



NEWSLETTER

atu758.org

November 2021

President's/BA Report -

Isaac O. Tate

Is this the Leadership of the Future?

What is a Union? An organization of workers who have come together to achieve a common goal. Such as protecting the integrity of their trade, improving safety standards, and attaining better wages, benefits (such as vacation, health care, paid holidays, and long term disability benefits), and working conditions through the increased bargaining power wielded by solidarity among workers.

My Union sisters and brothers would not have been able to attain the gains that we have as Union members if not for the ones that came before us. Every generation of Union members has to be united in the fight for better working conditions and benefits “for all members” because things change. The fight won’t end with this contract, nor will the Union and membership get everything it wants now. There will be a continuing fight in every future contract to build upon what we have gained.

Now unfortunately, we are eating ourselves up from the inside as exhibited by what seems to be a great number of my members within my Local who have evolved into a haven of snitches, turning in co-workers to management, (for what purpose?), making and taking copies of Union fliers and communications to management (for what purpose), members who want to give management recordings of Union meetings thereby inhibiting me as a member who wants to speak freely and without fear of retribution or risk of being castigated by the employer, members that think my Union is part of management, followers of loud and uneducated individuals who have never belonged to this or any other Union, and don’t have a Union bone in their body, members who believe Facebook is the way the Union should be run, blindly following what someone else has “told” them instead of finding out or educating themselves from the Union leadership. Then there are followers of individuals who have personal agendas whose goal is to move up into a management position in the agency, but it will never happen because if they’re cutthroat as Union members they’ll be cutthroat as non-Union as well, and who would want to have those type individuals in their midst. And finally, we have an influx of those whose only concern is themselves and couldn’t give a rip about another member, their working conditions, their safety and or benefits. Be leery of individuals such as these.

These individuals seek self-fulfillment and little else. These individuals have an agenda of self-interest. These individuals seek to destroy the Union intentionally and or through inability to understand Union doctrine. These individual seek to belittle the efforts of members before them. These individuals seek to diminish workers’ rights. These are dangerous individuals. **These are not leaders of the future.**

Contract Vote

This contract vote has been one of the strangest in my 37 years as an ATU Local 758 member and time as a Union Officer. This definitely wasn't my first contract negotiations (the first in 1996), but apparently someone was able to convince individuals in the membership that all of a sudden I became this person who would run crooked vote counts and violate the member's rights. Someone is barking up the wrong tree. Probably for their perceived gains. The results are the results, but who were you listening to in this process?

Rumor 1: I had heard rumors of ballot box stuffing. First if someone was going to stuff a ballot box, what would it be for, to Vote yes, or to Vote no? Every ballot has to have a name to it, so how could you stuff the ballot box with more ballots than were cast?

Rumor 2: I have heard that somehow I could personally stuff the ballot box. How and why? Your Union bargaining team has to accept the vote whether it passes or not. If as presented it passes, it passes. If what was presented doesn't pass, it doesn't. Contract votes haven't passed 2 maybe 3 times in my 27 years in a Union position so a failure to pass would not be anything new.

Rumor 3: Do you feel someone is stealing your vote? Ask the rumor spreader to explain to you how that could happen. Some members have suggested we have outside counters who don't have any skin in the game. That's exactly what we had and have, outside counters. Votes have been tallied the same way whether it was for a contract or the election of Officers since at least 1981.

Rumor 4: Just as they fed you the "ballot box stuffing" conspiracy. Somebody is having a good laugh at your expense. Especially the ones that have been here when a contract vote didn't pass and those that have never voted on a contract. It's never happened in the history of this Local. Why should it start now?

Rumor 5: The loudest people are right. Again, someone thought it fun to give you misinformation or probably didn't know the process themselves. Some managers are telling us that members are thanking them. We know members are giving managers Union literature, friending them on Facebook etc. but Who and Why?

Evidently Facebook was rampant with "no", or misinformation. Allegedly there were post(s) stating to vote the contract down. But and however these individuals did not list the reasons it should be voted down, nor what the members should rally around if it is voted down. That's a key component when you're pushing a "NO" vote.

Then there were the members who stated they didn't get enough information prior to the vote. I personally received and responded to emails from members with questions and there were notices of the informational meeting posted in every building where there was/is a Union bulletin board. Notices were posted on the Dispatch window and posted on our ATU Local 758 webpage. The informational meeting was 12 hours long with only (35) members showing up.

And finally. It was rumored that the negotiation team would somehow get more money than the rest of the membership. I would be leery of someone spreading that false rumor. No member of the negotiation team would get any more than what's negotiated on behalf of every member myself included. I am still a Transit Operator on a leave of absence from Pierce Transit serving as the Union President for the last time. As a matter of fact, if you were to see the wage and compensation chart for Pierce Transit employees, you would find several Operations and Fleet Maintenance members paid more than I. **I'm not representing members for the money; I do it because I believe in the Union and workers rights.**

There were some positives in the tentative agreement. For the first time in the 41 year history of Pierce Transit and ATU Local 758, Relief Transit Operators would have received paid holidays, and be treated as a full-time employee. There were more positives of which those who have asked questions via email and the informational meeting were made aware of.

Union Meetings

Questions were also asked about the Union meetings. The reason for not having them has been explained many times (COVID). Even in the last newsletter. But now that the IBEW Union Hall (large space) is available we will resume the meetings there whenever we can schedule in a date. With as much interest expressed in regards to meetings, we fully expect them to be packed. Oddly enough, prior to the COVID shutdown the majority of the members inquiring about the meetings had shown up maybe once or twice in the 4 year period prior to the COVID shutdown. One of those loud individuals talking about not having meetings had only attended (2) meetings in his 3 years here, and they both were to check if the Union had the same number regarding the layoff as he had, after he went into the back office with management first to find out.

Something else was brought to my attention and I appreciate the member bringing this up. Union contract votes and elections should not be conducted on Pierce Transit property and from this point forward they will not be. The conduct of Union business on Pierce Transit property has now evolved into some members thinking the Union is part of, or dependent on Pierce Transit. *We Are Not. Union meetings were conducted in the IBEW Union Hall into the early 2000's and we can and should go back to that. When I worked at Boeing as an International Association of Machinist-Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) Union member at the Developmental Center adjacent to Boeing Field and lived in Tacoma, I had to drive to Tukwila for meetings, to picket and vote. **Again, the reason I did it was because I believed in Union and workers' rights.** With the influx of non-members (the ones that want "live off both mine and your dues" when the Union goes into negotiations and rental space for meetings etc.), one need not hear their opinion on anything especially in the workplace because they chose not to support you as Union members although I might add, said individuals have needed representations on numerous occasions.

*The Union will work jointly with the agency in the distribution of literature of interest to both parties.

Be Well, Isaac

Financial Secretary/Treasurer-Recording Secretary– Vonda Marshall

VACCINE MANDATE

There has been no word as of this date/time from OSHA regarding COVID vaccinations.

TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

Any updates in regards to the tentative agreement will be shared with the membership as they occur.

INFORMATIONAL HAND-OUTS/MEETING AND VOTING PROCESS

It's been a busy three weeks preparing for and conducting the voting process for the contract. First I would like to thank the E-Board members and Retirees for all their help. Russ Lowe, Angela Howard, Lori Pickering (E-board members), Retirees-Lynn Proctor, Richard Siemers, Bob and Twyla Synder, Linda Perry, Walt Waisath, Deborah Brown and Mike Moats. I really appreciate you all taking time out of your busy schedules to help the Union get out the informational packets/informational meeting, manning the Polls and counting the ballots.

I would address all the false rumors surrounding the voting procedures, but President Tate did in his article and it would just be redundant. All I will say is that the procedures for notification, voting and the counting of the ballots is outlined by the Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS) and International By-Laws and this is our template to follow.

HOLIDAY PARTY

Unfortunately there will not be a Holiday Party due to the COVID restrictions. I pray that you and your families have a wonderful and safe Holiday!!!



Retiree's Christmas
Luncheon

Saturday, December 11, 2021

12 Noon- 3PM

La Quinta

1425 E. 27th St.

Tacoma, WA 98421

Cost \$30 (includes tax & tip)

Everyone is welcome!

Please RSVP to
Lynne Proctor 253-304-4182
if you would like to attend.





Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 758

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(253)474-3123 atu758.org

This statement could save your job! "If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated I respectfully request that my shop steward be present at the meeting. Without Union representation present, I choose not to respond to any questions or statements."

UNION MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTICE

Due to COVID-19 all Union meetings have been cancelled until further notice or direction from the International Offices.

Thursday, Union Office 6923 Lakewood Dr W Suite B-1

Friday, Union Office 6923 Lakewood Dr W Suite B-1

Longview, Wednesday, 254 Oregon Way Longview, WA 98632

Executive Board—(Executive Board Only)

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