



General Membership Meeting

09/26/2021

In attendance: Jason Johnson, Jason Dornford, Chuck Brien, Ron Taylor, Jose Taveras
David Buchholz, Heather Duby, Conniebeth Meyers and members of local 81408

10:17 **Meeting is called to order**

10:18 **Pledge of Allegiance**

10:18 **Review of Agenda**

10:20 agenda was adopted

10:16 **Introductions (Retirements Joe Miller & Cheryl Bisbee)**

President Johnson introduced the Executive Board, all shop stewards from every bargaining unit, all committee's and recent retirees were recognized. Retirees Joe Miller and Cheryl Bisbee both spoke to membership and thank everyone for their support and encourage the membership to keep fighting for Workers Rights.

10:30 **Icebreaker** – Topic was “What does the Union mean to you” Membership answered this question on a poster board during registration. President Johnson gave out three tickets to Tillman Jefferson of Versant Health NTS, Jose Taveras of Versant Health Latham, and Carol Mcfarland of Visionworks who were all asked to come read their favorite answer on board while also asking to share what they wrote. Jose chose “Unity” written by Carla McClain of Versant Health Latham. Tillman also chose “Unity” Which no one admitted to, so President Johnson asked Annie Carnavale of Versant Health Latham to come up and share what a union means to her. Carol chose “Respect from Management” written by Joe Rizzo of Value Vision. Carla, Annie and Joe all explained why they wrote what they did.

10:37 **State of the Union/2022 Budget** – President Johnson addressed the membership with what the union has been doing over the last year, such as issues related to the Pandemic. Currently 30% of membership was lost due to Vacancies and layoffs throughout the Companies. There are Currently over 200 openings throughout the bargaining unit. The companies are desperately trying to fill those openings.

President Johnson also touch base on the Versant Health Latham and Visionworks contract ratification listing the highlight; which include wages increases, Mandatory Overtime and the attendance policy changes in Latham and at Visionworks highlights include the highest wage increase in the history of the bargaining unit and work life balances.

President Johnson also spoke about the union new EAP program with HCAMS and encouraged membership to use if they are feeling overwhelmed.

President Johnson touched on the midterm bargaining wage increase that took place at Value Visions that saw 1/3 of the members get an immediate increase.

Finally, President Johnson touched on the multiple Grievances filled through the local and the outcome of those grievances including the “in Contact” Grievances at Versant Health Latham that was filed for arbitration, but recently settled which included 2 job reinstatements and acceptable resolutions for most of the others impacted.

President Johnson vowed to continue to fight for the workers' rights in any situations deemed necessary.

Union member Sandilyn Rivet of Versant Health Latham was recognized to speak (Point of order). Sandilyn wanted to thank President Johnson and all Union members involved in helping to get non-Binary language changed in the Visionworks contract from the masculine pronoun (He or She) change to (Them or They).

Union member Jose Taveras of Versant Health Latham was recognized to speak (Point of order). Jose wanted to give special thanks to President Johnson for his hard work, dedication, and leadership.

Union member Andre Yermokov of Versant Health Latham was recognized to speak (Motion was made) Motion to keep tables quiet while someone else may be speaking.

10:52 Motion adopted

The 2022 Budget was presented by President Johnson

- IUE Divisional Meeting/Training: \$20,000.00
- 2022 GMM: \$12,000.00
- Quarterly Lab Visits: \$6,000.00
- Quarterly Executive Board Meetings: \$10,000.00
- Supplies: \$5,000.00
- Steward Training: \$50,000.00
- Women's Committee: \$4,000.00
- Diversity Committee: \$4,000.00
- Safety committee: \$4,000.00
- Organizing Committee: \$4,000.00
- Political Action Committee: \$4,000.00
- District 1 Meeting: \$2,500.00
- AFL-CIO Meeting: \$2,500.00
- CWA Presidents Meeting/ Political Conference: \$2,500.00
- Administration and Contract Services: As needed

10:57 Budget adopted

10:58 **Review of Ex Board minutes** – Recording Secretary Ron Taylor presented Ex board minutes over the last fiscal year and explained the process to which they are provided to the membership.

11:01 Minutes adopted

11:01 **Trustee Audit Review** – Trustee Jose Taveras presented the Audit reviews over the last fiscal year and explained the process to which they are provided to the membership.

11:06 Audit review adopted

11:07 **Treasury Report** – Treasury Chuck Brien present the Treasury report over the last fiscal year and explained the process to which they are provided to the membership.

11:11 Treasury report adopted.

11:12 **Investment Report** – Trustee Heather Duby presented investment report over the last fiscal year and explained the process to which they are provided to the membership.

11:13 Investment report adopted

11:14 **Diversity Committee** – Presented by Chairperson Jose Taveras

The Diversity committee purpose is to bring attention to the diversity in our Union. They continue to use the FB page to post content aimed at respecting diversity. The Committee will partner with our contact in Capital District Labor federation to participate in a local food pantry. There next Committee Meeting will be on 10/06/2021.

11:18 **Women's Committee Report** – Presented by Chairperson Sandilyn Rivet

Information postcards will be sent out to let all Local locations/members know they are here for them and what our purpose is for them. Viewing and post-view discussion of the documentary movie 9 to 5 with Jane Fonda, Dolly Parton, and Lily Tomlin was based on. This is a project in coordination with the Girl Scout of Northeastern NY. Who is building an Ambassador Girl Scout (11th and 12th grade girls) program to promote and include this level of girls, as a non-partisan, activism program, which will include the Pro-Act support (encouragement to pass this bill).

Current news/Future focus: Plans are in progress to promote a STEM project week with Video meet and greet of women in STEM for middle school age girls. March is Women's History Month, each week there will be a different theme, with community based projects and activities. We hope to send out a special message to all the women of the Local during March. Next meeting set for 11/20/2021.

11:24 Union member Heather Duby of Visionworks was recognized to speak (Point of order). Heather stated that the company is changing the name tags at Visionworks to use pronouns.

11:26 Union member Carmel O’Hanlon of Visionworks was recognized to speak (Point of order). Carmel ask for all members to write down Sandilyn email address and to send her an email if interested in joining Women’s committee. As they are looking for more supporters.

11:29 **Political Action Committee** – Presented by Chairperson Jason Dornford.

Committee Chairperson Jason Dornford presented report. It is the committee intent to have quarterly meetings to discuss ways our local can take action on issues that impact worker and Union rights. We have a Facebook page where we post current political news that affect Unions as well as stories centered around labor in general. Some of the actions we have taken to date include phone banking in support of the Pro Act as well as for nominees that support Labor in their campaign for office. We always have opportunities for those who would like to get involved and we will be expanding on that.

11:33 Union member Andre Yermokov of Versant Health Latham was recognized to speak (Point of order). Ask all members to call their Senator first Wednesday of every month in support of the Pro Act.

11:36 **Organizing Committee** – Committee Chairperson Kim Idzinski presented report.

With the help of the IUE, the committee will focus its effort on organizing a lab in Syracuse along with other potential sites. They are currently working on our mission statement and looking into creating a Facebook page. There next meeting is scheduled for 10/07/2021.

11:39 **Safety Committee** – Committee Chairperson Ken Stuppy present report.

The safety committee was formed in response to the NY Health & Essential Rights Act, also known as the HERO's Act. This act mandates extensive new workplace health and safety protections by establishing a joint labor/management safety committee. Their purpose is preparation for any future air transmitted infectious diseases. The safety committee consists of Ken Stuppy as Chairperson representing Visionworks, Ron Taylor for Newtown Square, Gunner Lenihan for Value Vision and Conniebeth Myers for Versant Health Latham. They plan on establishing a Facebook page and will then release our mission statement. We're here if you need us. There next meeting is TBA.

11:41 **LM-2 Report** – Trustee Dave Buchholz presented the LM-2 over the previous fiscal year and explained the process to which they are provided to the membership.

11:44 LM-2 report adopted

11:45 **Guest Speaker**

Since the guest speaker was not able to attend Membership meeting do to Covid restrictions. President Johnson made a motion to change to open floor for members to ask questions. At 11:47 Motion was granted.

11:48 Union member Steven Poston from Versant Health Latham was recognized to speak. Steven ask President Johnson about returning to in person work at office. President Johnson addresses that issue, stating he is unaware of any return to office mandate at this time in Latham and said the last time the company spoke to him about that was over the summer with a plan of possibly at back to school, but feels the Delta Variant may have pushed that back. Currently the company has a survey going around asking questions about who has been vaccinated.

11:50 Union member Jose Taveras from Versant Health Latham was recognized. Jose ask President Johnson about mandate vaccines. President Johnson also addressed that concern and said the companies are not planning mandates at this time but should it happen, the union will invokes its rights.

11:53 Union member Nora King from Versant Health Latham was recognized. Nora thanked the Union for fighting for her and she truly appreciated it.

11:55 Union member Ruth Vanwagenen from Versant Latham was recognized. Ruth was curious about the discussion of equipment being used. The current computer equipment that is being used is a nightmare. What is the Company doing about this if anything? President Johnson addressed this issue to the best of his ability, letting ruth know that constant conversations are being had with HR at each bargaining unit but ultimately recognized system used is managements rights in each CBA.

11:57 Open floor questions closed

11:58 **Door Prizes** – Congratulations to all the following winners.

First Prize Winner – Sylvia Marquez of Visionworks received \$100 gift card

Second Prize Winner – Ken Stuppy of Visionworks received a 40-inch TV

Third Prize Winner – Sha'bre Barnett of Versant NTS received an IUE-CWA Zip up Hoodie

Fourth Prize Winner – Jennifer McKinney of Visionworks received an IUE-CWA Pullover Hoodie

Fifth Prize Winner – Jose Taveras of Versant Health Latham received an IUE-CWA Coffee mug

Sixth, Seventh, and Eight Prize Winners – Korpo Moore, Joe Miller, and Michelle Borum all of Versant Health NTS all received Skin cream kit courtesy of union member Glem Cosmetics

12:10 Adjournment