

LABOR NEWS

& UPDATES

Summer 2005

News from the Mid-Central Illinois Carpenters

- Carpenters Business Representatives Roger Schonekase (Local 189, Quincy) and Mike Dummit (Local 44, Champaign) retired this spring. Taking over in their jobs are Mike Martin (Quincy) and John Kloewer (Champaign).
- In all likelihood, the Danville Carpenters Health and Welfare Plan will be merged into the Central Illinois Carpenters Health and Welfare Trust. While details are still being ironed out, the merger will occur sometime this fall.
- Representatives from CIB and the Greater Peoria Contractors and Suppliers Association have been meeting with representatives from the Mid Central Illinois Regional Council to discuss how to establish a comprehensive drug testing program. While this remains a work in progress, it appears that this program will become a reality within the next year. As a reminder, the current collective bargaining agreement with the Carpenters expires on April 30, 2006.

Labor/Management Meetings

CIB has held several successful Labor/Management meetings in 2005. We started out the year by meeting with Ed Smith and Jack Reid from the Laborers Midwest Regional Office to discuss some “big picture” issues.

Meetings were also held this spring with the Great Plains Laborers District Council and Painters District Council 58. Upcoming meetings are planned with the Southern and Central Laborers District Council (September 1 in Decatur) and Iron Workers locals 46 and 380 (date still to be established).

NLRB Dismisses Unfair Labor Practice Regarding Drug Testing Program

On April 11, Iron Workers Local 380 filed an unfair labor practice charge against Broeren Russo Construction Co. The charge challenged Broeren Russo's pre-employment drug testing policy as well as the program's component of having random testing as a requirement for safety bonus eligibility. Broeren Russo properly notified the union of the program's implementation back in 2003, but the union did not file a ULP until this year. Elements of their program are similar to programs being used by other CIB members and area contractors.

On July 19, Labor Attorney Chuck Murphy called CIB and reported that the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) had dismissed the charge against Broeren Russo. While a dismissal means that the NLRB is not required to rule on the actual facts of the case, this is clearly an employer victory. While there are still some company-specific issues that need to be worked out between Attorney Murphy and Broeren Russo, this is great news! If you need information on how to establish a drug testing program at your company, contact Scott Larkin at the CIB office.

National Labor Relations Board Seminar at Annual Meeting

Speaking of the NLRB, do you really know what it is or what they do? Glenn Zipp, retired director of the Peoria National Labor Relations Board office, will give a one hour presentation at the Industry Seminar on November 17 in East Peoria answering these very questions. This program is designed to be of interest to both the contractor and union communities and will be followed immediately by the industry reception. Mark your calendars.

CIB Names Labor Policy Co-Chairmen

John Ubaudi, BRH Builders, stepped down as Labor Policy Chairman at the beginning of this year, having served in this role for the past five years. John contributed enormous amounts of time to the association in this role and he will be missed by many on both sides of the bargaining table. At the

February Labor Policy Committee meeting, it was determined that it may be worthwhile to try a regional labor policy structure being headed by three co-chairman based on geography. Those chairmen are: John Goetz, R.D. Lawrence Construction Company, covering the western region (primarily consisting of the Springfield and Decatur areas), John Meek, Felmley-Dickerson Co., covering the northern region (primarily consisting of the Bloomington and Peoria area) and Greg Petry, The Petry-Kuhne Company, covering the eastern region (primarily consisting of Champaign and Danville). Our goal is to ensure better participation with both contractor members and union representatives in these various areas.

Updates on the Capital Development Board Project Labor Agreement

On a nationwide basis, most employer groups are not in favor of Project Labor Agreements. In central Illinois, CDB has used a PLA since the early 1990's that CIB had significant input in creating. As a result, the association has generally been supportive of PLA's, assuming we have input into their creation. Recently, however, changes were made to the CDB PLA by a newly created AFL-CIO "PLA Committee". CIB was unaware of this committee or its activities. Changes were made in the jurisdictional dispute language of the PLA. While we have some concerns about the substance of the changed language, our real concern is that these types of changes were made without contractor input. In cooperation with the Illinois Construction Industry Committee (ICIC, the industry legislative group of which CIB is a member), a letter was sent to CDB expressing our concerns. CDB has since responded that our concerns have been passed along to the AFL-CIO, and they are in turn receptive to meeting with us to discuss our concerns. We will keep you informed of the outcome.

Update on University of Illinois

A couple of years ago, the University of Illinois adopted a set of front end documents that were very unfavorable to contractors. Over the last few years, this has resulted in some local contractors choosing not to bid U of I work. Dan McCall, President of the East Central Illinois Building Trades and Business Manager for Bricklayers Local 8, has been instrumental in orchestrating meetings between U of I officials and CIB representatives. CIB appears to be making positive steps in communicating the concerns of local contractors to the U of I. Next time you see Dan McCall, thank him for his efforts.

Upcoming Dinner with the Springfield Basic Construction Crafts

The Basic Construction Crafts Council of Mid Central Illinois consists of the Springfield Carpenter, Laborer, Operator and Teamster locals. A group of local contractors and council representatives met for dinner back in March. It was an enjoyable event and served as an excellent opportunity to get to know the union guys in a little more laid back atmosphere. Representatives from this group have suggested that we continue to do this a couple times per year. The next dinner event will be held at Indigo Restaurant (located in the Parkway Point shopping plaza) on August 24 at 6 p.m. Please contact Scott Larkin if you wish to attend to ensure that we have an accurate headcount.

Grievance Activity Is Up in 2005

In a typical calendar year, CIB receives somewhere between 20 and 25 grievances. At the halfway point of this calendar year, CIB has received 19 grievances. What does this mean? It points to many things, but in general, work hours are down, there are more craft workers on the bench and union representatives seem to be closely monitoring job site activity. What can you do? Make sure that your superintendents read and understand the union contracts to which your company is signatory. Most grievances can usually be avoided if a rational discussion occurs when the issue is first presented at the jobsite. Remember, calm communication will usually go a long way.

National Wage and Benefit Trends

According to the Construction Labor Research Council recent June report, wage and benefit settlements reported so far in 2005 have resulted in an average first year increase of \$1.58 or 4.1 percent. This is up somewhat from \$1.38 or 4.0 percent reported for the comparable period a year earlier. Second and third year averages are higher than first year and are also up from a year earlier. Three years continues to be the preferred duration for newly negotiated contracts. About three-quarters of new agreements have been three years or more in length.

We hope you find this information useful; if you have suggestions, please contact Scott Larkin, Director of Labor Relations at 217/744-2100 or e-mail at sml@cibagc.org. We welcome your comments.