



# SYSTEM COUNCIL NO. 6

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS

**Tom Owens**  
**General Chairman**

**Shannon Spotswood**  
**Vice Chairman**

**Mike Stacks**  
**Secretary-Treasurer**

General Chairman's Report – February, 2020

Brothers and Sisters:

Roanoke Locomotive Shop Closure: On February 18, 2020, the Carrier posted notice of their intent to do a complete shop closure at the point under Article I of the September 25, 1964 National Agreement (Appendix M of our controlling Agreement) dealing with transfer of work to Juniata. The provisions require that the Carrier and the General Chairman enter into negotiations to achieve an implementing agreement for the closure. Twenty-four active Electricians (85 workers across all crafts) are affected by the closure. All 24 Electricians have been offered the opportunity to follow their work to Juniata. I brought in our IBEW legal attorney to assist in this negotiation. Despite what I or the membership wish, the arbitration awards and the Article language appear to let the Carrier out of the responsibility for Article I separation allowances for members not desiring to move to Juniata. Despite this setback, I am continuing with negotiations to obtain a possible benefit available for the membership at Roanoke Locomotive Shop.

National Negotiations: Traveled to Washington, DC to attend the negotiations. Our attorney, having 40 plus years of negotiating on our behalf, remarked that the Carrier's opening proposals was the most aggressive he had ever encountered. The sole topic of discussion was the Carrier's demand for work rule changes in all areas of our agreements. Our wage submissions were dismissed as "not even acceptable as a starting point." Health care was not discussed. The next meeting in Cleveland, OH, will open with the Organization's response and possibly touch on wages and/or health care.

Charlotte Roadway Shop: The shop has become a pilot program for the Carrier to test biometric scanners for logging in the property and shift check-in times. I consulted with our legal counsel for the legality of using hand and/or eye scanners in regard to confidentiality or any other infringement of rights. It was determined based on court cases already settled on the matter, that the biometric scanners are legal for the railroads to use.

Communication Workers: Case settlement for member who was disciplined 5 days actual for loss of laptop – 5 days to be reimbursed to member; Handled displacement issues due to job abolishments; Meal expense issue – Carrier took exception to certain members repeatedly charging meals to locations in the immediate vicinity of their headquarters. As a result, all members on the division are being subjected to more stringent restrictions. The seniority rosters released under the new Communication Agreement format have been protested due to multiple errors. Negotiated waiver for member charged with improper payroll submissions.

Covid-19: At the beginning of this month, Covid-19 was something happening in China. By the end of this month, Covid-19 has started to change our world here in America as well. The effects on railroad operations have yet to be determined.

Insurance: Our efforts for establishing additional for purchase disability/life insurance with Cornerstone was successful. The plans are designed directly for railroad IBEW workers. Our System Council membership was the template for the plan which was then extended across the country. Cornerstone attributes the success of establishing this plan to our members.

In Your Service,

Tom Owens  
General Chairman