



# THE RABBLE



SEPTEMBER 2024

## STILL HERE. STILL FIGHTING.

The Rabble Rousers are an ongoing protest group dedicated to the improvement of working conditions for workers in AFSCME Local 696 and improving Union administration and communication. We are here to build an educated membership and advocate for Local 696 leadership to bring our Union into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### WHAT SHOULD YOUR UNION LOOK LIKE?

Part 1: Stewards  
By: J. Matthew Catron

With voter turnout rates below 25%, no newsletter, no centralized communications, and only 4 meetings per year, Local 696 is without a doubt one of the most disconnected, disorganized Locals in District Council 33, so let's take a look at what a Local Union should be doing.

First and foremost, let's talk about the Shop Stewards. The Local 696 Constitution combines the Steward- the coworkers elected to enforce the contract- with the Delegate- coworkers elected to represent the Local at the biannual AFSCME Convention, in a position called "Steward/Delegate". Whether or not that's a good thing can be the subject of its own article. What's really important here is that our Constitution only provides for 1 Steward/Delegate every 50 members.

That means that every Steward/Delegate is responsible for the contract violations, workplace abuse, healthcare concerns of *fifty coworkers*.

For reference, the AFSCME Officer's Handbook recommends a ratio of 1 to 20, which for our Local would mean roughly 58 Steward/Delegates for us- way more than double what we have now!

Just imagine for a moment that each Steward/Delegate in Local 696 had less than half the amount of work to do. They could focus more time and effort on each members' needs, spend more time training, and crucially- keep their lives balanced with their work. Above all else, our representatives are completely overworked. Even if they were the best labor advocates in the world, there's just not enough hours in the day for them to do their jobs effectively.

Keep an eye on this space as we explore more aspects of what a labor union can and should be doing to best advocate for you!

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Local 696 has 4 General Membership Meetings each year, on the third Thursdays of March, May, September, and November.

General Membership Meetings are the **highest governing body of the union**. No president, board, or committee has higher authority than **you** in a Meeting. Make a plan to attend!

### CONTRACT UPDATE

AFSCME District Council 33 President Greg Boulware was elected on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

He submitted a contract proposal to Mayor Cherelle Parker on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. You can read it here, or scan the QR code at the bottom of this page:

[696rabblers.com/documents/2024-contract-proposal/](https://696rabblers.com/documents/2024-contract-proposal/)

After that was the 2024 AFSCME International Convention, the Democratic National Convention, and the Presidential Debate- all things which have slowed the bargaining process.

Since then, there has been no update from either the Mayor's office or District Council 33 regarding progress on the contract.

### IMPORTANT DATES

LOCAL 696	CITY HOLIDAYS
<b>September 19<sup>th</sup>: General Membership Meeting</b>	<b>October 14<sup>th</sup>:</b> Indigenous Peoples' Day
<b>October 10<sup>th</sup>:</b> Executive Board Meeting	<b>November 11<sup>th</sup>:</b> Veteran's Day
<b>November 14<sup>th</sup>:</b> Executive Board Meeting	<b>November 28<sup>th</sup>:</b> Thanksgiving
<b>November 21<sup>st</sup>: General Membership Meeting</b>	<b>November 29<sup>th</sup>:</b> Black Friday*
<b>OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR HEALTHCARE TAKES PLACE IN NOVEMBER- DATES NOT YET ANNOUNCED</b>	<b>December 25<sup>th</sup>:</b> Christmas
	<b>December 31<sup>st</sup>:</b> New Year's Eve

\*Black Friday was added for DC47 employees this year. It has not yet been recognized as a City Holiday for DC33.

### KEEP IN TOUCH

The Rabble Rousers pride ourselves on our accessibility. All members of Local 696 are welcome- scan this QR code for access to our Discord instant-messaging server and important documents related to organizing our Local!

