

# Local 522 Union Meeting Minutes

**Date: 10/11/23**

**At: 4 P.M.**

**Location: Romano's Italian Restaurant**

**330 Orange ST., Redlands, C.A. 92374**

**Meeting called to order by: Pres. Raul Reyes    Second by: Trustee Angel Sanchez**

**At: 4:05 P.M.**

**Roll Call: All in attendance except**

**Rec. Sect. Eddie Reedy (Virtual)**

**Trustee Melody Griffin**

**Flag Salute**

**Additions & Corrections:**

- 1. Trustee Darin Adkins added to New Business.**

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

**Second by: Rec. Sec. Eddie Reedy**

**Swearing In of Officers and Shop Stewards:**

**Oath to the Union**

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Minutes from 8/16/23 (Ready by Pres. Raul Reyes):**

**Q.:** (Trustee Darrin Adkins) I disagree with Kito Singleton being involved in the PACK study. I believe Dan Parral is a better fit since he has 8 years in SPS.

**A.:** We have discussed the PACK study in the e-board meeting.

**Motion of Approval: Trustee Angel Sanchez**

**Second By: Treas. Ernie Gonzales**

**Result: Passed**

**Minutes from 9/20/23 (Read by Pres. Raul Reyes):**

**Q.:** N/A

**Motion of Approval: Trustee Angel Sanchez**

**Second By: Treas. Ernie Gonzales**

**Result: Passed**

**Trustee Reports:**

- 1. Kelvin Tanji:**

**a. No Report**

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

- 2. Melody Griffin:**

**a. No Report.**

i. Q.: N/A

3. **Darrin Adkins:**

a. **System Protection Specialist:** Management have been telling employees how to do their job and where to cut corners but then hold employees responsible. If management is going to control how employees go out and when employees can go out but want to write up employees because something did not get done in the timely manner due to, **we** have compliance dates. There was an issue when I didn't see an order for over three months that set back time to meet the compliance date. They are restricting us from doing our jobs properly. In the past the department brought in contractors to troubleshoot areas and the contractor took the package to Arizona and the contractor did not get the area into compliance, but I was the person who worked that package that went for miles and got it into compliance by finding shorts and adding anodes. There have been several issues with the new program TOB, but the company continues to push it. System Protection employees have repeatedly told them that the system does not work but they are not listening to us.

i. Q.: (Rec. Sec. Eddie Reedy) What exactly are they telling the employees to do?

A.: They are controlling how we go out and work down areas. They've also told SPS's to tie anode areas to rectified areas to bring the read up, just to get them off the books. CP10's were given back to System Protection Pacific and whoever was doing them before was not doing them correctly because services that were changed to plastic over 10 or more years ago were still coming up as CP10 when they are checked every 10 years. We also have service history that's not correct and were never corrected more than 10 years ago. They have given CP10's to new employees who mostly would have no idea about all the issues with CP10 orders and they may get done but mostly not correctly.

A.: (S.S. Orvin Wilson) TOB was a system pushed by the company that required us to wait for dispatch to assign us work instead of allowing us to work our areas. Cathodic Protection was the test group to try it out first. I was told not to request work and wait for dispatch to assign work to me which resulted in my not being able to follow up with my work in an appropriate time. I was falling behind. I was off for a couple of days and my work did not get reassigned, so I got swamped with work upon my return. If our work goes past its due date, we could be fined by the CPUC so it's kind of a big deal. I was then told to continue to request my own work and work the assignments accordingly, yet they are still pushing TOB. When I email them, I make sure to mention TOB and the time frame for my records. I've been saving all the correspondence in case we need

to build a case later.

**A.:** (Trustee Darrin Adkins) Management shouldn't control how you do your work. Jerald Armstrong will make false statements, which he has done before, so be careful. Also, to the other classifications, make sure you don't deviate from policy even if management instructs you otherwise.

#### **4. Angel Sanchez:**

**a. Parts Shortage:** We had a conversation with Dustin Tomilson about the parts shortage we've been having. It seems like the parts shortage isn't just affecting Anaheim planning and has affected the whole company. This has been an ongoing issue with major back order on parts that we continue to bring up, but it doesn't seem like there is a resolution coming. The company continues to make changes without any of our input that ultimately doesn't address the actual issue. Pico doesn't seem to have the parts either. Since no parts are available for jobs a lot of crews end up pulling parts from the emergency stock which raises a new concern; will we be prepared if a natural disaster hits us again? The company first attributed the parts shortage to the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020, but it's been three years, and we are still having issues. We hope to elevate these concerns to JSC.

- i. A.:** (V.P. Travis Hickman) When I was a CT in 2017, I remember bringing this issue up at a safety congress. We spoke to the lady in charge and explained the difficulties of getting parts and the concern with the lack of parts in case of an emergency. Seems like the problem hasn't been resolved.
- ii. A.:** (Trustee Darrin Adkins) The group we have now that orders parts does not seem to be concerned with public safety. I know we had problems before with different vendors producing bad parts, but it's still their responsibility to find alternate reputable vendors that can produce the parts to our standards. It's a major problem that the union is not more involved.
- iii. A.:** (Treas. Ernie Gonzales) Our parts supplier is Mueller.
- iv. A.:** (Trustee Angel Sanchez) We understand that the parts need to go through rigorous testing and that takes a lot of time and money, but we should still have a secondary option when Mueller doesn't have the parts. We brought this up to the VP's a while ago as well.
- v. A.:** (Trustee Darrin Adkins) When the CPUC was looking into our contractors they had all the parts we needed, but once they CPUC left it seems like there was a change. They made cut to orders and began laying people off. The membership needs to hold them accountable.
- vi. Q.:** (Trustee Angel Sanchez) Who determines what is emergency stock?

- vii. **A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) I'm not sure who determines emergency stock, but I will investigate it. I will bring these issues up to the JSC and keep in mind if your running into problems contact us or your local shop steward and document everything. These problems need to get addressed.

**Officer Reports:**

**1. Treasurer Report (Ernie Gonzalez):**

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

- i. Beginning Balance (as of August 1<sup>st</sup>) = \$357,644.27
- ii. Total Deposits and Credits = \$28,316.24
- iii. Total Checks and Withdrawals = (\$28,935.41)
- iv. Ending Balance (as of August 31<sup>st</sup>) = \$357,025.34

1. **Q.:** (S.S. Steve Castillo) Can you explain what the LA FED is and why we pay for it?

**A.:** All unions pay a fee to join the LA FED. Being a part of the LA FED has many benefits. During the last negotiations, when we were picketing there were a lot of other unions there picketing with us and that was in large part to the LA FED. Since we will be going into negotiations next year it doesn't hurt to have some back up from other unions. I will go over it more during my report.

**A.:** (Treas. Ernie Gonzales) I spoke to Melody Griffin about last months concern with the treasurer report. The concern was cleared up.

**Motion for Approval: Pres. Raul Reyes      Second By: Vice Pres. Travis Hickman**

**Result: Passed**

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

- i. Beginning Balance (as of September 1<sup>st</sup>) = \$ 357,025.34
- ii. Total Deposits and Credits = \$ 28,951.02
- iii. Total Checks and Withdrawals = (\$ 1,396.36)
- iv. Ending Balance (as of September 30<sup>th</sup>) = \$ 384,580.00

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

**Motion for Approval: Pres. Raul Reyes      Second By: Vice Pres. Travis Hickman**

**Result: Passed**

**2. Vice President Report (Travis Hickman):**

- a. **Questionable Behavior:** We just want to remind the members to report any questionable behavior or practices being done at your work locations. If something feels off let us know. Talk to your steward and if you don't know who your steward is, reach out to us. Call a "Stop the Job" if you have too. Make sure to document everything as well.
  - i. **A.:** (Trustee Darrin Adkins) Make sure to e-mail your managers and save the e-mails to make a paper trail. Also, take pictures for the paper trail.

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

- a. **Negotiations:** I used to think that if we don't have a contract that we must be on strike, but that is not the case. If we don't have a contract, then we are simply operating without a contract. If the union does not agree with the contract, we simply don't sign it. As for the strike, we cannot close our contract without legally notifying the company we are closing the contract 90 days prior to closing. We would also need authorization of a strike from the members. If a strike does occur the members need to know how impactful that will be on them. The strike fund is not meant to cover any personal expenses such as your mortgage or utility bills. The strike fund is meant to cover the expense of striking, for example: materials needed for picketing, meals for picketers, permits, etc. There are special circumstances which would allow assistance from the strike fund, such as medical expenses, but those need to get petitioned through nationals and are case by case. The biggest issue with operating without a contract is that everything in the red book is inapplicable. The red book cannot be used to help you if you run into some trouble. You can get terminated and the union will not be able to represent you; it may be unfair labor practices, but the union cannot arbitrate it for you. If the negotiations get extended and it is agreed to extend the CBA temporarily, then the previous contract remains applicable. There will be many bulletins being sent out during negotiations. The membership must know how to sift through that information. We won't be able to communicate much information during negotiations due to a "gag order" but just try to read between the lines with what's being sent out. Keep in mind the unions have everyone's best interest at heart we just can't communicate everything going on in real time. The company does pay for 4 months of negotiations, after that the union covers our expenses. We aim to be well prepared, so negotiations don't go over 4 months.
  - i. **Q.:** (Rec. Sec. Eddie Reedy) When does the "gag order" go into effect? Also, if the negotiations get extended does the company cover that cost?
    - A.:** As soon as negotiations begin the "gag order" goes into effect, and no, the union covers our costs if negotiations get extended (after the 4 months).
  - ii. **Q.:** (Member Philip Laduke) Can the union communicate with the membership what it plans on fighting for before negotiations start?

**A.:** Sure. We already started talking about what we want to discuss for 2024. We understand not everyone will interact with us, but we will try to contact everyone in person next year. Outer areas will be tackled earlier in the year, and we will centralize towards downtown L.A. as the year progresses and we get closer to negotiations.

**A.:** (Trustee Darrin Adkins) We have good talking points so far. It seems like the company isn't concerned with public safety so we can use that.

**iii. Q.:** (S.S. Orvin Wilson) I know I'm not allowed to represent an employee from another union, but may I give them advice or am I allowed to act as witness?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Yes. If they trust you for advice feel free to give it, but make sure you say it's from a friend and not your local. When anyone engages management, I encourage more involvement to get more perspective.

**iv. Q.:** (Member Mike Sanchez) If a strike occurs and it last a few months, what happens then? How does that affect our seniority? What about back pay? What if a main is broken and blowing (or any other emergency) while we are on strike, are we required to go back to work?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Usually you don't lose seniority. We would ask for back pay but the company doesn't usually do that. As for emergencies, the company usually has a contingency plan for that. They would probably have contractors working those emergencies. During the 2008 negotiations I worked off hours. I walked in at noon one day to find management there being taught how to do our job. That was their contingency plan then, but we don't know what they have in place. They were getting ready just as we should be getting ready.

**Q.:** (Member Mike Sanchez) Doesn't that make us look bad? The company may turn it on us and say something like, "the union wasn't there to serve the community". Can the contractors even do %100 of our work?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Yes, it does make us look bad. But we all need to realize that going on strike is like going to war. It's ugly. I do want to reiterate that it's like a last resort. We don't want to go that route if we don't have to. It's more of a tool we can use. The company could lock us out as well, but if there is an active unfair labor practice within 6 months, they can't lock us out. So, make sure to report any unfair labor practices to the union. In 2021, towards the end of negotiations, we filed an unfair labor practice towards the end of those negotiations, and they couldn't lock us out until September 30<sup>th</sup>. The contractors can do %100 of our work. The company is getting prepared but so are we. Keep on communicating with officers about what changes you would like to the contract. Keep in mind we are working with the rest of the locals to come to an

agreement with what to fight for. I advise all the membership to read the contract and see what we want to fix or change.

- v. **Q.:** (Member Issac Boucher) Can we get some resources on how to save money in case a strike happens? What about taking a loan out of the 401k? We could leave that information at the bases to spark the conversation.

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Good feedback. We have a meeting with nationals in a few weeks and I will bring that up. Keep in mind that we cannot picket or strike until we are out of our contract, but you can still take a vacation day and picket. We should all start putting money aside just in case.

- vi. **Q.:** (Member Erick Lopez) What measures do we have to prevent people crossing the picket line (during a strike)? Are there penalties?

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) Traditionally there will be leadership at the picket line. Part of the line is to hold it and see who's breaking the line. The various locals will be informed of Employees who break the picket line and violate the oath.

- b. **New Long-Term Disability:** In 2021, the new agreement for long term disability is 2 years. Under the old agreement it was 5 years before you were exited from the company. Under the new agreement even though you are released from the company after 2 years you would still get benefits for the remaining 3 years. Your position would be open to get filled in after the 2 years. There are members who are fighting serious illnesses so please reach out to them and let them know of the changes. The agreement was made on 11/6/2021, so if a member was on disability before that means their 5 years is coming up. The company did mention about 24 employees it would affect.

- i. **Q.:** (Member Philip Laduke) Is there a difference if you got on disability on or off the job?

**A.:** Yes, if you got on disability for an off the job incident then you'd be taking care of %100 of the costs. If it's on the job, I recommend you get an attorney. Keep in mind that the union deals with contract issues. An attorney would be better suited to represent you and would be able to get ahold of your medical records much faster.

**A.:** (Member Cesar Ramirez) Also, be careful what you sign for. I had a situation where the company tried to have me sign a document that would give them access to my full medical record. I didn't sign it. The request isn't fully illegal (depending on the situation) but the company can't pressure you to sign it.

**A.:** (Guest Marvin Stovall) I hurt my knee a few years back and the company went all the way back to my high school years to insinuate a previous injury.

**A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) There are instances where your medical record can help

you. Shows a pattern, but again check with your attorney. We all have each other's phone numbers, get in contact with each other and see if the company is doing something they should.

**A.:** (Trustee Darrin Adkins) Remember not to judge your coworkers for missing work. We don't know what they're going through.

- c. Inter Union Relationships:** Local 522 has about 400 members but there are other locals in the company. The contract states that if you get into a situation and need union representation you have the right to get someone from your local. The issue with being represented from someone that isn't in your local is that they cannot vote on your behalf. On top of that, locals can't sue each other for mistakes. If we fail to represent you, we can deal with it, but we can't do that across unions. On the other side, we are not alone. We are 400 out of 30,000 members nationwide. We all paid a per capita, which is about \$28,000, and %50 of that goes to nationals. That goes to officers, supporting strikes going on in other places, trainings, etc. If we need help, we can always reach out to nationals. There is also Inter-Union communications. We are apart of the LA FED but there is also one in the Inland Empire we could get involved with. I'd like to entertain joining the Inland Empire one along with the Orange County affiliate. We will discuss this with the e-board.

- i. A.:** (S.S. Orvin Wilson) 5422 I c.

- d. JSC:** We met on September 19<sup>th</sup> and will have a meeting tomorrow. Our focus will be going over the nuances of the contract and when PACK is occurring. We are still meeting once a month.

- i. Q.:** N/A

#### **Communication:**

- 1. Importance of Communication (Pres. Raul Reyes):** We need to keep the members informed with when the next meetings are.
  - a. Q.:** N/A

#### **Committee Reports:**

- 1. Grievance committee:**
  - a. Next Meeting (Pres. Raul Reyes):** Our next meeting will be next week. We are still working on on-going grievances.
    - i. Q.:** N/A
- 2. Audit Committee:**
  - a. No topic.**

i. Q.: N/A

**Unfinished Business:**

1. **Document Requests (Pres. Raul Reyes):** President Raul Reyes presented Trustee Darin Adkins with a sealed document which was supposed to contain documentation Trustee Darin Adkins asked for. Darin was asked to sign that he received said documentation without reviewing the documents. Darin decided not to sign due to not being able to review the documents.

a. Q.: (Rec. Sec. Eddie Reedy) Why is this being brought up in a general meeting? This seems to be a personal matter between Darin and the union.

A.: There have been several requests by Darin for his documentation. Even contacting nationals. We have given him what he asks for on several occasions, but he continues to deny we gave him the proper documentation. I just want this on record and everyone here to bare witness that we are handing him what he asked for.

A.: (Trustee Darin Adkins) This is not what I asked for. I have been given my appraisal before but that was not the documentation I asked for. To be clear, I'm requesting copies of all grievances, non-binding agreements, and anything else signed on my behalf.

A.: (Member Cesar Ramirez) Once Darin said he did not want to sign for this it should have ended this topic. The membership cannot bare witness since we do not know what is in the envelope. For all we know there could be a restaurant menu in there. Raul and Darin should resolve this privately and not during a meeting.

**New Business:**

1. **Amend By-Laws (Trustee Darin Atkins):** With the incident we had with Eric Hoffman (former Local 132 union president), I'm requesting we amend the By-Laws to allow the members to review anything the union president signs on our behalf. I believe we should know what's being signed for us behind closed doors.

a. A.: (Pres. Raul Reyes) If there is something discussed during the e-board meetings that needs to stay in house. The general membership does not take the oath the e-board takes.

A.: (Trustee Darrin Adkins) The request is more for the general membership. Decisions made for the membership should be shared with the membership.

**Announcements:**

1. N/A

a. Q.: N/A

**Election of Officers:**

1. **Vice President**

- a. Motion (Rec. Sec. Eddie Reedy):** I motion to elect Travis Hickman for Vice President.
  - b. Travis Hickman:** Accepted by Proxy.
- 2. Recording Secretary:** Eddie Reedy nominated and accepted in previous meeting and no other nominations.
- 3. Trustee:** Angel Sanchez nominated and accepted in previous meeting.
  - a. Motion (Trustee Darrin Adkins):** I motion to elect Orvin Wilson for Trustee.
    - i. Orvin Wilson:** Accept

**Open Forum:**

- 1. Phishing Emails (Member Philip Laduke):** Policy isn't clear on the phishing e-mails they send out. Recently there was one from Amazon and I deleted it. The verbiage of the policy says you must report it and not delete it. I still had to watch a video on why I should span it instead of just deleting it.
  - a. A.:** (Pres. Raul Reyes) The company wants you to report it as spam. If you accidentally delete it make sure to bring it up to management and it shouldn't go further than that.
  - b. A.:** (Guest Marvin Stovall) They've tried numerous ways to fire employees for stuff like this. Be careful.
  - c. A.:** (Member Erick Lopez) My boss pulled me aside for not reporting enough of the spam e-mails. They get a full graph if we report those or not.

**Meeting Adjourned by: Trustee Angel Sanchez                      Second by: Treas. Ernie Gonzales**

**Meeting Adjourned At: 7:09 P.M.**