

Service Employees International Union  
Local 521

**COUNTY OF KERN  
CHAPTER  
BYLAWS**

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# LOCAL 521 VISION STATEMENT

SEIU Local 521 envisions a future where all families have:

- Quality life-long health care
- Safe, secure and meaningful employment
- A powerful voice at work
- Access to lifetime learning
- A healthy, sustainable environment
- Safe, affordable housing, and
- A dignified retirement

We make this our future by building a powerful, democratic union that champions quality community services and empowers the people who provide them.

## OUR PURPOSE

It is the purpose of Local 521, Service Employees International Union, to improve the hours, wages, working conditions and general lives of its members. In order to do that, we must contribute in every way possible to the rejuvenation of the labor movement in the United States. To that purpose, we will:

- 1 *Actively and vigorously organize unorganized workers;*
- 2 *Empower our members to improve their quality of working life;*
- 3 *Work to bring vigorous, accountable leadership to all levels of organized labor; leaders who support and encourage both external and internal organizing and who reflect the diversity of our membership; and*
- 4 *Fight for social justice through community alliances, electoral politics and by promoting solidarity among all working people.*

## ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The County of Kern Chapter, hereinafter referred to as Chapter within this document, is a recognized Chapter of Service Workers Local 521, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and complies with all Bylaws of Local 521 and SEIU International and hereby incorporates such Bylaws as its own.

## **ARTICLE 2 - JURISDICTION**

The jurisdiction of the Chapter shall be all members employed by the County of Kern.

## **ARTICLE 3 - OBJECTIVES**

### **Section 1 - Objectives of the Chapter**

The objectives of this Chapter shall be to:

- Improve the wages, hours and working conditions of its members;
- Promote active participation of its members in the decision-making processes of the employer to bring quality public services to the community;
- Promote the economic, political, intellectual and social welfare of its members and the community within which we live; and
- Represent the members in disputes with the employer and in collective bargaining.

### **Section 2 - Objective of the Bylaws**

The objective of these Bylaws is to provide rules of acceptable self-government, not in conflict with the SEIU 521 and/or the SEIU International.

## **ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1 - Eligibility**

Any person employed within the jurisdiction of this Chapter shall be eligible for membership in accordance with these Bylaws.

### **Section 2 - Good Standing**

A member who has paid the full dues obligation of the local shall be determined to be in good standing with the Local Union.

### **Section 3 - No Discrimination**

There shall be no discrimination against any member, or applicant for membership, for reason of race, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, disabilities, creed, religion, national origin, political opinion, first language spoken or affiliations.

### **Section 4 – Retirees**

Members retiring from the Kern County chapter are urged to join SEIU Local 521 as a retired member and participate in the Retired Members Committee.

## **ARTICLE 5 - STRUCTURE**

### **Section 1 - Chapter**

The structure of this Chapter shall consist of the General Membership, Shop Stewards, Chief Stewards and the Chapter Board (which will consist of five (5) District Representatives (one from each Supervisorial District), a Bargaining Unit Representatives (one (1) from each bargaining unit), COPE Representative, Secretary/Treasurer, Vice President and President (Appendix E - Organizational Chart)

### **Section 2 - General Membership**

The General Membership is the body authorized to take lawful action, consistent with these Bylaws, and to act on behalf of the Chapter.

### **Section 3 – Shop Stewards**

Shop Stewards will be the first line of representation at a worksite location.

### **Section 4 – Chief Stewards**

The Chief Steward shall be a resource to all Stewards, coordinate the work of the Stewards, including making decisions in situations where a worker wishes to have a Steward who is not in their representational area; ensure that representation areas are designated and periodically reviewed in order to maintain the broadest possible representation; shall make notice to members to fill vacant Steward positions; shall report on his/her activity at all meetings; shall participate in formal grievance steps. The Chief Steward may call special meetings of all Stewards with adequate notice.

### **Section 5 – District Representatives**

There shall be five (5) elected District representatives, one (1) from each Supervisorial District where the worksite is located. Each District Representative shall work within their represented district, and shall represent his/her district on the Chapter Board.

### **Section 6 – Bargaining Unit Representatives**

There shall be one (1) elected representative from each of the bargaining units and each representative shall represent his/her bargaining unit on the Chapter Board.

### **Section 7 – Committee on Political Action (COPE)**

The COPE Chair shall be a member of the Chapter Board.

### **Section 8 - Chapter Board**

The Chapter Board shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, five (5) District Representatives, one (1) Representative from each Bargaining Unit, and the COPE Representative.

## ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS

### Section 1

The Chapter Board shall meet at least one time each month to be determined and announced. The General Membership shall be notified of cancellations no less than seven (7) days prior to the scheduled meeting. Minutes of regular and special meetings shall be recorded and presented in writing for approval by the Board at the next regular meeting.

**Section 2a – Quorum:** Two-thirds (2/3) of the Chapter Board shall comprise a quorum.

**Section 2b – Agenda:** The President, in cooperation with appropriate staff, shall cause an agenda to be presented for each regular scheduled meeting of the Chapter Board seven (7) days prior to that meeting. A copy of the agenda shall be posted at the SEIU 521 Union Office and website on the Friday before the meeting.

Any member may submit an item to the President to be placed on the agenda at least 10 days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

### Section 3 - Absences

Members of the Chapter Board who cannot attend a meeting shall notify the President and/or the local office that they will be absent. In the event any Officer fails to attend three Chapter Board meetings, without cause or proper notification, within a 12 month time period the officer's seat shall be declared vacant.

### Section 4 - Special Meetings

The President shall be able to call special Chapter Board meetings without prior written notice in such cases where two-thirds (2/3) of the Chapter Board deems the time factor is of urgency and the issue demands immediate attention, or when s/he feels a strategic position of the Chapter would be lost by hesitation, which could included but not limited to:

- ***Strike sanction vote (?)***
- ***Notification of strike (?)***
- ***Contract ratification (?) and***
- other matters of urgency.

The Chapter Board shall make a reasonable effort to contact all members. Minutes shall be presented at the following Chapter meeting.

### Section 5 - Regular Order of Business

The Regular Order of Business for Chapter Board meetings, subject to waiver upon proper motion, shall be:

1. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum
2. Unscheduled Presentations (total of agenda time each speaker limited to two (2) minutes)
3. Review of Minutes
4. Ratification of Agenda

5. Officer Reports
6. Workplace/Member Reports
7. Local Union Executive Board Delegate Report
8. Committee Reports
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Good and Welfare
12. Adjournment

### **Section 6 - Parliamentarian**

If the officers of the Chapter Board wish to have a parliamentarian to maintain parliamentary procedure in meetings, the President with the ratification of the Board shall appoint a member in good standing.

### **Section 7- Sergeant-at-Arms**

If the officers of the Chapter Board wish to have a Sergeant-at-Arms to maintain order the President with the ratification of the Board shall appoint a member in good standing.

## **ARTICLE 7 – OFFICERS**

The Officers of this Chapter shall be a President, a Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, COPE representative, one (1) representative from each Bargaining Unit, and five (5) District Representatives.

### **Section 1 - Duties of the President**

The President shall be the presiding officer of the Chapter and shall preside over all General Membership and special meetings; shall have general supervision of the work of the Chapter, in accordance with the Bylaws, and in coordination with Local Union staff; shall have authority to act in all matters not otherwise delegated. The President shall give a full report of her/his activities at each General Membership meeting.

### **Section 2 - Duties of the Vice President**

The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence and shall assist the President in the operation of all the affairs of the Chapter; shall succeed the President if the President is unable to complete the term. The Vice President shall monitor and attempt to insure attendance by the general membership.

### **Section 3 - Duties of the Secretary/Treasurer**

The Secretary/Treasurer shall, in coordination with Local Union staff, keep a correct and accurate record of proceedings of all regular and special General Membership meetings for the Chapter, and shall keep records of the Chapter's savings account. Records shall include an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements of the monies in the account. Funds may be drawn only when an expenditure is authorized by the Chapter with approval of the Local 521, in accordance with Local 521 policies and procedures.

### **Section 4 – Duties of the COPE Representative**

To inform Chapter Board membership of the activities of the Chapter, Local, State and National COPE. Shall work with staff and leaders to increase COPE donations and activities. Shall chair endorsement interviews.

**Section 5 – Duties of District and Bargaining Unit Representatives**

The District and Bargaining Unit Representatives shall be equal in voting rights. In order to maintain contact with the membership each District and Bargaining Unit Representative will participate in at least one of the standing committees (see Article 15) and monthly shop steward meetings. Each bargaining unit shall have representatives in accordance with the contract. No more than two representatives shall be from the same department.

**Section 5a - District Representatives** shall hold a quarterly meeting within their Districts to ensure regional issues are addressed.

**Section 5b - Bargaining Unit Representatives** shall hold quarterly meeting within individual bargaining units to ensure occupational issues are addressed

**ARTICLE 8 - Term of Office**

**Officers:**

Initial term of office shall stagger: President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer and COPE representative will draw a straw indicating a 2-year or 3-year term, two (2) for a 2-year term and two (2) for a 3-year term. District and Bargaining Unit Representatives will draw a string indicating a 2-year or 3-year term, six (6) for a 2-year term and five (5) for a 3- year term. Thereafter, all terms will be for 3 years. No member of the Election Committee may be a candidate for office, or a member of the Chapter Board.

**Section 1 - Election Committee**

At least forty-five (45) but no more than sixty (60) days prior to the Chapter Officers term expiration the Chapter Officers shall solicit nominations from the membership to serve on an Election Committee. A Committee of at least five (5) members and no more than nine (9) members shall be chosen by the Chapter Officers at the regular monthly meeting.

The duties of the Election Committee shall be to:

- a. Conduct the affairs of the elections;
- b. Act as judge in all matters arising from the election procedures;
- c. Validate the qualifications of the nominees
- d. Be responsible for the tabulation of the results of the election;
- e. Certify the results of the election;

**Section 2 - Nomination**

Nominations for Officers shall be made 60 days prior to the expiration of terms. A general membership meeting shall be held 60 days prior to the expiration of term to take nominations from the floor. At least 30 days' notice shall be given to the membership prior to the nomination meeting. Nominations shall be made at the nomination meeting from the floor, or by petition signed by at least five members in good standing.

### **Section 3 - Eligibility**

No member shall be a candidate for more than one Officer Position at a time. To be eligible for nomination and serve as an elected Officer, the person must have been a member in continuous good standing in the Chapter for at least six months immediately preceding the nomination.

### **Section 4 - Election**

Voting shall be a fair and secret system conducted at designated polling locations.

### **Section 5 – Absentee/Proxy**

Absentee, proxy and write-in votes shall not be valid for any purpose. After filling out the ballot, the member shall place the completed ballot into the ballot box.

### **Section 6 - Declaration of Election**

The candidate receiving a plurality of the votes cast for that office shall be declared elected.

### **Section 7 - Fair Election**

Adequate safeguards to ensure a fair election shall be provided, including the right of any candidate to have an observer at the counting of ballots. No Chapter or Local Union funds, resources, or mailing lists will be used to assist any member's candidacy.

### **Section 8 - Vacated Offices**

Vacancies on the Board, (with the exception of office of President, which is governed by Article 7, Section 2 of the Bylaws) may be filled by a majority vote of the Chapter Board, whether or not less than a quorum, or by a sole remaining Officer. Said vacancies shall then be filled by nomination and a vote of the membership at the next regularly scheduled election.

## **ARTICLE 9 - RECALL**

### **Section 1 - Notification**

To remove a Chapter Officer, District Representative, Bargaining Unit Representative, Shop Steward or member, a written petition consisting of the allegations along with signatures from 20% of the general members within their representational area from which elected, shall be presented to the Union staff for verification of signatures. A Chapter Officer or member would require a petition consisting of 20% of the Chapter membership. Upon verification of signatures Union staff will notify the General Membership of the need to convene a recall meeting. Within 30 days of the date of the boards' notification the general membership will be notified of the date, time, and place.

### **Section 2 - Exclusive Business**

No business other than the recall shall be conducted at this meeting. No action can be taken at the Recall Meeting if a quorum of the Chapter Board is not present. The recall vote shall be by secret ballot and shall require a two-thirds majority of those voting members in good standing present at the meeting, to remove the elected official from office.

### **Section 2.5 – Grounds for Misconduct**

Grounds for recall shall be based on the SEIU International Article 17 of the Constitutional bylaws.

### **Section 3 - Recall Petition**

The petition must be headed "Recall Petition" and must specify the person to be recalled and the allegations on each page.

### **Section 4- Sequence of events**

At the meeting the author(s) of the petition calling for recall of the officer shall show cause as to allegations. The Officer being recalled shall then have the opportunity to present his/her rebuttal to the allegations. Question and answer forum will follow. Presiding officer will call for a vote of the members present.

### **Section 5- Resolution of Recall**

A 2/3 majority is necessary to remove the officer from office without further recourse.

### **Section 6-Removal of Officer**

The Presiding Officer shall notify the Union Office in writing the outcome of the recall petition vote within 2 business days. This written notification shall be provided to the individual and the general membership. The Regional Director will also be notified to publish the results of the meeting. If applicable a special election will be held in accordance with Article 8

## **ARTICLE 10 – CHIEF AND SHOP STEWARDS**

### **Section 1 - Representation Areas**

Representation areas can generally be defined by physical boundaries such as a floor, branch, section, building, interest, division or common work area. Members are not restricted to utilize their area Stewards for representation. Steward Representation Areas shall be reviewed periodically and may be modified by the members in the area, with the process described in this section, to ensure the broadest possible representation.

### **Section 2a- Nomination and Election of Chief Stewards**

The Chief Steward shall be elected by the Stewards within the area of responsibility (ie: Department or geographical area). The Chief Steward shall serve at the pleasure of the stewards within their area of responsibility; however, must stand for reelection at least every year.

### **Section 2b - Nomination and Election of Shop Stewards**

Stewards shall be nominated and elected by the members in each Steward's representation area. The number of Stewards will be defined by the current MOU. Steward elections in the representation area are defined in Section 1-Representation Areas, by a majority vote by members in the representation area, who are in good standing, either by ballot or by petition. If uncontested then the person assumes the position. An election will be held by a secured ballot only if contested. A Steward must stand for re-election at least once every three (3) years.

Questions of procedures in Steward's elections shall be referred to the Chief Steward.

### **Section 3a - Duties of the Chief Steward**

In cooperation with the Local Union Staff, the Chief Steward shall be a resource to all Stewards; coordinate the work of the Stewards, including making decisions in situations where a worker wishes to have a Steward who is not in their representational area; ensure that representation areas are designated and periodically reviewed in order to maintain the broadest possible representation; shall call for elections to fill vacant Steward positions and shall conduct such elections; shall be a member of the Chapter Board and shall report on his/her activity at all Steward and Chapter Board meetings and General Membership Meetings; shall participate in formal grievance steps as described in the contract. The Chief Steward may call special meetings of all Stewards with adequate notice.

### **Section 3b-Duties of the Shop Stewards**

The basic duties of the shop steward flow from the responsibilities conferred upon stewardship. As a condition of stewardship, all shop stewards shall publicly commit to perform the roles and the duties associated with those roles in their representation area. The steward, upon election to the representation area, shall sign a "Steward Commitment Promise" and this Promise shall serve as his/her oath of office and provide the basis for which the steward shall be judged to be a steward and member in good standing by the Chapter, local, and Union. This Promise shall be provided to the Chief Steward under which the shop steward will serve to acknowledge his/her understanding of the role, rights, and responsibilities of the shop steward position. The Chief Steward will be responsible for providing a copy of this Promise to the newly elected Shop Steward for reference and as a reminder of the oath the Steward has taken to serve the Union members.

### **The Roles of Shop Stewards are:**

- a) Worksite organizer and catalyst for co-workers coming together to solve jobsite issues and disputes. The duties shall include:
  - 1) Identification and tracking of management/labor issues of concern to co-workers.
  - 2) Hold meetings with co-workers and/or management to define worksite problems, help build worker consensus on the problems, and help find workable and enforceable legal solutions to those problems.
  - 3) Be the first line of contact with the workers and with management in the process of worker and worksite problem-solving
  - 4) Seek, facilitate, and/or provide human and technical resources from the Union chapter and local supporting worker problem resolution at the jobsite.
- b) Worker representative in grievances and disciplinary procedures involving the Steward's employer. The duties shall include:
  - 1) Represent workers in their workplace and representation area in matters of discipline, workplace discrimination, payroll or compensation guarantees protected under the collective bargaining agreement(s) with the employer, unfair labor practices, or any other matter involving the employee and their labor rights provided under local, state and federal labor laws and/or regulations.
  - 2) Represent employees in the same matters as listed in b. (1) at any other worksite or representation area of the Steward's employer where that Steward is specifically requested to represent.
- c) Communicator of union, local, and chapter-wide issues and policies to the membership for the purpose of member understanding and education. Duties shall include:
  - 1) Conducting worksite meetings to convey union news, union/local/chapter policy

changes, labor legislation or political issues, employer worksite policy changes, contract negotiations, and any chapter business or events.

- 2) Conduct worksite meetings for the purpose of discussing labor/management conferences.
  - 3) Provide information on union services, benefits, educational conferences, and the collective bargaining agreement(s) the chapter has with the employer. The steward shall also provide members and represented employees with all available copies of legal documents or relevant labor laws and regulations that govern their rights in the workplace.
  - 4) Answer questions or make referrals to the appropriate Chapter staff or resource regarding any aspect of chapter, local and union membership.
- d) Representative to the Chapter Board meetings and functions.  
Duties shall include:
- 1) Attend monthly steward meetings and training.
  - 2) Attend Chapter Board meetings.
  - 3) Attend all meetings required under the bylaws.

The Shop Steward should attend meetings and functions in sufficient frequency and in a manner that he/she effectively represents the area for which he/she has been sworn as a Shop Steward.

#### **Section 4 - Ability to Hold Other Offices**

Stewards may also hold elected offices in the Chapter.

#### **Section 5 - Stewards' Rights and Responsibilities**

The Steward has no greater basic rights than any other union member. When dealing with matters between employee and management, the steward is managements equal and cannot be held to a higher standard than their fellow employee.

#### **Section 6-Steward's Tools and Resources**

The shop steward, upon election to the representation area, shall be provided with a package of materials and basic tools necessary to the performance of a steward's duties. These tools will include but are not limited to:

- 1) A Steward's manual containing the current collective bargaining agreement the Chapter and Local Bylaws, and basic labor laws including but not limited to the Miliias-Meyers-Brown Act, the Family Medical Leave Act etc.
- 2) A copy of the "Steward Commitment" signed by the steward and provided by the Chief Steward of the representation area.
- 3) New steward training that provides certification as a "Certified Shop Steward" through the union's local training program.
- 4) Any other tools, references and training materials deemed necessary by the Stewards Council to the adequate performance of a stewards duties in the representation area.

#### **Section 7 - Replacing a Steward**

Any Steward may be replaced at any time by the simple majority vote or petition of members, in good standing, in the Steward's Representation Area. The Chapter Board has no

jurisdiction to replace a Steward, but shall have the Chapter President notify the members in the appropriate Representation Area if the Steward has missed three consecutive Chapter Board meetings without a bonafide reason.

### **Section 8 - Resources**

All Stewards shall have copies of the Chapter, Local, and International Bylaws and all necessary working agreements and rules pertinent to their representation units available at all times.

### **Section 9 - Assistant Stewards**

The Assistant Steward shall fill all functions of the Steward in the Steward's absence, including attending meetings of the Chapter Board and voting on all issues before the Council. The Assistant Steward can also help the Steward when the Steward requires it.

### **Section 10-Steward Council**

The Chief Steward or Chapter President may establish a council of Stewards to meet, share, train and strategize about the handling of disciplinary actions and other functions of a unit Steward. This Council is comprised of all elected and alternate stewards. This Council shall meet at least every quarter.

## **ARTICLE 11 - COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

### **Section 1 - Negotiating Committee**

Elected representatives of the bargaining units shall be the Negotiating Committee for all negotiations with the County, for their represented bargaining unit, and shall have all powers within all applicable laws, subjected to final ratification or rejection by the General Membership, to negotiate agreements with the County.

### **Section 2 – Structure of the Negotiating Committee**

The Negotiating Committee shall consist of two (2) representatives from each bargaining unit. No more than one negotiator per bargaining unit may be elected from any department or major division of any agency. If no representative is elected or runs for a specific bargaining unit, then the Chapter Board may appoint a representative within that bargaining unit.

### **Section 3 - Eligibility and Election**

A person shall be eligible for nomination and to serve as an elected negotiator who has been a member in good standing in the Chapter.

### **Section 4 - Nomination**

Nominations for the negotiating committee shall be made in accordance with these Bylaws in Article 8, Section1. Six (6) months prior to the termination of current MOU, a Notice to the General Membership regarding nominations will be made. The nomination period will be for a minimum of 30 days. To have his/her name placed on the ballot, a nominee must submit to the local office a signed statement of consent to serve for the position no later than 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the nomination period.

### **Section 5 – Close of Nominations**

Ten (10) days after close of nominations, the elections committee will hold a candidates' forum to be developed by the elections committee.

### **Section 6 - Voting**

Ten (10) days after the candidates' forum, the election will be held. Voting shall take place at work site pursuant to procedures recommended by the elections committee and adopted by the general membership. All ballots shall be retained in accordance with Local Union policies and applicable law. Write-in, proxy and absentee votes shall not be valid.

### **Section 7 – Declaration of Election**

The candidate(s) receiving a plurality of the votes for that bargaining unit shall be declared elected by the elections committee.

### **Section 8 – Fair Election**

Adequate safeguards to insure a fair election shall be provided including the right of any candidate to have an observer at the counting of ballots. No Local Union, chapter funds, or resources will be used to assist any member's candidacy.

### **Section 9 – Proposals**

The negotiating committee shall survey the members before entering into general negotiations; shall prepare opening proposals; and shall present the proposal to the members at a General Membership meeting. The proposal must be approved by the majority vote of the membership attending the meeting.

### **Section 10 – Strike Sanction Vote**

A strike sanction vote may be authorized by majority vote of the General Membership present at a special meeting expressly called for that purpose.

### **Section 11 – Ratification and Strike Votes**

Votes to ratify a tentative agreement or to call a strike must be by majority vote, by secret ballot of the General Membership in good standing who are present at a special meeting expressly called for that purpose.

## **ARTICLE 12 - INVALIDATION AND REVISIONS**

If any section of these Bylaws is judged invalid for any reason, including conflicts with the International Constitution and Bylaws and the Bylaws of Local 521, such section shall be inoperative but all other sections shall continue in full force and effect. In the event of invalidation of any section of these Bylaws, the Bylaws Committee shall meet to revise that section to bring it into conformance with the Local and International Bylaws. The General Membership shall vote on such revisions at its next scheduled meeting, or a special meeting may be called with at least ten (10) days' notice. All votes to revise these Bylaws shall be by two-thirds (2/3) of those attending the meeting.

## **ARTICLE 13 - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Where not in conflict with these Bylaws, the parliamentary authority for all meetings of this Chapter shall be Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

## **ARTICLE 14 - STANDING COMMITTEES**

Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall be nominated by the committee and confirmed by the Chapter Board. Committee members may be nominated, appointed or may be volunteers.

### **Section 1 - Bylaws Committee**

In accordance with Article 12 of these Bylaws, the Bylaws Committee shall be convened as necessary to review the Bylaws and shall draw up and report proposed amendments to the Chapter Council and the General Membership.

### **Section 2 - Organizing/Negotiations Support Committee**

The Organizing Committee shall be responsible for keeping communication lines open between the members and for recruitment of new members. During contract negotiations, the Organizing Committee takes up the role of Negotiations Support Committee to aid and support the Negotiating Committee in communication with the membership.

### **Section 3 - Civil & Human Rights Committee**

The Civil & Human Rights Committee shall work with the Chapter Council and the Local Union to further the issues of civil and human rights for the Chapter membership, and anywhere in which such rights are at issue. The Civil & Human Rights Committee shall participate in, and where possible, assist the Executive Board in the planning of Local wide educational programs and coordination of events surrounding such issues.

### **Section 4 - Election Committee**

The Election Committee is responsible for the efficient and democratic procedures of internal pursuant to Article 9 of these Bylaws.

### **Section 5 - Safety Committee**

The Safety Committee shall be responsible for enforcement of applicable laws, rules, regulations and agreements affecting members' on-the-job health and safety. The Safety Committee shall recommend to the Negotiating Committee contract changes which will further protect members. Members of the Safety Committee shall participate in, and where possible, assist the Executive Board in the planning of Local wide safety meetings and workshops.

### **Section 6 - Training Committee**

The Training Committee shall work with the Chapter Council to determine the need for training for members, stewards and/or Officers. The Training Committee shall participate in, and where possible, assist the Executive Board in the planning of Local wide training programs, including the Leadership Convention and regional steward and leadership workshops.

**Section 7 - Committee on Political Education (COPE)**

The COPE Committee shall be responsible to work in coordination with the Executive Board and the Local wide COPE Committee to further the Locals political program, within the Chapter. The Chapter COPE Committee shall also be responsible for recruitment of and interviewing and endorsement of candidates for the Kern County Board of Supervisors and any other local elected offices, and other measures or issues as needed.

**Section 8 – Contract Action Team/Member Activists****Section 9 - Special Committees**

A Special Committee is a committee appointed by the Chapter Chairperson to work on a specific issue or task. Such appointments shall be approved pursuant to Article 7 of these Bylaws.

## APPENDIX A

# A SHORT COURSE IN PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

### *Using Robert's Rules of Order*

#### **The Agenda**

After the meeting is called to order, the first thing to do is to adopt an Agenda or Order of Business. This will limit the meeting to taking up only the points on the Agenda. "Beefs" are often taken up under Good and Welfare or Welfare of the Union. If you've forgotten anything, take it up there, too.

#### **Motions**

Business is conducted at a meeting by using Motions. A Motion is made from the floor, seconded and then debated. In debating, or speaking on a motion, no member should be allowed to speak twice before everyone who wants to talk has spoken once. Speaking on a motion is called taking the floor.

#### **Recognition**

In order to make a motion, a member should rise, face the Chairperson, and signal or call for attention by saying "Brother/Sister Chair." When you make a motion, be very clear on what you are saying. If there is confusion, ask the Chairperson to help you straighten it out. That's part of his/her job.

#### **Seconding**

Motions must be seconded before they can be acted on. Once a motion has been made and seconded, it must be disposed of, either by being defeated, passed, tabled, or placed in committee.

#### **Amendments**

After a motion has been made and seconded, it is on the floor. Only then can an amendment be made. The object of an amendment is to change the original motion without destroying the sense of it. For example, if there was a motion on the floor to hold a picnic, it could be amended to add a specific date or place, but it could not be amended to change the event from a picnic to a bowling tournament. Amendments generally take the form of inserting or adding words to the motion, striking out words or substituting words or sentences. The Chairperson is obliged to rule out of order any proposed amendment which would do more than the above, and change the sense of the motion entirely. Amendments to motions can be debated. After debate, the amendment is first voted upon, and then the motion itself is voted upon.

#### **Renew a Motion**

A rejected motion cannot be renewed at the same session. The same maker can renew it at a future session.

## **Voting**

The Chairperson cannot vote unless there is a tie vote and the Chairperson wishes to break the tie. Voting is normally by voice. If the result is not clear, the Chairperson should ask for a hand or standing vote, called a division of the house. If the Chairperson doesn't make such a call, a voting member has the right to demand it.

## **Deferring Action**

Sometimes it is best to wait until another meeting to act on a motion. There are several ways to do this, but the easiest way is to table the motion. To do this, make a motion to table the question. After someone seconds the motion, the vote is taken. There is no debate on a motion to table. A simple majority carries the motion. Motions that have been tabled are taken up by a motion to remove from the table. A second is required, no debate permitted, and a simple majority carries the motion.

## **Place in Committee**

If you want to let a few members handle a certain matter instead of tying up the whole meeting, then this is done by placing the question in a committee by a motion to refer to committee. If there is no committee, then the Chairperson can set one up after the motion to refer is passed.

## **Appeals to Overrule the Chairperson**

The Chairperson of the meeting has certain rights. They do not include "railroading" things through. A decision of the Chairperson can always be changed by appealing the decision of the Chair. When a member rises to appeal a decision of the Chair, he/she says, "I appeal the decision of the Chair." After the appeal is seconded, the Chairperson steps down. Without further debate, the acting Chairperson puts the issue up for vote by saying, "Shall the Chair be sustained?" The Chairperson is supposed to be the "servant of the assembly" and his/her job is to help get the work done. The Chairperson should not dominate the meeting by doing all the talking. The Chairperson cannot authorize anyone to act in his/her place if absent from the meeting. That is in the Bylaws. In the absence of applicable Bylaws, the members present elect a Chairperson for that meeting.

## **The Question of Privilege**

In questions of privilege, the only privilege involved is that of getting the attention of the Chairperson at once on a point of inquiry, point of procedure, point of order or point of personal privilege. When raising a question of privilege, you do not wait for recognition from the Chairperson; you interrupt by stating, "Brother/Sister Chairperson, point of order (or inquiry, procedure or personal privilege)."

Raise a point of inquiry to ask a question vital to your understanding of the question being discussed.

Raise a point of procedure if you feel the Chairperson is acting contrary to regular procedure.

Raise a point of order if you feel some member is acting contrary to regular procedure; you ask the Chairperson to take some action.

Raise a point of personal privilege if a member impugns your intelligence or character, or makes an untrue or unfair remark about you. The Chairperson states, "The point is well taken," and takes action on it, if he/she agrees with you. If the Chairperson disagrees, he/she must give a reason and you may then appeal. However, the membership, unlike the Chairperson, is not obliged to recognize an appeal on a question of privilege. Thus, a chronic interrupter, abusing the privilege, can be silenced.

### **Committee of the Whole**

In extreme cases, when the Chairperson is ruling with an iron hand, and has effectively straight-jacketed the members, despite all the other remedies available through use of Robert's Rules, it is possible for two-thirds of the members to call a committee of the whole. When you call for a committee of the whole, the union meeting is interrupted, and all members present become members of a committee. As such, they must elect a new Chairperson, as the regular Chairperson is obliged to step down. They are then free to discuss, as you would converse at the dinner table, without Robert's Rules of Order. This may allow the members to get things back on track. Motions must be made and passed, but finally, a motion must be passed to reconvene the union meeting, and the regular Chairperson resumes his/her post. All motions passed in committee of the whole must at that point be voted on by the members now assembled again as the union meeting.

### **The Minutes**

The minutes of a meeting are a record of what happened at a meeting. Minutes are approved at the next meeting. This way, if there are mistakes, they can be corrected. That's how the rank and file keeps the record straight. Minutes must record all motions.

### **Officers' Reports**

Rank and file union members should be alert during the Officers' Reports. These reports are an accounting to the membership of how their elected officials have conducted union affairs since the last meeting. Following the report, a motion must be offered from the floor to accept or reject the report. If you disagree with one or more points, you can make a motion to have each point considered separately. This is known as considering the points seriatim (in series). If the membership adopts your motion, you will be able to argue for rejection of the points with which you disagree.

## APPENDIX B

# RUNNING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Meetings, meetings, meetings! We seem to do a lot of "meeting" around here, but that's the way Local 521 conducts business. That's our way of ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to be involved in our planning and decision-making process. There are many different kinds of meetings, but generally they all have several key points in common. Here are some guidelines and tips to help you run an effective meeting:

**Be Prepared!** *Have a written agenda.* All materials needed should be ready and distributed to the members before the start of the meeting. Know your topics and materials, know both sides of the issue, and know what you want to have accomplished by the end of the meeting: action, feedback, getting out information.

**Start the meeting on time.** Members are more likely to come to your meetings—and *come on time*—if they know you are going to start at the announced time.

**Vote to accept the agenda.** Give people a chance at the beginning of the meeting to add topics to the agenda—then set it.

**Stick to the agenda!** Keep people focused—don't allow them to "get off track."

**Have written reports whenever possible/practical.** Ask people to look them over at the beginning of the meeting. All written reports should contain either a "recommended action" or be designated as "information only" so members know what is being asked of them. *Don't read written reports aloud!* The person presenting a written report should simply summarize important points and leave time for questions. Oral reports should be organized and concise.

**Use parliamentary procedure.** Motions should be stated and seconded *before* debate begins.

**7. Set a time limit for speakers.** Before debate starts, set a one or two minute time limit on statements.

Speakers must state whether they are "for" or "against" the motion, or identify that they have a "question on the motion."

Once around the table for debate. No one should be allowed to speak a second time until everyone has had the opportunity to speak.

Stay on the subject and don't drag out debate when the outcome is obvious. A member may "call the question" and the debate will end, or the Chair can say, "Unless there's dissent, let's call the question."

**Follow up on actions and commitments made during the meeting.** Follow up on issues or actions you have agreed to follow up on. Be prepared to report back at the next meeting. If other members have agreed to work on an issue or committee, remind them before the next meeting so they will have time to accomplish the task. Make it clear that they will need to report back to the membership at the next meeting.

## **APPENDIX C**

# **MINUTES: A GUIDE FOR RECORDING SECRETARIES PURPOSE**

Minutes are a record of the actions taken at a meeting. They should be sufficiently complete so you can look back and see what you did and when you did it.

### **SOME RULES TO REMEMBER**

Robert's Rules of Order discusses the content of minutes in some detail. However, to summarize some specific points, the following may be helpful:

- A. Minutes must contain all motions and any action taken on them.
- B. The Secretary should insist that all motions be made in an intelligible way. However, to clarify a motion in the written minutes, if necessary, a brief summary of the discussion may be included.
- C. Reports of committees should be incorporated into the minutes. However, the report should be brief and concise. The minutes should then reflect any motions to accept/reject the report and the action taken.
- D. For issues or questions in which a lengthy discussion has been held, a general summary is appropriate.
- E. A summary of a discussion should not attribute any parts of the discussion to any specific person(s) unless the contributor has specifically asked to be "on the record."
- F. When recording the action taken on a motion, it is only necessary to record whether the motion passed or failed. You can do this by indicating M/S/C (moved, seconded, carried) or M/S/F (moved, seconded, failed). However, a member may request that the dissenting or abstaining votes be recorded; therefore, the action may read: M/S/C with one abstention.
- G. If there are corrections to the minutes during the process of accepting them, then any prior drafts should be destroyed.

### **IN GENERAL**

It is the responsibility of the Recording Secretary to ensure proper form and content for the minutes. However, it is the responsibility of the members to review the minutes and make a motion to have them corrected if they disagree with what is presented to them.

## APPENDIX D

# CHECK LIST FOR PLANNING A MEETING

### 12 COMMON SENSE TIPS

- Set a topic/agenda
- Make a list of the people you need to invite
- Pick a convenient date and time: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_
- Pick an accessible location: Place: \_\_\_\_\_
- Reserve your location in advance
- Pass out notices in advance of the meeting (your Bylaws!)
- Post a notice of the meeting on the bulletin board
- If people need to review any information about the meeting topic, show it to them in advance.
- Remind people in person on the day of the meeting
- Get to the meeting on time (or early) to welcome people as they arrive
- Be sure to use a sign-in sheet
- Ask co-workers to help

## APPENDIX E

