

Monthly Meeting Summary by Michael R. Dunleavy - January 8th, 2010

Tonight I would like to address a timely topic “Union Dues”.

The Local Union portion of your dues has not been raised for over thirty years. The I.O. portion, however, has increased almost yearly. It is recommended by the Local Union that you pay your yearly dues in full, if possible, before the January Union Meeting.

The reason that we suggest that you pay your dues in full is twofold:

First, the local union’s obligations are front loaded and the largest bills must be paid in the first quarter of the year. Items such as the per capita payment to the I.O., insurance payment, and tax bill. If everyone in the local were to pay their dues quarterly, we would not generate enough money in the first quarter to cover these payments and, therefore, would have to raise dues, which we are committed to not doing.

Second, the majority of members whose dues lapse simply forget to pay them. The local union has no latitude if your dues are not paid. The I.O. Constitution mandates that if you are between three months and up to six months late that you must pay a reinstatement fee and you lose all union benefits for a minimum of six months. Additionally, the union is not required to accept your dues and you can remain suspended. If you are six months late the constitution mandates that you be dropped from membership in the I.B.E.W. and can only return as a new member if accepted. You lose all prior standing and benefits, except vested pension and deferred compensation balance.

The constitution stipulates that no notice be given of an arrearage and that a member must take notice when payments are due themselves. Local No. 5, as a courtesy, sends a registered letter to the address on file with the union to notify a member two weeks before they are to be dropped at the six-month cut-off.

To summarize, if you are able, pay your union dues in full after you have received your vacation check but prior to the first meeting in January. The consequences of forgetting are too great and the local union has no option but to follow the constitution.

The current healthcare legislation does not cover all Americans, it does not mandate that the non-union provide healthcare and it taxes your healthcare. Contact Senator’s Casey and Specter and let them know your concerns with the current version of the bill.

Local 712 and 56 now have the Construction Electrician/Construction Wireman classifications and Small Works Agreements. I have a meeting this week at the International Vice President’s office to discuss the use of these classifications in

our jurisdiction. As you know, we voted in the Construction Electrician/Construction Wireman over three years ago. I expect much more pressure from the International Office mandating their use. I will keep you informed of this issue.

Our work continues to slow. We currently have 90% of our members employed. There are approximately 350 on Book I across the jurisdiction. I encourage you to sign multiple books, maintain a drug free card, maintain as many specialties as possible and take all work offered.

I will conclude by congratulating all of tonight's pin recipients.

Thank you. Good night.