionworks, Irondequoit and Greece

11:19AM-Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Presented by President Jason Johnson with reports furnished in lieu of Recording Secretary Ron Taylor.  
Ron Taylor absent due to New York State travel restrictions.

11:20AM-Executive Board Meeting Minutes Adopted

11:20AM-Trustee Audit Review

Presented by Trustee Jason Dornford with reports furnished.

11:28AM-Trustee Audit Report adopted

11:28AM-Treasurer Report

Presented by Treasurer Chuck Brein with reports furnished.

11:31AM-Treasurer Report Adopted

11:31AM-Investment Report

Presented by Trustee Heather Duby with reports furnished. (Funds grew from \$313,800 to \$356,468)

11:34AM-Investment Report Adopted

11:34AM-Diversity Committee Report

Presented by Committee Chair Jose Taveras. The Committee will conduct a survey of issues of Concern with the membership, continue to use FB page as platform to raise awareness and Intends to partner with NTS Human Resources to Conduct diversity awareness exercise.

11:37AM-Diversity Committee Report Adopted

11:37AM-Womens Committee Report

Presented by Committee Chair Sandilynn Rivet. Mission Statement, "Fempowerment": It's about you! It's About us! Developing a survey for information of what topics are relevant to members. Will create a FB page, and a newsletter, and coordinate with CWA & Coalition of Labor union women.

11:40AM-Womens Committee Report Adopted

#### 11:40AM-LM-2 Report

Presented by Trustee Dave Buchholz. With reports furnished. All reports submitted timely. It was also pointed out that 2019 came with \$92,000 decrease in spending from the previous year.

**Question:** Sandilyn Rivet, Latham. Can you please explain the Ribaldo Payment? **A** The Rebaldo payment was a payment paid to the wife of the founder of the union. This payment was approved by the executive board back in 1983. As a result of the pandemic and the loss of membership, this forced the union to look at all of its expenses and this payment was reviewed by our legal team and its requirement to continue. It was determined that it may not legally be required to continue this payment. A letter was sent to Rebaldo in May informing her that this payment would end in July with the explanation of why, unless additional proof of requirement was supplied. To date, the local has not heard any response.

#### 11:47AM-LM-2 Report Adopted

11:47AM-Organizing Update: President Jason Johnson shared that there are a few campaigns going on to help expand our local. This is being supported by both the IUE and the CWA and they have devoted staff and SIFF funds to our campaign. This includes labs in Syracuse and Georgia and other retail locations.

**Question:** Andrei Yermakov, Latham shop. With MetLife as new owners of Davis Vision, are there plans to mobilize the call center in Sacramento, CA? **A.** nothing, I can formally discuss, but the topic has come up.

**Question:** Dave Buchholz, Visionworks shop. Will we bring former Syracuse lab members back to the fold with organizing western New York region? **A** If they want to help the cause, sure.

**Question:** Heather Duby, Visionworks. Is the lab that was referenced, the Optigenics Lab? **A** No

**Question:** James Liang, Latham. Please repeat connection of MetLife with Sacramento and Latham and are we looking into which unions does business with Met life. **A** Met life will now own Versant Health which means they own Davis Vision and Superior Vision and yes.

#### 11:57AM-Guest Speaker

IUE-CWA staff Rep Kendall Bell spoke about the IUE mentorship program, and our local's heavy involvement in the program.

#### 12:07PM-Guest Speaker

Attorney for the local Mimi Satter spoke about the contracts that were negotiated in the last year And how each negotiation won additional benefits for each contract. Challenges with ongoing negotiations in Latham contract and discussed some decisional and effects that have been bargained for at each unit during the pandemic.

**Question:** Steven Poston, Latham. Are we negotiating Latham contract with Versant or MetLife and do we foresee changes to staff or working conditions at Latham with MetLife as new owners? **A** Probably with the current owners and MetLife part of the process. We believe there is security in the units, but what work life conditions may change we just don't know today. Hopefully things do get better working for a company that understands insurance.

12:20PM-COPE

Presented by Vice President Jose Taveras with COPE forms Distributed, spoke of the importance of members to get involved in this Program and to support the CWA political battles.

**Question:** Carmela, Visionworks: Does the contribution to COPE continue automatically, or does it need to be renewed? **A** continues until you say stop.

12:25PM-Door Prizes: \$150 gift cards: Willis Lee and Alvin Ellis, Rain Jacket: Jason Johnson, Sweater: Allison Ingber, Mugs: Ken Stuppy and Denise Drake

12:35PM-Adjournment