

MINUTES OF THE WASHTECH GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
January 20, 2010, 6:00 PM
Minutes taken by Brian Roberts, Secretary

I. Call to Order

President Les French called the meeting to order. There was no call for a quorum count, and therefore the presence of a quorum was assumed.

II. Reading of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of 7/15/09 were read and approved.

III. Officer/Chair Reports

Treasurer's Report (Les French for Mitchell McMurry, Treasurer)

Les presented the profit-and-loss statement for October-December 2009, saying he had fine-tuned some of the line items for better tracking. There is now a separate line for organizing. We are in good shape on cash flow, but there is always some lag time and the cash flow is not smooth. One lag is the outstanding \$23,600 to come from CWA to reimburse wages and expenses for our organizer, Malachy Sreenan. Another lag is that the dues income from the AT&T Network Operations Center (NOC), which will likely add \$50,000 a year, hasn't started and may not start until February. In the meantime we may have to cut back on our attendance at conferences, this being the likeliest area for cuts to be made.

Les said he was concerned about the loss of at-large members. Dan DiLeva asked if he could be doing outreach, and Les replied that it doesn't seem fruitful. Dave Larsen noted that at-large has gone down 37% in a year. Dan Gillespie said that for reasons unknown we have lost at-large members whenever we have sent out a health care mailing to the membership.

The treasurer's report was accepted.

President's Report (Les French)

Les said the CWA convention is in July and so is the Legislative Conference. Dan DiLeva asked what the latter means to us, and Les replied that it makes the rules for the year, and conferences are useful for local leadership development. Paul Colvin asked if Les will inevitably be our delegate to the conference; Les replied that, if there is only one delegate, that will be the local president, but he wants to send as many as feasible for leadership development.

Les had 10-year membership certificates for members who joined in 2000; they are Dave Larsen, Corey Ball, T. Cole, Gary Moore, Barbara Kempf, and Nick Achman. Dave was at the meeting and was presented with his pin.

There was an update on the decertification petition for the NOC. Les explained that the petition was not submitted within the required 45 days of the posting of the notices of certification; however, the petitioners argued they had longer because a notice at one of the 10 locations disappeared (for reasons unknown) a few days after posting. They are represented by a right-to-work lawyer who makes a career out of busting unions. It will be a long-drawn-out battle because whoever loses will appeal. Our argument is that there should be no decision until the appeal of the Dana case, which set a precedent on this issue, is concluded. Meanwhile we continue to represent the NOC.

Membership Committee Report (Derek Stanford)

Derek presented the current membership update. Dan DiLeva asked if there are any projects in work to attract more at-large members. Derek replied that he's working on a brochure with a mail-in card and will follow that up with tabling and other initiatives. Paul asked if the report is still lagging by 30 days, and Dan Gillespie replied that it is. Les said the numbers will start back up as the NOC certification progresses. Bill Montgomery asked how many at-large members live outside Washington, and Les replied that it's about half.

Legislative Committee Report (Ian Jacobson)

Ian said he had attended a candidate interview today, conducted by the King County Labor Council. The interviewee was Ian Eisenberg, who has the support of several unions. There is a meeting tonight to vote on Eisenberg, at the Showbox Theater which has never used union crews. However, they will use one tonight because the new Mayor, Mike McGinn, insisted on it.

Ian said SEIU and the teachers union have recruited challengers to Democrats they feel are not responsive to labor. Dan DiLeva asked if they have approved any Republicans or third-party members. Ian replied that they haven't, that the State Labor Council is apparently not thinking outside the box, and that there seems to be little rank-and-file input. Dan asked how we can break into this process. Ian said we will see if they follow through on their own expressed DIME-PAC policy, i.e., to go with the individual pol instead of the party.

Technology Committee Report (Rennie Sawade)

Rennie said he has putting in spam filters and fixing e-mail accounts. He is almost ready with the new web site and hopes to go live this weekend. The new site is better organized, with (for instance) pop-down menus, but still preserves existing links via an "archive" connection.

Communications Committee Report (Rennie Sawade)

Rennie reported that his blog post about Microsoft's charging contractors rent for their desks has drawn a lot of attention nationwide: he got a phone call from *Business Week* to interview him about it. His next article will be about the H1-B contractor issue.

Dave and Paul related their own experiences with worsening conditions for labor at Microsoft.

Vice President's Report (Bill Montgomery)

Bill talked about the Catch-22 situation at AT&T in regard to the Family Leave Act. The way it has been working there is that employees get a doctor's approval to take time off, as AT&T requires, they take the time off, then they submit the doctor's note and it is disapproved. This makes the employee subject to dismissal despite complying with the rules.

IV. Unfinished Business

A resolution was on the floor (from the last meeting) to change the bylaws to constitute the existing Women's Task Force and Equity Task Force as standing committees, with their present chairs, and adopt the proposed language describing the committees and the chairs' duties. It was the consensus that the description of the Equity chair's duties is inadequate because it refers only to ethnicity whereas the committee's charter is to work also on problems of bias regarding sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, and "any other basis." However, it was argued that there was too much delay if the vote was held up for that reason. The Election Chair, Dan Gillespie, conducted the voting:

- **Action:** The said committees are ratified as standing committees and the bylaws are to be

changed to use the new language, as quoted in the GM minutes of September 2009. Rose Hurban is chair of the Women's Committee, and Anthony Vogelsang of the Equity Committee. However, the secretary is directed to correct the description of the Equity chair's duties and submit it for a vote at the next GM meeting.

- **Action:** The secretary will submit the bylaws change to District 7 for the required review and then, when District OKs it, make the change in all paper and online copies of the bylaws.

V. New Business

Dan Gillespie proposed "punishing" the big banks that caused the present economic mess by moving WashTech's bank accounts from Bank of America into a local bank or credit union. Les responded that this is an issue to be presented to the Finance Committee.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM. The next General Membership meeting will be at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, April 21, 2010, at Suite 200, 2900 Eastlake Ave. E., Seattle, WA.

Brian Roberts, Secretary