



LOCAL UNION 6

## *International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers*

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August 12, 2020

### **RE: Membership Meetings during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

To all Members of IBEW Local Union No. 6,

We have received a handful of calls recently about the possibility of a Local Union General Membership meeting held on-line. Unfortunately, that is not allowed. International President Stephenson, in a 2015 communication to Business Managers and Local Unions in the United States and Canada, asked that Local Unions “*expressly forbid any unauthorized audio or video recording of any official Local union meetings.*”

While there are some protections afforded in the various on-line meeting formats, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or Google Meet, those security provisions will not prevent someone from using their phone or some other device to make a surreptitious recording.

Why the security concerns? It is unfortunate that the IBEW would have to take this position, and in the words of IP Stephenson it is a result of efforts by “*those who wish the IBEW harm by gaining access to what may be sensitive information that could hamper efforts to organize or to represent our members effectively.*” Aside from organizing efforts, and representation issues, we also have concerns around various compliance efforts currently underway. Some of those threats come from within the IBEW itself.

We have worked hard to provide the membership with pertinent information during these trying times, both through updates on the Local Union’s website and through my monthly articles in *Organized Labor Newspaper*. Every month we post the schedule of meetings for the following month and include among that the General Membership meeting. We do so because it is our sincere hope that we will be able to hold such a meeting and, furthermore, because it would be an indication that the Shelter-in-Place restrictions have been relaxed.

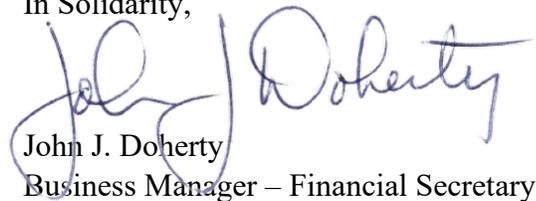
Despite any scurrilous and outlandish claims of disenfranchisement to the contrary, we have worked hard to make sure the basic tenets of our Union democracy are upheld. We have successfully completed a DOL compliant Election of Local Union Officers. We have successfully performed an allocation process for private sector contracts. We continue to bargain contracts on behalf of our members. We continue to operate a Hiring Hall and dispatch workers on a daily basis. We have worked for job-site safety standards. We have worked to open, and keep open, your jobs in the private sector. We are working to avoid any layoffs and/or cuts to the public sector.

What we have not done is unnecessarily expose fellow members to the Coronavirus. What we have not done is violate the Health Orders of the City & County of San Francisco. What we have not done is put the treasury of the Local Union at risk during this pandemic by hosting gatherings in violation of the Public Health Orders. We will continue to act in this prudent manner.

I spoke with the Executive Board at their meeting of August 11<sup>th</sup>, and have received permission to provide the membership with an update on the business matters of the Local Union since our last General Membership meeting was held on March 11<sup>th</sup> of this year. Please look for that to come in the mail soon.

We are in the most trying of times. Many of our members find themselves juggling work, childcare, and soon the educational needs of their families. Pressures are high. We at the hall, along with you, long to interact with our fellow members in a social setting and to actively discuss our movement going forward. But we cannot do that until it is cleared by the Public Health Orders, and your patience is greatly appreciated.

In Solidarity,



John J. Doherty  
Business Manager – Financial Secretary