

February Newsletter

AFSCME LOCAL 448

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February 2021

President: Alice Sutherland
Vice President: Diane Ritter-263-6673
Secretary: Taquisha Santos-Teague
973-2857
Treasurer: Laurie Scudder-987-7509

Chapter Chairs

Tanya Burns: DCFS-847-9104
Marie Reck: Revenue-209-5405
Jennifer Lavasseur: Lottery 773-330-0566

Members at Large

Aaron Sockwell: DHS-670-5283
Robin Aebly: DCFS-908-9664
Tom Soresie: DCFS-973-2857

Trustees

Tina Wren: DCFS-590-9350
Jeff Bergstrom: DHS-908-2969
Greg Duffy: DCFS-994-0502

People Chair

Laurie Scudder: Revenue-987-7509

Chris Hooser: Staff Representative-815-968-0447

Meeting Dates

ZOOM MEETING

Contact Alice for link to
Zoom meeting

March 4, 2021

ZOOM MEETING

Contact Alice for link to
Zoom meeting

June 3, 2021

**All Membership meetings
will begin at 6:30 p.m.**

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Local elections were held in December and the ballots were counted on January 5th and on January 7th, 2021, the new Executive Board for AFSCME Local 448 was sworn in. We have a lot of work ahead of us over the next 2 years, but I know we are up for the task.

I would like to introduce the newly installed Local 448 Executive Board.

Officers

President-Alice Sutherland
Vice President-Diane Ritter
Secretary-Taquisha Santos Teague
Treasurer-Laurie Scudder

Chapter Chairs

DCFS-Tanya Burns
Revenue-Marie Reck
Lottery-Jennifer Lavasseur

Members at large

Aaron Sockwell
Tom Soresie
Robin Aebly

Trustees

Tina Green
Greg Duffy
Jeff Bergstrom

Thank You!!

We owe a big thank you to those members of the Executive Board members who have retired and or are no longer on the executive board.

Kathy Lane, for all the years she has dedicated to our local and this union. Enjoy your retirement Kathy; it was hard earned and well deserved.

Dave Beccue has been active in our local for as long as I can remember. For the last several years, he has served as the Chapter Chair for DNR. Dave has retired from DNR as well as the executive board. We wish you all the best. Hopefully you will stay active with the retiree local.

Gail Greenblatt has served this local in many capacities. Most recently she had served as the local's Treasurer for the last several years. Gail is still a steward at DCFS and we are grateful to have her still in that capacity.

Melissa Dix held the position of DHS Chapter Chair on the executive board. Don't worry, she didn't go far. Melissa will still be around and a steward for DHS.

History is Made

Not only do we have new leadership in our local we have new leadership for our nation. On 1-20-2021 Joe Biden was sworn in as the 46th President and Kamala Harris was sworn in as the very first female Vice President of the United States.

Union Plus Scholarships

Nearly \$5 million in scholarships awarded to union families!!

Since 1991, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$4.8 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education. More than 3,200 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education.

Go to <https://www.unionplus.org> to find out more. The 2021 application deadline is January 31, 2021. Winners will be announced May 31, 2021.

Thank You Received

The year 2020 has been horrific for everyone. We, as State employees, are more fortunate than most in that we still have our jobs and are receiving a steady paycheck unlike the millions of people who have had to file for unemployment or seek assistance through DHS. With this in mind, earlier this year, a motion was made and passed to donate to 5 area food pantries. So far, we have received a Thank you from the Freeport Area Church Cooperative, The Salvation Army of DeKalb, Dixon Food Pantry and Sauk Valley Food Bank in Sterling. All were extremely appreciative for the donation.



WE DID IT! Core Workplace Rights Protected!

The Illinois General Assembly has just passed Senate Amendment #2 to House Bill 3653. This criminal justice reform measure was introduced last week as SA#2 to HB 163, and it originally included two provisions that represented a serious threat to many in law enforcement and a dangerous precedent for all public employees.

**Thanks to AFSCME's intensive lobbying efforts,
those provisions were NOT included in the final bill as adopted.**

1.HB 163 would have amended the state public employee collective bargaining law to eliminate most of the workplace rights of "peace officers"—primarily police officers—in Illinois. It would have restricted the issues over which these employees could bargain only to wages and benefits. There would have been no protection against wrongful discipline or discharge, no ability to establish workplace health and safety standards, no bargaining over any other working conditions. This amendment would have set a very bad precedent: If police officers could be so readily stripped of their bargaining rights, the rights of all of us are at risk. Every worker deserves the right to a voice on the job—and that includes police officers.

2.HB 163 would also have eliminated qualified immunity for "peace officers" in cases of civil lawsuits. This provision had a broader definition of "peace officer" and could be construed to cover parole officers, county corrections officers, probation officers, and sheriff's deputies, in addition to police officers. Qualified immunity is vitally important to public employees in a wide variety of occupations. It is a well-established legal principle intended to prevent civil lawsuits against employees who were acting in good faith to carry out the duties assigned to them.

Both of these provisions were REMOVED from the final legislation.

SA#2 to HB 3653 as adopted by the General Assembly maintains collective bargaining rights for "peace officers" under the state collective bargaining law—including the right to bargain over discipline, discharge, health and safety, and other working conditions. The only change to the collective bargaining law is a restriction on bargaining over residency requirements for police officers in cities of more than 100,000 people.

The bill as adopted also does not eliminate qualified immunity for peace officers. Instead it only sets up a task force to study qualified immunity.

Finally, AFSCME was also successful in securing elimination of a provision in the law that could have negatively impacted all of our members in cities and counties across the state. It would have reduced state funding through the Local Government Distributive Fund (LDGF) to those localities by 20% if they failed to implement certain reforms. That provision was REMOVED from SA#2 to HB 3653.

There are still some problematic provisions in the final bill, but we achieved our overriding goal of defeating the provisions that trampled on workplace rights. Once again we've demonstrated the power of our union: The AFSCME double whammy of activism at the grassroots (thanks to all of you who called your legislators!) and a top-flight lobbying team at the state Capitol.

CGH EMPLOYEES UNION | AFSCME COUNCIL 31

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

After countless delays, baseless accusations, and needless wasting of resources from CGH management, **the Labor Board Judge ruled in our favor!**

CONGRATULATIONS!

What does this mean?

As a union we have stood strong and resilient through attacks from CGH management and their outside anti-union attorney. This caused many distractions, tension at work, and diverted resources away from patients and onto their own agenda. It's about time we have answers!

After the labor board hearings in Sept/Oct, we have waited for the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) to rule on:

- The make-up of the RN bargaining unit
- Inclusion of the EMR Trainer position
- Fraud/Coercion allegations

Each of these objections put forward by CGH administration were a tactic to delay our certification and cause tension amongst us staff, in hopes we would give up.

WE NEVER GIVE UP!



WE WON!

The ALJ has issued his decision! We won on the critical issues before him. We won both the RN challenge and the baseless fraud and coercion allegation. We are moving forward towards certification.

What's next?

1. Management has 14 days to file exceptions and appeal the ALJ decision to the Labor Board. The Labor Board's decision will then be finalized. (Based on Labor Board case law and the strength of the ALJ decision, we will likely be certified within the next two months.)
2. Our votes / cards will be counted to verify majority in both the Registered Nurses and Non-RN medical staff!
3. Our Preference Poll ballots will be counted - to determine if we will be in one bargaining unit or two. In any case, we're all ONE UNION!
4. We will be certified and begin electing our bargaining team from our coworkers

While legally the CGH Administration has 14 days to appeal the ruling, we call out for **AN END TO delays, and AN END TO squandering CGH resources. It is time to respect our voices!**

In the meantime...

If you would like to learn more about how to be on the bargaining committee, or how to participate in other ways, please let us, your Organizing Committee coworkers, know or reach out to the contact information below.



For any additional questions about our union, please contact your union Organizing Committee coworker, or:

Phone: (708) 524-5356 ext 5768
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