

# Metro Teamster

No. 8 *All the news not fit for polite company*



## 2022 Is An Election Year—We Plan to Run

Elections in Local 695 are every three years for officers of the union. In 2019, Rebuild695 ran and had the first contested election in the local in 20 years. The most common thing we heard during the election was, “We get to vote for these guys?” People had no idea that there could be elections for the officers.

In 2019 we ran a full slate for the union’s executive board, and took 47% of the votes cast; Schultz Slate (guys who have been running the union) of course got 53% and kept all the positions. Last year in 2021, we ran in the elections for delegates to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters con-

vention and the margin was only 16 votes. Now in 2022, its time for another election. We intend to run a slate again this year for the union’s officer positions.

### How does this work?

- SEPTEMBER – nominations are opened, and candidates announce themselves for a position.
- OCTOBER – ballots go out in the mail to all members
- NOVEMBER – returned ballots are counted
- JANUARY – new officer term begins. Whoever wins, starts January 1st.

### What are the positions?

There are seven (7) officers of the union, who together form the executive board of Teamsters Local 695. The executive board meets regularly to conduct union business, and reviews the actions of the principal officer and business agents. Three positions are full-time paid, doing work as business agents (Sec-Treas, President, Recording Secretary), the other four are for working Teamster members.

Please contact us if you have any thoughts or questions, are interested in being part of this election. [rebuild695@gmail.com](mailto:rebuild695@gmail.com)

## Big Management Expansion: More \$\$ At the Top

New Metro General Manager Justin Stuehrenberg is giving Metro a management restructure — bumping up General Supervisors to Managers and creating a set of super-managers above them in each department. The reasoning is that Metro is gonna expand and have multiple sites and BRT. Til now, each department has had one Manager (Chris in Ops, Butler and now Erica in the Shop, Mick in Marketing, and Jennifer in Finance). The restructure means they’re promoting every

General Supervisor (Phil & Jennifer in Ops; Fink in the Shop; Jessy in Marketing) to full managers, and then hiring someone *above them*.

What kind of money are we talking? Base pay for a General Sup is \$87k. Managers get a base of \$105k. (That’s a \$20,000 raise!) The category managers (or whatever they will be called) will have to live in Madison, but will have a max pay of approximately \$150k.

Doing some quick math: at least four general sups got moved up to manager, which will cost \$80,000. Add in four category managers for \$150k each, that’s another \$600k (not counting benefits).

Meanwhile, the number of mechanics at Metro has not been increased in at least 20 years, but there are many more buses. Inflation is at a record 9%, but no movement on hazard pay or retention bonuses.

# UNDERSTAND YOUR CONTRACT

Here's a brief what you need to know.

## THE UNION

Our union is called **Teamsters, Local 695**. A union is a workers' organization: workers are union members, the members vote on representatives (stewards, officers) and approve or reject contracts that have been bargained. If you vote NO on a contract, you are saying you don't think its acceptable or the bargain didn't get all you think it could. The union our organization — it has problems, but they are *our* problems.

At Metro, people in the union are all the drivers, mechanics and shop workers, the customer service reps, finance clerks/techs, and paratransit coordinators. Outside Metro, the union represents mainly private sector employers at warehouses, food processing plants, concrete companies, manufacturing places, stuff like that.

## THE CONTRACT

The contract is an agreement between the union (representing us) and the employer (City of Madison) that spells out wages, working conditions, benefits, work rules, and so on. It's a legally binding agreement. If the employer violates the agreement, we can file **grievances** (talk to your steward) - essentially a complaint that they broke their end of the deal.

Every contract is different and has its history about why things are the way they are. For us, there was **a strike in the early 1980's** of bus drivers that the union won. Jayme J (who was part of the strike) said before he retired that the Mayor at the time conceded and said, "Give them whatever they want." That victory is what established some of the best stuff in our contract: spread time, 40 hour guarantee, overtime language, etc.

Collective action is what makes the big leaps for contracts. Labor lawyer Bob Schwartz's book, "No Contract, No Peace" explains it like contract time is war time where both sides try to make their advances, and the settled contract is a temporary peace.

## SOME NOTES

- The union has bargained raises for every represented worker (see the wage tables in the back of the contract). These are currently set for Jan 1. The rest of the City got a 0.5% raise, our raises are 2—2.5% each year (and we have maintained 100% paid healthcare).

- When you read the contract, you have to read **the entire section**.

-Long-time practices and MOU's are also part of the contract, even though they are not written in the book. You can grieve changes to past practice.

# Metro Briefs

## Metro Retirees

- David Johansen, Deb Biddick

## New People Started Recently

Metro is desperate for drivers. Every place is trying to hire, but they're especially hurting for bus drivers.

**DRIVERS:** There are *three classes* of new drivers right now; more than 20 people. Over the last year, only about half of new people have stuck it out.

## Management Blotter

**Shop:** Fink promoted to manager

**Ops:** Jen Wiegert and Phil promoted to managers, same level as Chris

**Planning:** New planning manager, Sean Hedgpeth. Replaced Drew. Julian is gone as a planner.

**Marketing:** Jessie promoted to manager, same level as Mick. Jeremy is

# TEAMSTER UPDATES

- Still waiting for the WERC to issue a ruling about the City trying to **remove Finance workers from our union**. (Booooo!)
- New Teamster General President (guy in charge of the entire union across the country): **Sean O'Brien** of the Teamsters United slate won against Steve Vairma, more than 2-to-1. O'Brien's big thing is targeting UPS (workers there are Teamster) and talking about organizing Amazon into the union.
- Teamster rail (BLET) contract goes to federal "cool-off". Biden intervenes to prevent strike between railroaders and employers.

# LABOR BEAT: Worker News from the US

- Union workers at **CUNA Mutual** on Madison's west side have been negotiating their contract this year. CUNA (finance & retirement corporation) made record profits but is trying to cut their health insurance and outsource their work. Their union, **OPEIU 39**, has been having pickets many Saturdays. HONK if you pass to show some love.
- Workers at Starbucks have been filing for union elections across the country—more than 150 shops have won elections to be repp'd by **Workers United (SEIU)**. In Madison, the Starbucks downtown just voted up the union there.