



Local 899

TSO Reporter

An occasional news and information report from the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 899 for Transportation Security Officers in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. Labor donated.

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www.AFGElocal899.org

March 2014



President's Report

Celia Hahn

Celia is a checkpoint LTSO who has worked for TSA at MSP for 10 years. She was appointed President by the Trustee in October 2013 and has worked very hard on member issues.

With the merger of AFGE TSA Local 804 into 899 completed, and new sign-ups, our current total membership is about 290 members.

We have helped RST take care of some issues that they had. We successfully got a Military Member the appropriate pay for his duty time, we assisted another employee in turning over an AWOL charge, and are in the process of filing 2 grievances for 2 other members of RST. For our upcoming training in April we will be training 2 stewards from RST, 2 from RAP, and 2 from FAR. There is a lot of potential for recruitment in the spoke airports, and we hope to get more members from the merger. Hopefully once the Stewards get trained and become active, new members will follow.

Since September, Local 899 has lost 26 members. Of those 26, 17 either retired, transferred, were deployed with the military, promoted, quit, or were removed. Of the 9 members that quit the Union, one has since returned. With all the movement, our numbers reflect that we are up by 53 members since September, with some applications still pending, and the merged members not counted. Of the 4 people that were removed, 2 were successfully brought back.

AFGE and Management has been working together to get vending machines in the break rooms. Last month, we did a walk around with a vending company and looked at all the break rooms. There were so many things to take into consideration that I never thought of before: space available, outlets/circuits, future construction plans, etc. We are still waiting on word back from the vendors on which break rooms will receive what machines.

Our national contract does not allow the union to block bidding based on operational needs. However, AFGE and Management worked together on the mechanism of March 2014 bid that we had. We ironed out many

Continued on page 4

Case Stories

Real Stories — but the names and other points of identity have been altered for privacy.

“Greg’s” Story: Greg is a TSO in the prime of his life. In his very early thirties, he’s married, well-liked by his co-workers and supervisors. He has a nice new vehicle bought in part with his end-of-the-year bonus. Greg started with the TSA in 2002, and has endured the many hours of mandatory overtime, the inability to take leave, and the revolving door of TSOs coming and going.

Greg joined AFGE before it was selected as the TSA’s Union. A union does many things, he said, and number one is that they do is protect their members.

So when Greg got sick, he took it in stride. But his illness interfered more and more with his ability to be to work every day. Greg found out about the Family Medical Leave Act and approached his doctor about it. He filed the proper paperwork and went about his life. Then TSA sent him a letter and removed him from screening.

TSA claimed that Greg was not fit for duty and that he could no longer be employed by the TSA.

So Greg talked to his AFGE Reps and got a Union Steward assigned to him that day. The Steward looked at everything, prepared a response and worked with him to find ways to keep him on the job. The bar was steep, however, because Greg didn’t know what the legal eagles at the American Federation of Government Employees knew: TSA has a book of medical guidelines that they keep secret.

When Greg was removed from the service, AFGE’s legal team went to work. Appealing the case on Greg’s behalf, AFGE’s legal went toe-to-toe with the TSA. Within two months, Greg was given the news that he would be returning to work.

Contents

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| President’s Report, p. 1 | TOPs Scores, p. 3 |
| Case Stories: Greg, p. 1 | Weingarten Rights, p. 3 |
| Bob, p. 3 | AFGE Structure, p. 4 |
| Trustee’s Q & A, p. 2 | Upcoming Election, p. 4 |
| Member Notes, p. 2 | Useful Links, p. 4 |
| Treasurer’s Report, p. 2 | <i>NEXT ISSUE: “Rumors”</i> |

Questions and Answers from the Trustee



Bradley Turflinger

Brad is a staff attorney for the Midwestern District of the AFGE. He was appointed Trustee of Local 899 by Regional Vice-President Jane Nygard in October 2013

What is the Trustee's Job and what are the intended goals of the Trusteeship?

In accordance with the AFGE Constitution, the AFGE National President, with the approval of the National Executive Council, placed Local 899 under trusteeship in August 2013. The Trustee's job is to take charge of all the Local's equities and properties for the purpose of preventing corruption or financial malpractice, assuring the performance of collective bargaining agreements or other duties of bargaining representation, restoring democratic procedures, and otherwise carrying out the legitimate objectives of the AFGE.

Additionally, the Trustee ensures that your Local is properly submitting per capita taxes to its parent body and is complying with legal requirements for financial reporting, recordkeeping, and bonding.

What has the Trusteeship accomplished so far?

The bank account was brought under control and unauthorized spending stopped. Interim officers were appointed. Monthly meetings were established, with notifications, monthly Treasurer's reports, and minute taking by the Secretary. Stewards were appointed and trained. Grievances were attended to. Meetings with local management were held. Required reports were made to the US Dept of Labor and required reports to the IRS are in preparation.

An initial annual operating budget for 2014 has been prepared and approved by membership during an open meeting.

Additionally, the Trustee made certain changes to the local By-Laws to accommodate current needs.

Finally, the process for electing for new officers has begun — including establishment of an Elections Committee and member notices are being prepared.

How did this Trusteeship happen?

It was found that under the prior Local 899 leadership, 1) there was a documented loss of leadership, 2) a failure to file required reports with the Department of Labor (U.S. DoL), and 3) a refusal to communicate with the District AFGE office and with the U.S. DoL regarding requests for financial documents.

How and when will it end?

The AFGE Constitution limits the term of the Trusteeship to 12 months (August 2014). Before that time, the Local should have been put right and new officers elected to run things.

Member Notes



Who is eligible to be a member of AFGE Local 899?
TSO's and LTSO's in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

How much does membership cost?

Dues for full-time officers are \$15 per pay period; for part-time officers \$8. (Part-time officers are currently subsidized by full-time members, so dues for part-timers will likely increase \$1 or \$2 per PP soon.)

How are membership dues paid?

Dues are deducted through allotments from paychecks issued by TSA as authorized by members.

What are the benefits of membership?

Union representation by trained stewards, Local leadership, and staff attorneys, if needed. Also AFGE negotiates member benefits with many vendors.

What if I'm not a member?

No union fees are deducted from your paycheck. The provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement apply to you, but you are on your own to protect yourself.

When and where are meetings?

During the 2nd week of the month — times and locations are posted in AFGE bulletin boards and by email.

Interim Treasurer's Summary Report



Neal Gosman

Neal is a PT checkpoint TSO who has worked for TSA at MSP for 10 years. He has experience in non-profit administration and was appointed by the Trustee in Oct 2013.

Local 899 bank account - 2013:

Income: \$31,304

Expenses: \$27,645

End of Year Assets: \$28,505

End of Year Liabilities: \$0

End of Year Members Equity: \$28,505

(Detailed reports are available at monthly membership meetings.)

Accomplishments since August 2013:

Local account Income and Expense statements initiated, equipment inventory acquired, required Department of Labor forms filed, financial controls established, 2014 Budget approved, monthly reports made at membership meetings.

2014 To Do List:

File IRS forms, expand membership accounting, merge records with AFGE Local 804.

What to do for your TOP's in 2014

OK brothers and sisters – in 2013 we were told by management that there was going to be no monetary value put on TOP's. Well, we all know what happened next. At the end of the year, when the rating officials asked all of us to sign our final rating for TOP's, we accepted the low scores they gave us because they told us, "What do you care, you don't get anything any way."

NOT THIS YEAR! There are things that they are required to do and it is your right to make sure that they do those things. If you want a good score, make them show you how. You need to go to your supervisors and demand they do the following.

When you have your first meeting with them, the Performance Plan meeting, you need to have them explain everything. Have them tell you what all the expectations are and go through each one with you. Along with the goals, they are required to do this, it is in the CBA.

Make sure that they tell you what they want and need for you to do to get a better score and **have them write it down** (get everything in writing).

Create a file somewhere (on a computer or in writing) where you can keep track of everything you do that you feel is above and beyond. At every meeting that you have with management, bring those notes with you and show them. Make them agree that this is accepted for your file and they should attach it to your TOP's file. Make it happen!

Ask them for progress reviews during the year so you know where you stand and ask them to give to you in writing anything that they feel is keeping you from getting what you want.

Do not sign anything until you are satisfied with the results.

At the beginning of the year, ask for a self-assessment form and fill it out before the mid-year review and maybe another one before the end of year review.

At the end of the year, if you do not like your TOP's

score, seek out your REP! And tell management you want to grieve it – do not wait, do it right away.

Remember brothers and sisters, make them do their jobs and get you what you deserve. If they do not want to help you with any of the things I have listed above, you have the right to ask to see their rating officials. Ask to see your rater and tell them that you care about your score and you want them held accountable.

— Jeff Hayden, Steward

Case Stories

Real Stories — but the names and other points of identity have been altered for privacy.

“Bob’s” Story: Bob was a TSO working the morning shift at Lindberg Terminal. Bob believed himself smart, observant, and thrifty. Bob had already spent half-a-lifetime sitting behind a desk, and had a fairly decent retirement set aside. But Bob needed health insurance, so he came to the TSA.

Bob had always believed that joining Unions was a waste of time. Unions are corrupt, he said, and the people that willingly paid a portion of their salary every pay period were fools. He had better uses for his money. So when approached by a fellow TSO on his break and asked to join the Union, his answer was prepared: No Way!

Bob was sitting at the exit one day. He felt a little sleepy. Next thing he knew he was being shaken awake by a Law Enforcement Official.

Bob then received a Proposal to Remove from his checkpoint's Screening Manager. Bob was in trouble. So what did Bob do? Bob went to the President of the Union and asked for help. The President apologized but explained that with limited resources the Union is not required to represent non-AFGE members. The President gave Bob some advice, and even had him contact the Union's Legal Staff.

Bob hadn't paid any dues. In the end, the Union pointed out how expensive it can be to defend someone, and told him they could not represent him.

Bob saved himself \$30 dollars a month, added right to his bottom line. However — Bob is no longer a TSO.

Useful Links:

The Collective Bargaining Agreement
(TSA version)

www.tsa.gov/sites/default/files/assets/pdf/research/compilation_080612.pdf

(AFGE version)

www.afge1260.org/index.cfm?action=downloadasset&assetid=6774f132-80bb-473a-b322-0208cfbe4b73

TSA Management Directives

www.tsa.gov/research-center/management-directives

AFGE National Web Site

www.afge.org

AFGE Local 899 Web Site

www.AFGElocal899.org

Discounts for AFGE Members

www.afge.org/index.cfm?Page=memberbenefits

AFGE National Union Constitution

www.afge.org/?DocumentID=5

AFGE Local 899 By-Laws

www.AFGElocal899.org/

AFGE structure and responsibilities:

Local 899:

Chartered under National. Adopts Standard Local Constitution. Creates Local By-Laws. Locally elected officers. Trains stewards. Initiates representation and grieving processes. Interfaces with local TSA management. Primary interface with members. Can affiliate with Regional Labor Bodies. Can establish relationships with elected officials. Exclusive representative of all bargaining unit employees.

Council 100:

Representing all AFGE TSA Locals. Will negotiate future national Collective Bargaining Agreements with the help of the National office. Elected nationally .

The 8th District:

Operates under National AFGE Constitutional limits. National VP for the Region (elected) is Jane Nygaard. Established office and staff attorney. Serves all AFGE Locals in 5 states, not exclusively TSA. Maintains relationships with elected officials.

National Office:

Central staffing. Serves membership on a national level. Coordinates member benefit offerings. Negotiated 1st national Collective Bargaining Agreement with TSA. Maintains relationships with elected officials. Officers are elected at National conventions.

(See AFGE Constitution for details.)

AFGE Local 899 Elections — SOON!

In 2012, AFGE Local 899 held its first election of officers. Unfortunately less than 1/2 of paid up members bothered to vote. A slate of officers was elected by a slim majority of the few that voted. After the Local was put under Trusteeship, those officers were removed from office by the National President. (See page 2.)

Let's not let this happen again. Look for information about new elections coming to you soon.

New elections of officers is scheduled to occur in May 2014. After new officers are elected, Local 899 can be released from Trusteeship and re-gain its autonomy.

PLEASE VOTE!

President's Report continued from page 1

issues from the August 2013 bid, and were able to avoid those issues this time. This bid went much smoother, and there have been no grievances filed at this time. Management has been willing to get the Union involved earlier in processes so that we can identify possible issues before things happen.

The shaded areas in the national contract that were in arbitration have finally been decided. Look for new Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) coming soon!

Upcoming Steward training: MSP has added 5 new stewards to our group. We will have a total of 10 for MSP after training. It is a good, diverse crowd. Management has been very busy with disciplinary actions lately, so the new stewards are needed badly! We are very excited to train stewards to work for you!

ALWAYS consult with your rep BEFORE attending any meetings with management that may result in a disciplinary action. Too many members forget this right, and it is very important that we are with you every step of the way. This is why you pay your dues, and it is why we go to training. Let us help you! Tell Management you want a rep present, and they will get you one.

Because TSA is funded by the US Congress, 899 needs to become politically active! We have added 3 Local Political Coordinators to our team, and these people represent us in US Congressional Districts 2,4, and 7. We still need members from the other districts to represent us. If anyone likes to be politically active, and wants to assist us in getting our names and faces out to the US Congressional Representatives, please contact me. We would like to get 1 member from each congressional district.

Here is an on-line petition I like: <https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/reform-aviation-transportation-security-act-atsa-public-law-107-71-115-stat-597-all-tsa-federal/2DsTBqGf>

BENEFITS FOR AFGE MEMBERS

When you join the union, you have access to AFGE benefits. These benefits are backed by the collective strength of over 10-million members of AFL-CIO unions. By using one or two of the programs, many members save as much as their annual dues.

These Money-Saving Benefits are Available Only to AFGE Members. Benefits Line: (888) 844-2343

Clip this card and fold in half to carry in your wallet.

REPRESENTATION RIGHTS (WEINGARTEN)

TSA Officers have a right to an AFGE Representative in a meeting that may lead to discipline, but you must ask for it:

"If this meeting/discussion could lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or to adverse action against me, I respectfully request that my Union representative, officer or steward be present at this meeting."

Do not refuse to attend if denied union representation — tell them that you object and ask for the denial to be put in writing. Then call AFGE as soon as you can.



Protect Your Rights

The people listed below are trained, experienced and available to assist AFGE Local 899 members.

Celia Hahn 651-503-0043 Rochelle Fifer 239-634-1973
Jeff Hayden 612-224-5032 Todd Wendt 952-356-2147

