

A Guide for New Delegates

What is the South Central Federation of Labor?

Just as workers join together to form unions because there is strength in numbers and collective action, so too local unions join together in Central Labor Councils, like SCFL, for the same reasons. There are 600 Central Labor Councils throughout the United States, each with a specific geographic jurisdiction.

The best unions are democratically run and take their direction from the membership. So too with Central Labor Councils. Hence, SCFL (say “scuffle”) is whatever its affiliated unions, as determined through actions taken by their delegates, want.

Activities

In essence, the purpose of any Central Labor Council is solidarity between unions in a given geographic area, and sometimes outside that area. This solidarity takes the form of helping a local affiliate by getting the word out and by turning out union activists from other unions for pickets, rallies, and the like when such help is requested in order to further an affiliate’s collective bargaining or organizing efforts with an

employer. This solidarity is also displayed when the affiliates agree to speak with one voice on issues of public concern – legislative and otherwise – and on elections for public office. SCFL also gathers unions together for various other projects ranging from community service work to labor education.

Union Cities

SCFL was one of the first Labor Councils to endorse the national AFL-CIO’s “Union Cities” program. This consists of a set of eight goals designed to strengthen the labor movement from the local level up by placing a renewed emphasis on organizing, holding public officials accountable, developing a Street Heat rapid response solidarity action network, economics education for workers, and an elevated emphasis on coalition work with others in the community (for example, our Living Wage Campaign).

For more information check out the South Central Federation of Labor’s website:

www.scfl.org

SCFL Delegates Meeting Agenda

Here’s a description of the kinds of things covered under each agenda item.

I. Meeting called to order by President

II. Roll Call of Officers

III. Reading of New Credentials

The Recording Secretary reads letters from affiliates appointing new delegates and alternates. These new delegates and alternates and any others who have not previously done so are sworn in.

IV. Reading of Minutes

Typically the reading of the minutes of the previous delegates meeting are dispensed with in the interest of time. Minutes of the Executive Board are read and the action items, which are actually recommendations to the delegates, are noted. A vote by the delegates to approve the Board minutes is also a vote to accept the action item recommendations.

V. Communications

Correspondence and other communications of note, plus information on conferences, etc., are summarized in a handout that delegates receive when they register with the Sergeant at Arms upon entering the meeting. Anyone wishing a clarification or additional information on anything included in this handout should ask at this time.

VI. Reports of Officers

A. Treasurer

The Treasurer reads the expenditures in the various budget categories for the previous month, as well as per capita income for that month. On a quarterly basis, this report is provided in written form. Delegates vote to accept this report.

(cont. on back)

**Mark your calendar for SCFL’s monthly meeting –
the THIRD MONDAY of each month at 7 P.M.**

B. Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary notes if any affiliates are falling behind in their per capita payments to SCFL. Delegates vote to accept the report and sometimes vote to provide a per capita payment extension to an affiliate that's falling behind.

C. President

The President reports on his activities of the previous month and on upcoming events of interest.

D. Sergeant-at-Arms

Based on the sign in sheet, the Sergeant-at-Arms reports on the number of delegates, alternates, and guests present and the number of unions represented by those individuals.

VII. Reports of Standing and Special Committees

SCFL's standing committees are listed in the first paragraph on page 14 of the Constitution and By-Laws. Of these committees, the following are consistently active: Community Services, Organizing, Education, Labor Day, and COPE (Committee on Political Education). Active committees report on what's going on or being planned during this part of the meeting. Those interested in serving on a committee should contact Jim Cavanaugh

COPE Explained

The COPE Committee is different than the other committees, and does not generally report during this part of the meeting. The COPE Committee, previously called the COPE Steering Committee, deals with the logistics of our endorsement process revolving around elections. The COPE Committee schedules interview/endorsement meetings, decides whether to have candidate questionnaires or not, and makes recommendations regarding some endorsements.

The actual candidate endorsement process is described on pages 19-22 of the Constitution and By-Laws. Briefly put, when COPE (as opposed to the COPE "Committee") takes up questions of political endorsements, it is actually the delegate body as a whole, most often in a special meeting. It takes a two-thirds vote of those present to make a political endorsement or to recommend a particular position on a ballot issue (a referendum).

VIII. Reports of Union Representatives to other Boards and Committees

Other Boards and Committees might be allied organizations (such as the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice, the South Central Wisconsin Committee on Occupational Safety and Health, or the State AFL-CIO),

public bodies on which union representatives sit (Board of Public Works, Police & Fire Commission, etc.), or community organizations (United Way, Red Cross, etc.)

IX. Unfinished Business

Most often, nothing comes up under this item, but when it does it is frequently a resolution or constitutional amendment introduced at a previous meeting or an item tabled at or referred from a previous meeting.

X. New Business

Again, seldom does anything come up under this agenda item. An example of what might come up at this time is an urgent matter or a matter involving a timeliness issue, usually something that has arisen between the Executive Board meeting and the Delegates meeting.

XI. Reports of Local Unions

This is probably the most important part of the meeting. It is when local unions involved in a struggle – be it bargaining or legislating or organizing – report on their activities and frequently ask for assistance. This is also the time for reporting local union news of general interest, contract settlements, grievance/arbitration victories, results of local union elections, etc. In other words, this is the time to let each other know what's going on in our respective unions and also to solicit aid from each other.

XII. Discussion of Political and Economic Issues

This category is pretty broadly construed. It is a time for announcements and also a time to pass motions taking positions on legislative and other matters.

XIII. Good and Welfare of the Federation

This is kind of a hodgepodge category in which additional announcements are sometimes made and we do our raffle drawing. Purchasing tickets for just \$1 helps to feed the hungry – proceeds go to the South Madison Food Pantry.

XIV. Meeting Adjourns



Solidarity
SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF LABOR