



2019 Civil Service Basic Negotiating Team – North Candidates (vote for up to 2)

(all Basic members can vote for both North and South Candidates)

Name: Carol Sever

Nominated for: Basic / North

Where do you work and what do you do?

Public Health and Human Services in Hibbing. Financial Worker
Senior on the METS team.

How long have you worked for the County? 15 years

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

Currently on the 2017-2019 negotiation team.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I have experienced on the Negotiation Team. I am willing to put in all the hard work and the extra unpaid time that comes with being a member of the team. I have a lot of years left to work and care about our benefits and terms and conditions of our employment.



Name: Dylan Otto

Nominated for: Basic / North

Where do you work and what do you do?

Public Work/Land Survey Division

How long have you worked for the County?

Almost 5 years

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I am a part of the member action team and have been a part of the new employee training.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I would like to be involved in making employment for the county an enjoyable experience, fight for the benefits we deserve and be a voice of my fellow coworkers.



Name: Jared Ecklund

Nominated for: Basic / North

Where do you work and what do you do?

I work on the first floor of the Northland Office Building in the Land Use Division of the Planning and Community Development Department. I work with landowners within the County on the permitting processes that are required to develop their property. Much of the work I do consists of issuing land use (building) permits and working with landowners on the requirements of the Wetland Conservation Act and other local, state, and federal regulations.

How long have you worked for the County?

I have worked with the county for approximately two and a half years.

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I try to be involved with our union as much as I can. I have been a member of the Basic Merit Organizing Committee since the fall of 2018 and I attend as many monthly union meetings as my schedule permits.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I grew up in a union household and understand the importance of being involved in the union. I am also relatively new to the county which gives me a different perspective on some of the issues that face many of the county employees. The workforce within many county departments tends to be aging. Staff turnover will become more common as retirements increase. Turnover due to retirements will likely lead to a younger workforce. I feel that I would be a good negotiating team member because I have somewhat recently gone through the new hire process and understand the concerns that face the new, younger employees as they begin their careers with the county. I also believe that it is important to have a variety of perspectives on the negotiating team so that we can work together toward a common goal of agreeing on a contract that benefits all employees in our bargaining unit.



Name: Krista VanSickel

Nominated for: Basic / North

Where do you work and what do you do?

I work out of the Hibbing Annex for the North Family Maintenance team. I specialize in maintenance on cases that have family's receiving cash and SNAP benefits.

How long have you worked for the County?

I have been with the county for 1 year and 6 months.

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I am a union steward in the Hibbing office, and also a member of the Basic Merit Organizing committee.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I currently serve as the Civil Service Basic representative on the Health Insurance Committee for St Louis County. I have a strong working knowledge of our health plans and the difficulties we are facing with ever increasing healthcare and pharmaceutical costs. I would like to be a part of the negotiating committee to help ensure we keep our health insurance premiums as low as we can, and that we continue to offer an excellent health plan to all of our employees, and to ensure we have a fair contract for everyone.



Civil Service Basic Negotiating Team – South Candidates (vote for up to 3)

(all Basic members can vote for both North and South Candidates)

Name: Ben Hansen

Nominated for: Basic / South

Where do you work and what do you do?

I work as a Principal Appraiser within the Duluth Courthouse office of the County Assessor's Department. I knock on strangers' doors, give them a 20-second spiel, and ask to walk through their homes to figure out what it's worth. So my job requires a decent amount of sales analysis, measuring properties, and interacting with (sometimes not very) happy taxpayers.

How long have you worked for the County?

My first day on the job was June 6, 2013.

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I have been a full share member almost from the very beginning. I have almost always voted for a strike, given the fact that it seems that our more-tenured coworkers no longer care to take an aggressive stand to keep their pay or benefits. Case in point: over the years, our pay rates have continued to fall behind the rising cost of living--I would fight for our pay to be indexed to inflation instead of crystal-balling a few years' worth of pay into a union contract. (And don't even get me started on how our Sick Leave cap has been obliterated in recent years.)

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

If I'm selected to be on the team, I have no doubt I'll be one of the more aggressive negotiators--but not out of ignorance. Everything needs to have a firm, factual basis. Furthermore, I have a gift for spotting any gray areas in a contract (there are several in ours) and making sure any ambiguities get eliminated through more clear, strong language. Being proactive about such matters will save us a few headaches and misunderstandings later down the line.



Name: Cynthia Elsafari

Nominated for: Basic / South

Where do you work and what do you do?

I work in the GSC on 6th floor. I'm an IS II in the Financial Assistance Department.

How long have you worked for the County? 7 ½ Years

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I've been a member since I began working for SLC and over the past few years have been involved as a MAT leader, Volunteer, Steward and recruitment.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I feel I would be a good team member because I care about our employees and am not afraid to speak up or debate injustice, and also because I "want" to make a difference and give our employees a voice.



Name: Dave Bednarski

Nominated for: Basic / South

Where do you work and what do you do?

I work at the Duluth Courthouse as an Information Specialist III, performing administrative work for the Auditor's Office.

How long have you worked for the County? 18 years

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I have been a union member for the past 18 years and served on the negotiating team for at least the past four times. I am a member of the Basic/Merit Organizing Committee (BMOC), and also a union steward representing members on grievable matters.



Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I would like to be on the negotiating team because I care strongly about protecting the benefits of current and future members, and that those benefits keep up with the cost of living. I believe in holding firm in representing members at the negotiating table, and also believe in honest, open communication on the status of negotiations as they proceed.

Name: Emily Kram

Nominated for: Basic / South

Where do you work and what do you do?

I work at the Duluth Courthouse as a clerical employee for the Assessor's Department.

How long have you worked for the County?

One year and six months.

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I am a Member Action Team (MAT) leader. In my previous occupation as a journalist, I served as a Union officer (president and then steward) and helped negotiate five contracts.



Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

If chosen to serve on the negotiating team, I would fight for a contract that preserves our current benefits but also keeps the Union moving forward. I've been in difficult negotiations in the past and do not believe in surrendering our hard-won gains. With my background in communications, I feel I could also help to keep Union members informed of and involved in the negotiation process.

Name: George Schick

Nominated for: Basic / South

Where do you work and what do you do?

I work at the Government Service Center in Duluth in the Information Technology Department. I am part of a team that supports our Electronic Content Management systems, primarily OnBase.

How long have you worked for the County?

I have been with the County for four years.

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I have been with the County for four years.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I listen to become well informed so I can make the best decision for all. I will stand by my decision and support those around with their decisions. I believe this is what makes me a good choice for the Negotiating Team.



Name: Matt Farden

Nominated for: Basic / South

Where do you work and what do you do?

I work at the Duluth Courthouse in the Property Management Department as an afternoon shift Janitor.

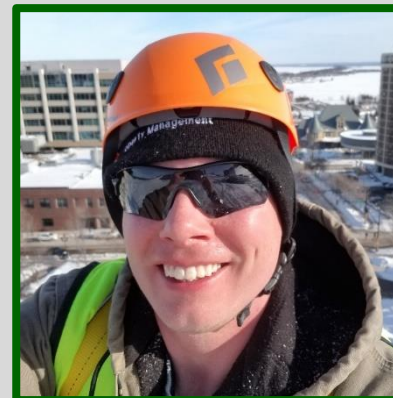
How long have you worked for the County? 13 years

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I have been involved with the union for 12 years and have served on the negotiation team for the last 3 rounds of negotiations. I also serve on the sick leave bank committee and I'm a member of the member action team. In 2012 I addressed the County board about contracting out work done by County Janitors in Hibbing and successfully helped stop them from proceeding with their plans.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I believe I would be a good team member because I'm a Good listener and problem solver. I take a common sense approach to solving issues that come up during negotiations. I do the research needed and familiarize myself with member proposals. I don't believe in giving up benefits we worked hard to get years ago. I believe the County needs to prove the financial need for major givebacks. I am also a long term employee with a retirement date of 2052. So I have an active interest in what happens to our contract long term.



Name: Mona Berg

Nominated for: Basic / South

Where do you work and what do you do?

PHHS-Child Protection Worker

How long have you worked for the County?

Starting My 44th Year

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I was on the last contract negotiating team. It was tough but I learned so much from the team members.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I enjoyed learning about negotiating and working with the team. We ended up with a good 3-year contract. Now that I have that experience, I look forward to making sure we never give back benefits that past employees negotiated and sacrificed for so that we have the contract we have today. I hope we can make it an even better contract for our members for the next 3 years.



VOTE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17th!

Duluth

Government Services Center – 1 st Floor	10:00 – 5:00pm
Richard Hanson Building (Pike Lake)	7:00 – 9:00am
AP Cook Building	8:00 – 9:00am
Pike Lake Land Department	8:30 – 9:00am
Duluth Jail	9:30 – 10:30am
Public Safety Bldg	10:45 – 11:15am
Court House	11:00 – 1:00pm
Mall Auditor’s Office	11:30 – 12:00pm

Virginia

Public Works Garage	7:00 – 9:30am
Northland Office Building – 2 nd floor	10:00 – 12:00pm
Court House - Lower Level Conference room	12:15 – 1:15pm

Hibbing

Hibbing Annex	8:00 – 11:00am
Court House – Room 213	11:30 – 1:30pm

Ely

Government Services Building	8:00 – 12:00pm
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You must be a member in good standing in order to vote. If you are not a member, you can become a member on the day of the vote.