OUR UNION NEEDS YOU!

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This November our statewide union, Local 5000, will elect a new President for the first time in decades. Since our union was founded in 1979, I have had the great honor of being President. Forty years! Even I cannot believe it.

When our union began, it was made up of RNs working for Milwaukee County Hospital. Over the years, we expanded to represent other workers in the County and in other public and private facilities. Almost from day one, the struggle for healthcare workers to unionize has been brutally difficult, because employers use every tactic they have and spend huge sums of money on anti-union consultants to try and stop our members from organizing. Even today, we represent the only unionized workers in the Ascension and Advocate Aurora systems in Wisconsin, and the only Froedtert workers within their Wisconsin Diagnostic Laboratories division.

In addition to the fierce opposition of private employers, politicians have tried to destroy our union. We suffered our worst defeat when Scott Walker succeeded in getting a law passed (still in effect today) making it illegal for public sector workers in Wisconsin to negotiate real contracts. Politicians at local levels also voted to close or privatize services causing the closure of the Milwaukee County acute care hospital in 1995, and the subsequent shift of many mental health, nursing home, and correctional services to private companies. With the shift, the workers often ended up without a union, and patients took a backseat to the private company’s bottom line.

In the 1980s, we were very proud when RNs at the Milwaukee VA voted to join our union. Part of the reason they chose to unionize was the anti-union rules coming from President Reagan. Over the years, presidents came and went, but our union kept standing tall and proud, even with some of the worst attacks in our history taking place today under the Trump administration.

Even with employers and politicians against us, our union has stayed strong and proudly continued to fight for the values we believe in—the right to quality healthcare for all people, and the right for quality working conditions and respect for all healthcare workers. To make these values our lived standard, we need to connect with each and every member. This is not easy to do, but critical for a strong union. I’ve also come to see time and again that we cannot win any battle alone. Our members need each other, but we also need to be part of and work with our community. It is the health of our community that must continue to be at the heart of our work.

As my time as President ends, I am truly optimistic about the future of our union and labor unions in general. Recent polls indicate that public support for unions is now at 62%—the highest in decades—and, it is even higher for the youngest generation of workers.

Times are still difficult because healthcare corporations are becoming bigger and more powerful, and their opposition to the workers’ voice is stronger than ever. These companies put corporate greed over community need—focusing on profits over patients. The fact is, workers and our communities need unions more than ever to stand up for quality care and quality working conditions.

The next WFNHP President and leadership team have much work to do as they fight to build an even stronger, more democratic, more active union able to take on health systems focused on greed, and politicians who have forgotten that healthcare is a right—not a privilege.

As members, you have a critical role. The vote for President is the most important vote a member can cast. What is the candidate’s vision for the future of our union? What will they do to make their vision a reality? How will they strengthen our democracy and member engagement? What role do they see for our union within the community?

So many challenges. So many opportunities. So many questions to be answered.

The future is in your hands. I leave with a heavy heart because I love the union work I do for all of you. I not only built a union with the help of hundreds of amazing union leaders and staff but, as a single mother, the union was family for me and my three children. I also leave with a great sense of hope and optimism knowing that whomever gets elected as the next President will be the right person for these times and will help you to navigate a proud future.

I close by saying thank you to all who have worked so hard and sacrificed so much to make a difference in our members’ lives. The work you do matters—often more than you will ever know. I pledge my support for the new leadership team and staff, and as always, I will only be one phone call, text, or email away.
Members to Vote on Amendments to the Local 5000 Bylaws

Our Union periodically has to make some adjustments (some minor, some major) to improve operations and, in some cases, our democratic process. The following is a summary of the changes to the Local 5000 Bylaws that members will be asked to vote on at the November 1st, 2019 Membership Meeting. In the first column is the change and in the second column the reason for the change. Language to be added is underlined in red, and language to be deleted is strikethrough.

Proposed Changes to the Bylaws:

Article I - Rules of Operation for Chapters

Section 1. Election of Chapter Officers

1. Election of Chapter Officers shall be held by secret mail ballot in March Fall of even numbered years.

2. Prior to nominations, the Chapter Officers shall identify which positions will be elected positions. At a minimum, each Chapter must elect the following: President, Chief Steward and Secretary. Additional elected positions are at the discretion of the Chapter.

5. Elections shall be either by mail or at a general membership meeting.

7. Candidates receiving a majority of votes shall be considered elected and shall assume their duties as soon as the results are verified on January 1 of odd numbered years.

10. The chapter elections shall be overseen by the Local Election Committee in accordance with the Local Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2. Chapters shall have the following minimum requirements:

A. Chapter Executive Board

1. Each Chapter shall have an Executive Board consisting of the Chapter President, Vice President, Chief Steward and Secretary, plus the elected Stewards (and in the case of the VA, the Treasurer).

E. Arbitration Review Committee

1. The Executive Board of each Chapter shall serve as an Arbitration Review Committee to establish a committee and process to review cases that may be referred for arbitration.

3. The purpose of the committee shall be to establish a consistent and uniform mechanism by which cases are reviewed and referred to arbitration. The committee shall follow guidelines as adopted by the Local Board.

4. The committee shall be comprised of at least 5 members appointed by the Chapter Officers.

H. Chapter Meetings

2. A quorum shall consist of 5% plus two (2) Chapter Officers.

Article II - Amendments

Amendments to Bylaws may be proposed by the Executive Board and be submitted to the membership for a vote not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the vote. Adoption shall be by a majority of those voting.

Add, Proviso for VA Chapter which was adopted in March of 2017.

Rationale:

Provides for mail ballot elections & consistent time of year for all elections.

Establishes uniform date of January 1 when Chapter Officers & Stewards take office.

For clarification

For consistency with the Constitution.

Clarifies that the Chapter Executive Board is the Chapter’s Arbitration Review Committee.

To clarify the committee is not appointed.

Establishes amount needed for a quorum at membership meetings.

Provides for mail ballot and majority support.

Added as clarification of the dues arrangement for the VA Chapter.
OFFICIAL NOTICE:
Nomination & Election of Officers/Delegates

Nomination & Election Process
It’s time to nominate and elect the Officers who will lead our union for the next two years; and, the delegates who will represent our union at the 2020 American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Conventions; and, also the delegates who will represent our union at the monthly meetings of the Milwaukee Area Labor Council.

Nomination Procedure
If you have been a member in good standing of Local 5000 for at least three months, you can run for office. You may nominate yourself or other members you believe will be the best team to lead our union for the next two years. To nominate individuals, you must submit their name(s) on the official nomination form on page 5. PLEASE NOTE: There will be no write-in candidates on the final ballot, so only those nominated using the formal nomination process will be considered nominated. Nominations must be received by the union office no later than 5pm on October 4th, 2019.

Nominations will be reviewed by the Election Committee. All approved nominees will be notified and will be required to complete a consent to serve form in order for their name to appear on the ballot.

Only candidates with opposition will appear on the ballot. In the event there is only one candidate nominated for a position, they will be considered “elected” after review by the Election Committee and will take office 1/1/2020. If there is no nomination received for a position, that position will remain vacant and be filled after 1/1/2020 by the Local Executive Board.

Candidates may request from the WFNHP office contact information for the statewide membership so that they may equally and fairly campaign. This request can be made beginning 9/18/19.

Election Information
The constitution requires the election of Local 5000 Officers take place in odd-numbered years during the Fall Membership Meeting.

IN-PERSON VOTING:
You can vote in-person at the Fall Membership Meeting on Friday, November 1st, 2019 between the hours of 5:30-7:30pm at Klemmer’s Banquet Center (Maryland Room), 10401 W. Oklahoma Avenue in West Allis.

OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED
The President, is the most important union role because it is the leader and official spokesperson of the organization. The President is focused on setting policy, and creating vision and direction for our union. The President also runs meetings and is in close consultation with the Executive Director, to make sure members’ needs are being met.

The Executive Vice President’s role is to assist the President.

The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the finances.

The Secretary is responsible for handling minutes and correspondence.

Additionally, (3) At-Large Vice Presidents will be elected, whose duties are assigned by the President or Local Board.
Term of Office: January 1, 2020-December 31, 2021

These seven (7) elected Officers will make up the Executive Board of Local 5000 and be required to meet at least four (4) times each year.

Delegates to be Elected
Our local is entitled to ten (10) delegates to the 2020 American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Convention. The President is an automatic delegate, therefore, nine (9) additional delegates are to be elected. The AFT Convention will be held on July 27-30, 2020 at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas. The number of delegates whose expenses will be fully paid will be determined when we set next year’s budget. Delegates must attend on their own time.

Nominations are also in order for six (6) delegates to the 2020 Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Convention. The President is an automatic delegate, therefore, five (5) additional delegates are to be elected. The Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Convention is tentatively scheduled for the end of September 2020 in Madison, Wisconsin. The number of delegates whose expenses will be fully paid will be determined when we set next year’s budget. Delegates must attend on their own time.

Nominations are also in order for six (6) delegates to the Milwaukee Area Labor Council. The Labor Council meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm at 633 S. Hawley Road, Milwaukee.

Election Results
Reminder, only candidates with opposition will appear on the ballot. Candidates with opposition can have observers both when the absentee ballots are collected and during the in-person voting.

The Election Committee will count all in-person and absentee ballots after the election period closes at 7:30pm. Results of the election will be announced at the end of the meeting. Elected Officers and delegates not in attendance will be notified of the results of the election by phone or email.

Candidates will have 5 days to register any objections. If objections are filed, the Election Committee has 10 days to meet, review, and finalize. If no objections are filed, the election will be considered finalized and elected Officers will take office 1/1/2020.

WFNHP Official Nomination Form

I nominate the following as Local 5000 Officers:

President: ___________________________
Exec. Vice President: ___________________________
Treasurer: ___________________________
Secretary: ___________________________
(3) At-Large Vice Presidents:

I nominate the following as Local 5000 delegates to the 2020 AFT Convention: (9 to be elected)

I nominate the following as Local 5000 delegates to the 2020 State AFL-CIO Convention: (5 to be elected)

I nominate the following as Local 5000 delegates to the Milwaukee Area Labor Council: (6 to be elected)

Signature ___________________________ Date _________

(Only nominations on this official Nomination Form will be accepted. Nominations by phone will not be accepted. You may fax to 414-475-5722, drop off, or mail your form to WFNHP, 9620 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis, WI 53214)

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no write-in candidates on the final ballot. Only those nominated using this official form will be considered nominated.

Nominations are due by 5pm on Friday, October 4, 2019.
Important Nomination/Election Information is Enclosed

Fall Meeting Notice

On Friday, November 1st, 2019, from 5-9pm we will be holding our Annual Fall Membership/Dinner Meeting at Klemmer’s Banquet Center, 10401 W. Oklahoma Ave., in West Allis.

For a $5 registration fee, members will enjoy a delicious family style dinner including beef pot roast, baked chicken, mashed potatoes & gravy, corn, a garden salad, rolls, and coffee, tea or milk to drink. (A cash bar will also be available.) Pre-registration is required by 5pm on Friday, October 25th.

To RSVP, call Amy at 414-475-6065 x10. Your $5.00 registration fee must be received in advance, so please give it to your Union Rep or mail it to WFNHP, 9620 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis, WI 53214.

Tentative Agenda for the evening:

5:00-5:30PM—Meet the Candidates (Brief speeches by candidates running for Union Office.)
5:30-7:30PM—Election of Officers
6:30PM—Dinner
7:00-8:30PM—Business Meeting

***This event is for WFNHP members only. Sorry, no guests.***

WFNHP-LOCAL 5000
Fall Annual Membership/ Dinner Meeting

DATE: Friday, November 1st, 2019
TIME: 5:00 – 9:00 PM
PLACE: Klemmer’s Banquet Center
10401 W. Oklahoma Ave., West Allis

Family Style Dinner ⚖️ Cash Bar/Cocktail Hour 🎉 Door Prizes

COST: $5.00 advanced registration fee required

Sorry, no guests—seating is limited

Please R.S.V.P. no later than Friday, October 25th!
Please RSVP to 414-475-6065 x10 & give your $5.00 to your Union Rep or mail to WFNHP, 9620 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis, WI 53214