

# Local 522 Union Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 2/21/24

**At:** 3:30 P.M.

**Location:** Norms

17844 Lakewood Blvd., Bellflower, CA

**Meeting called to order by:** Rec. Sec. Eddie Reedy

**Second by:** S.S. Theron Smith

**At:** 3:46 P.M.

## **Roll Call:**

Pres. Raul Reyes

V.P. Travis Hickman (Via Zoom)

Treasurer Ernie Gonzales

Trustee Angel Sanchez

Trustee Melody Griffin

Trustee Kelvin Tanji (Excused Absence)

Trustee Dan Parral

Recording Secretary Eddie Reedy

## **Flag Salute**

### **Additions & Corrections:**

1. **Addition:** Moment of Silence
2. **Addition:** Swearing in of Members and Officers
3. **Addition:** Inland Shop
4. **Addition:** Rutherford Family
5. **Addition:** Regional Conference
6. **Addition:** Negotiations
7. **Addition:** Burbank Incident
8. **Addition:** OC Shop
9. **Addition:** Pacific Shop

**Approval of Agenda by:** Trustee Angel Sanchez

**Second by:** S.S. Kito Singleton

**Moment of Silence:** Sandra Moran

### **Swearing in:**

**Members:** Members in attendance repeated "Members Oath" as written in the By-Laws.

### **Stewards**

**Officers:** Officers Oath recited by Rec. Sec. Eddie Reedy, Trustee Dan Parral, and Vice Pres.

Travis Hickman.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

**Minutes from 1/17/24 (Read by Angel Sanchez):**

**A.:** (Trustee Angel Sanchez) Error in the minutes, S.S. Jagpreet Singh counted the vote; not me.

**Motion:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) Motion to delay approval of 1/17/24 minutes until corrections have been made.

**Second:** Trustee Dan Parral

**Result:** Passed (**Minutes Not Approved**)

**Minutes from 1/31/24 (read by Trustee Angel Sanchez):**

**Q.:** N/A

**Motion of Approval:** S.S. Kito Singleton    **Second By:** S.S. Theron Smith

**Result:** Passed

**Trustee Reports:**

1. **Kelvin Tanji:** No report.

a. **Q.:** N/A

2. **Melody Griffin:** No report.

a. **Q.:** N/A

3. **Dan Parral:** No report

a. **Q.:** N/A

4. **Angel Sanchez:**

a. **LA FED:** Next meeting will be 2/26/24. Nothing to report yet.

i. **Q.:** N/A

**Officer Reports:**

1. **Treasurer Report (Treas. Ernie Gonzales):**

a. **Report:** Full Report given by Ernie Gonzales.

i. Beginning Balance (as of January 1<sup>st</sup>) = \$ 425,013.62

ii. Total Deposits and Credits = \$ 30,537.76

iii. Total Checks and Withdrawals = (\$ 41,620.29)

iv. Ending Balance (as of January 31<sup>st</sup>) = \$ 413,931.09

1. **Q.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) Is the national per capita you mentioned for 1 month?

**A.:** (Treas. Ernie Gonzales) The national per capita I mentioned in the report is from November 2023, December 2023, and January 2024.

**Q.:** (Trustee Melody Griffin) What is "other"?

**A.:** (Treas. Ernie Gonzales) That would be expenses for the committees, such as grievance committee.

2. **Motion to Approve Financial Report:** Trustee Angel Sanchez

3. **Second:** S.S. Theron Smith

**4. Discussion:** N/A

**5. Result:** Passed

**2. Vice President Report (Vice Pres. Travis Hickman):** No report.

**a. Q.:** N/A

**3. President Report (Pres. Raul Reyes):**

**a. Rutherford Family:** We lost Steve Rutherford on 1/25/24 and raised about \$1,000 for his family. His services were Friday the 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and I still have remembrance books if anyone would like one. His widow, Jennifer, wanted to thank us for what we raised and shared with me that she feels disconnected from us [the union] now that Steve has passed.

**i. Q.:** N/A

**b. Regional Conference:** The last time we had a regional conference was in 2022. We are having another one this year between April 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>, but it will be held in San Diego.

**i. Motion (S.S. Kito Singleton):** I move to approve a maximum expenditure of \$20,000 to send a maximum of 8 shop stewards to the conference. Each steward will get a maximum of \$2,500 for loss time, travel, room and board, and per diem.

**ii. Second:** Trustee Dan Parral

**iii. Discussion:**

**1. Q.:** (Treas. Ernie Gonzales) Since this is a regional conference and we are the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest local do you think 8 shop stewards is enough? Since we are financially stable at the moment, I believe 10 stewards would be better.

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) If the membership agrees in sending 10 shop stewards instead of 8, then the motion should be declined and a new motion made to reflect that.

**Q.:** (Trustee Melody Griffin) How should the funds be distributed?

**A.:** (Treas. Ernie Gonzales) We will wait until the stewards arrive at the conference where a check will be hand delivered to them.

**Q.:** (Member) Is the room rate based on double occupancy?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) No, it is just the room rate.

**A.:**

**iv. Vote:**

**1. In Favor (0):**

**2. Apposed: Unanimous**

**3. Abstention (0):**

**v. Result:** Not Passed

**vi. Motion (Treas. Ernie Gonzales):** I move to approve a maximum expenditure of \$25,000 to send a maximum of 10 shop stewards to the conference. Each steward will get a maximum of \$2,500 for loss time, travel, room and board, and per diem.

**vii. Second:** Trustee Angel Sanchez

**viii. Discussion:** None

**ix. Vote:**

**1. In Favor (16):**

**2. Opposed (0):**

**3. Abstention (1):**

**x. Result:** Passed

**c. Negotiations:** We are continuing to prepare for negotiations. We have a flyer ready to be distributed to the membership with tips on how to prepare for negotiations. There is also a questionnaire being developed to get the memberships input on what should be focused on for negotiations. Since the company only pays for 4 months to have the union negotiate, we will probably begin negotiations in late June. The communications committee will be expanding to keep the membership informed during negotiations. They are currently verifying everyone's phone number and e-mail address. If the members have not received anything from us, please reach out to your shop stewards so we can get the correct information.

**i. A.:** (S.S. Leigh Estrada) I have had some members in my department that don't feel comfortable giving their personal information through company e-mail.

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) That is understandable, if they don't feel comfortable giving their information through company e-mail or teams they can go ahead and contact anyone on the communications committee. Or you can forward their information to the communications committee.

**A.:** (Trustee Angel Sanchez) If we can't get a hold of members then we reach out through teams or company e-mail. That is usually the last resort.

**A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) I recommend utilizing the local shop stewards. The local shop stewards usually have better luck getting updated information from their colleagues.

**ii. Zoom Meetings (Pres. Raul Reyes):** We also plan on having informal zoom meetings stickily to inform the membership of what is going on during negotiations. Again, please have your information up to date with us because we will be sending out the zoom invitations to the e-mails you provide to us.

**A.:** (S.S. Leigh Estrada) It is difficult to get ahold of coworkers on different shifts, but I will try my best.

iii. **Pledge to Vote (Pres. Raul Reyes):** Another local had a great idea of asking the members at your work location to sign a “Pledge To Vote” and post it on the union board. It shows solidarity and I think it a good idea for us to implement.

**Q.:** (S.S. Jadric Anongos) What is the percentage needed to ratify a contract by the membership? And what % is needed to authorize a strike?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) %50 + 1 to ratify a contract and 2/3 of the voting members to authorize a strike. Traditionally our membership has more seniority, so we usually get a larger turn out.

**Q.:** (S.S. Jadric Anongos) Is having a pre-authorization for striking typical across the company?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) In my experience, most members would like to know what they are going to vote for before authorizing a strike. You only get 1 shot to authorize, if it isn't presented at the best time we will lose it. We are required to let the company know we have an authorized strike vote.

**A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) On a national level, it is easier to have pre-authorization if you've had bad deals in the past. The best thing we can do is have a lot of our members vote. Even if they're not happy with the vote, the strength of the number of voters can be powerful in the future. We need to show the company that everyone is serious.

**Q.:** (Member Ozzy Covarrubias) Do we have historic figures of the total amount of votes in the past?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) I have an idea of the figures and the typical response is 25% - 30% of our members that vote.

**Q.:** (S.S. Jadric Anongos) If we lose a member to management, does the union get notified and their information purged?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) That is something I've reached out to our members about. We do get a list and we cross check the list and we also get quarterly reports from the company with who went into management and who's on a V assignment. But if you know of someone that does go into management, please let us know immediately.

**A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) While the votes are being counted, we are also verifying each member is in good standing. During the last contract we discounted 4 names because they were in management. If we can identify you, we must discard the vote because every member has the right to a secret ballot. Keep negotiations information amongst ourselves and if management hands you any labor bulletin, please check with your shop steward or officers to clarify any misunderstandings.

**d. JSC:**

- i. Covid 19 Policy Update:** There has been an update on the Covid 19 policy. If you feel symptoms and test positive you will need to quarantine for at least 24 hrs. once your fever and symptoms have reduced. ECS will contact whoever you came in close contact with 24 hrs. prior to showing symptoms. If there is no outbreak you are required to wear a mask for 10 days when you return to work. If you have two negative tests at least a day apart then you don't have to wear a mask, but it is still recommended. From now on only locations suffering from an outbreak will be communicated with the employees, instead of every incident. 3 or more positive cases in a 7-day span will constitute an "outbreak". An outbreak is a 7-day rolling period. Meaning if a new positive test arises at that work location within the last 7 days of the last positive case the outbreak period will roll over. At a base where an outbreak is occurring, employees will need to wear a mask regardless of negative test status. If ECS is slow to respond to you, contact Labor. If you test positive but are not showing symptoms it will be at local management's discretion if you are able to work from home if your work permits it. If you have symptoms but test negative, you are encouraged to take a sick day. The government is updating its policy and so is SoCal Gas. There will no longer be covid time off. You are now encouraged to use your entitlements.

**1. A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) The preferred method of contacting ECS would be through e-mail. If they call you, you should follow up with an e-mail to confirm what was discussed. That creates a paper trail in case the company decides to challenge you later. It has happened before and I'm sure it will happen again. If you are getting your test through a clinic, you may need documentation.

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Contact a union steward if you are having any problem.

- ii. Vista 1 Boundaries:** The company is rolling out a new system in hopes of replacing Pacer and possibly CIS. This system will be "Vista 1". A major component of "Vista 1" is that it will automatically make routes for employees, and when orders from neighboring districts come in, they will be routed to the closest employee whether they report to that district or not. The Union did ask if it was going to send orders to people and according to the company it will be a dispatch tool. It doesn't impact our work group as much, since IST's dispatch their own work.

**1. Q.:** N/A

iii. **Blue Cross Coverage:** With the universities of California in negotiations there was going to be a change to Anthem Blue Cross coverage but since they have come to an agreement there will be no change to employees with Anthem Blue Cross. Labor said they would send something to employees explain what happened. Letter, you can ignore it.

1. Q.: N/A

iv. **FSA Redeployment:** There is not enough FSA work in San Juaquin Valley to sustain their position. They were getting redeployed but somehow found 800 orders for them to work. The orders are starting to windle down, so redeployment is being brought up again. If there is not enough work to sustain and it's too far for them to commute, they will have the right to be laid off.

1. Q.: (Trustee Melody Griffin) Since they are a paygrade 3 will they be given priority to other paygrades, like level 7's?

A.: (Pres. Raul Reyes) It's usually priority to entry level positions. SPS, SPT, and PPA are still considered entry level. If they have equal qualifications and are in the path for layoffs they would get priority. It is a case-by-case basis. I imagine they'll be redeployed in their own area. The work group is about 10 employees.

v. **Burbank Incident:** There was an incident in Burbank where there was a leak and special equipment, and fittings were needed. Instead of neighboring districts being called for the parts, the parts and crew were brought in from Visalia. It is under investigation, but we want to remind the membership to follow the rules and regulations. If management isn't following the rules and regulations, please contact the union.

1. Q.: N/A

vi. **PACKS:** There are six positions up for a PACK study but one of those positions is in our local. Last week the company agreed to increase the paygrade for transmission pipeline specialists but senior leakage clerk on the other hand is going through arbitration. The union has notified the company that the other classifications will be going through PACK. If you get called, SPS's, please answer truthfully and don't be intimidated. We are doing our best to keep them anonymous, so they don't get harassed. The board decided that Pres. Raul Reyes and someone with SPS experience will be conducting the interviews. Interviews will be in the next month or two.

1. Q.: (Trustee Melody Griffin) Who will be calling the interviewees?

A.: (Pres. Raul Reyes) The company will be calling them. They will call you and tell you to go to a location to conduct the interview like a

panel interview.

**Q.:** (Member Dave) Does the company decide who gets interviewed?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) No, the union chooses who gets interviewed and we will be in the room with the company to conduct the interview. So, our information is consistent with theirs.

**Q.:** (S.S. Orvin Wilson) If SPS goes up 2 paygrades what will happen to the leads?

**Q.:** (S.S. Leigh Estrada) Will they get rid of a level 8 lead?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) We will have to see if it gets to that point, but the company may have an answer to that. Such as, eliminating the position.

**A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) They may not eliminate it, but not fill in behind it. They can't eliminate a position without negotiating with the union.

**Q.:** (Member Ozzy Covarubias) What's the process of going through the PACK study?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Some positions will get upgraded automatically, other will get negotiated. We agree to have them go through the process, but the other way is you notice a substantial change in your duties. In 2013 the WOC's were scheduled to go through this process but the union lost the arbitration.

- vii. Gas Company Event:** We discussed how the absence of the Gas Company annual event has been missed by employees. The union has asked when the next event will be. The company said that they have been in talks about bringing it back. They expect to communicate something with us soon, but we are not sure what they are planning. It's safe to say that "The LA Fair" is probably not an option.

1. **A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) It would be nice to attend in our union gear across all the locals.

- viii. Drugs & Alcohol Policies:** There has been an update to the Last Chance Agreement (LCA) as well. The LCA used to be for the life of your career with So Cal Gas, but it has been reduced to 10 years. If you find yourself in that situation, please read the document and make sure it is the updated LCA with the 10-year date. For non-DOT positions, the test will be a swab test. Also, if you are showing inebriated behavior, you may also get a swab test.

1. **Q.:** N/A



**ix. Out of Service Territory Leak Orders:** Some employees in bordering districts have been getting leak orders outside of our coverage territories such as, PG&E, Long Beach Gas, etc. Employees are encouraged to advise the customer to call their natural gas provider to resolve the issue. The union did ask the company to draft a policy employees can reference to avoid retaliation on employees.

1. **Q.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) Has the company considered we could be impinging on sewer?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Excellent point, I'll bring it up to JSC.

**x. Supply Management:** We understand that there has been a backlog on parts. Mueller has been having supply chain issues. The company has been aware of this problem and has started looking for other vendors. The problem is that a lot of our special equipment is exclusively made by Mueller and works only with Mueller fittings. If we use other vendors, we would have to retool equipment and retrain employees. It's a cost the company doesn't want to spend yet, but they are aware of the backup.

1. **Q.:** (Member) Instead of switching the whole company over, could a few bases get trained?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) I agree but if we change policy or procedure it needs to be for everyone.

**Q.:** (Trustee Angel Sanchez) Is management communicating that simple fittings are back ordered?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) I doubt it.

**Q.:** (Member Ozzy Covarrubias) Wouldn't emergency work take priority over new business?

**A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) With the talks of electrification we need to install as many pipes as possible in the ground.

**A.:** (Member Ozzy Covarrubias) The whole electrification was found illegal in Berkley.

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) It is still a threat though. The people I've talked to in Labor have a background in distribution and even they weren't happy with the answers but those were the answers we got.

**xi. Cease-and-Desist Order for Contracted Leak Repair:** The company took a position that specific tasks are not fenced in. The union notified the company that we feel different from that and issued a cease-and-desist order.

1. **Q.:** N/A

**xii. Sick Time:** Despite California State Law stating we can use up to 80 hours of our sick time without repercussion or consequence, the company is stating that

we are only allowed 48 hours without repercussion or consequence. The company claims that was always the agreement, but all the locals firmly believe the conversation and agreement between the company and the union was different. The new agreement is you can use 100% of sick time for FSL. The understanding at the table is you wouldn't get penalized until you use 80 hrs. of your earned sick time but the company is saying "we mis understood". Now they want us to "plan" our FSL. We would start getting occurrences after 48 hrs. If you're sick, use your time. If you're being told you can't use it or you are penalized, contact the union. The Union is still arguing with the company. If you're getting some push back, please contact us.

1. Q.: N/A

#### **Committee Reports:**

##### **1. Shop Committee:**

a. **Orange County (Trustee Angel Sanchez):** Shop was held today. There will be a special shop meeting on 3/14/24 and the next standard shop meeting will be 3/6/24.

i. **Letter of Interest:** The letter of interest is in the language of shop, but management wants to present it to the rest of management in Anaheim before it gets approved.

1. Q.: N/A

ii. **Tardy:** We asked for accidents verbiage in the policy to be taken off. They want a written notice when we are tardy, but past practice was first a verbal warning.

1. Q.: N/A

iii. **Security:** There have been concerns with security at Anaheim HQ due to customers and transients coming into the office. We had asked for the porto potties to be removed because they attract the homeless. We've also brought up that there have been personnel not badging in when entering the facility and security not checking ID's. Facilities will work with security/corporate security to be more engaging.

1. Q.: N/A

b. **Pacific (S.S. Kito Singleton):** Next shop will be March 6<sup>th</sup> to go over shop rules.

i. **Call outs:** The union asked if you miss a phone call on call outs if it counts as declining the call out. We are still looking into that.

1. Q.: N/A

ii. **Crenshaw Base Schedules:** The schedule was augmented due to a simple error.

1. Q.: N/A

iii. **Huntington Park Base Schedule:** The schedule was also augmented.

1. Q.: N/A

- iv. **Recent Earthquake:** With the recent earthquake it was noted that the intercom in the back of Compton Base does not work properly.

1. Q.: N/A

- v. **Yukon Base:** Customer service and distribution are having communication issues.

1. Q.: N/A

- vi. **Blast Pages:** There are still unfriendly incidents in Pacific that SPS's are not getting blast pages on. They could be out in those potentially hostile situations. The company has gotten better with incident reports but there should be no reason that the base has information that the office doesn't.

1. Q.: N/A

- vii. **CST Zones:** Management has brought up the realigning of CST zones. It may be implemented with the IST's as well.

1. Q.: N/A

- viii. **Special Shop:** A special shop meeting will be conducted to prevent the Vast Numbers. The special shop meeting will be 2/28/24.

1. Q.: N/A

- c. **Inland Empire (Pres. Raul Reyes):** There will be a special shop meeting to go over vacations on 3/13/24 and our standard meeting will be 3/15/24.

- i. **Vast Numbers:** The Vast Numbers were presented in shop to some extent, but we also asked for the non-vast numbers.

1. Q.: N/A

- ii. **Clock Synchronization:** There has been an issue with the clocks not being synchronized. The union and the company have an agreement to synchronize the clocks weekly but that hasn't been getting done.

1. Q.: N/A

- iii. **Safety Committee in Redlands:** The union and company are still discussing the management heavy safety committee at Redlands.

1. Q.: N/A

- iv. **Audio Test for SPS:** SPS briefly reached out to us because they were asked to get tested in audio. Cathodic Protection does get tested but SPS's do not need to. It's voluntary but keep in mind that if you don't get a passing score, it may deem you unfit to do your duties.

1. Q.: N/A

- d. **Northern (S.S. Jagpreet Singh):** No report.

- i. Q.: N/A

**e. Mapping (Pres. Raul Reyes):** No report.

**i. Q.:** N/A

**f. Energy Analysis (S.S. Leigh Estrada):** Meets quarterly and no date set for the next meeting.

**i. Eliminating On-Call:** Supervision is trying to change gas operations policy for Code 1's. He is asking for no coverage from the lab between the hours of 12:00 A.M. to 7:00 A.M. He states he is working with area managers for their approval. Also, he wants to create another shift from 3:30 P.M. to 12:00 A.M. to avoid having on call.

**1. Q.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) Has there been push back from the union?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Yes, the union has been pushing back and distribution management have agreed with us.

**A.:** (S.S. Leigh Estrada) I've also been told that Hollywood Supervision has been advised not to call the lab after certain hours. They're being compliant.

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) If that is the case, please provide us with more information so we can build a case.

## **2. Communication Committee (Trustee Angel Sanchez):**

**a. E-Mail and Phone Update:** The communication committee is continuing to reach out to update our information.

**i. Q.:** N/A

**b. Preparing for Negotiations Flyer:** The flyer has been approved and we have begun to hand it out to the membership. The flyer is universal, so you can share it outside the local.

**i. Q.:** N/A

**c. Suggestions for Negotiations:** We are working on a survey to hand out to the membership, and it should be ready to hand out to the membership soon.

**i. Q.:** (Member Eddie Cortez) Can members still mail suggestions for negotiations?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Yes, they can send in letters or hand the suggestions to use directly.

**A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) If you have any suggestions, please send them in now or as soon as possible, negotiations are fast approaching.

**Q.:** (Member Eddie Cortez) They may not want to speak up and send it in, so some members have requested I hand them in for them. May I do that? Also, may I put a petition together?

**A.:** (Treas. Ernie Gonzales) Yes, the more information the better. If a petition is created just run it through the E-board so we can vet it.

**d. Expanding Committee:** The Communications committee is looking to expand. The main role will be to communicate with members in your regions. If you are interested, please contact Trustee Angel Sanchez or any board member.

**i. A.:** (S.S. Kito Singleton) I suggest the eboard set a number for that committee for negotiations years and non-negotiations years.

**3. Organizing committee (Treas. Ernie Gonzales):** No report.

**a. Q.:** N/A

**4. System Protection Committee (S.S. Orvin Wilson):** No report.

**a. Q.:** N/A

**5. Grievance committee (Vice Pres. Travis Hickman):** No report.

**a. Q.:** N/A

**6. Audit Committee (Treas. Ernie Gonzales):** No report.

**a. Q.:** N/A

**Unfinished Business:** N/A

**New Business:** N/A

**Announcements:** N/A

**Election of Officers:** N/A

**Open Forum:**

**1. Planned Work Being Done by Contractors (Member Eddie Cortez):** Maria Guerrero is an LPA out of Visalia. She informed me that her department has slowed down and a lot of work is currently being planned by contractors.

**a. A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) That shouldn't be happening. Please continue to gather all the evidence you can and bring it to the eboard so we can investigate and possibly send it to the grievance committee.

**2. Vehicle Tracker Concerns (Pres. Raul Reyes):** There were some concerns with the new vehicle tracking technology and how it would affect pacemakers. The company has assured me that it will not interfere with pacemakers.

**a. Q.:** N/A

**3. Sandra Moran (Trustee Angel Sanchez):** We will be doing a collection for her. We will contact her husband and see if there is anything we can help with. Her services are scheduled for 3/15/24 and the funeral will be on 3/16/24. If you are interested in attending, please contact us. We will do our best to raise funds.

**a. Q.:** N/A

**4. Memorial (S.S. Kito Singleton):** There was a memorial posted in Compton for Sandy. She was one of our mail couriers. Sandy passed away in her sleep, she was 32. A Go-Fund-Me was created in her name. Please show appreciation for those at our facilities. Also, please be aware about

posting on the union board. I know we are just trying to post in their memory, but you don't want to trigger anyone. Try to keep it in your area.

**Meeting Adjourned by:** Trustee Angel Sanchez

**Second By:** Pres. Raul Reyes

**At:** 6:52 P.M.