

WASHTECH GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

May 21, 2008

Minutes taken by: Brian Roberts, Secretary

I. Call to Order

There was no call for a quorum count, and thus the presence of a quorum was assumed.

II. Reading of the Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting (2/20/08) were read and approved with these corrections:

- p.2 4th line, add: "(The Planning Council later elected Emily Baty to the position—General membership approval required.)"
- p.2 under "VP Reports," change sentence to: "Les discussed the recent AT&T Bargaining Conference in December 2007 and indicated that bargaining will be difficult."
- p.2, last line, add: "Mitchell McMurry, Alternate Delegate"

III. Officer/Chair Reports

Treasurer's Report (Rick Saling)

Rick presented the finance report. We are over budget, primarily due to not receiving 3 months of subsidy from CWA in March. The overage is \$33,475.37, but we have about that much in subsidy requests pending, so we should be okay in the long term.

Loretta has prepared an updated salary expenses spreadsheet which takes into account the latest, particularly Priyanka, Marcus leaving, an organizer, + stewards and VP lost time wages, etc. We will see if we can move Dan off the CWA-subsidized portion of the budget. We will ask CWA for a \$168,000 subsidy for next fiscal year; otherwise we won't be able to pay all of Loretta's and Dan's wages. We are now doing an estimate and will present the new budget to the General Membership meeting in September.

Rick has opened a \$25,000 CD account at the Wallingford branch of Frontier Bank.

President's Report (Marcus Courtney)

Membership is 1,419, up by 48 since the last General Membership meeting in February. Subscribers are 16,196, down by 99.

Twenty-one stewards have been trained, and we are continuing discussions with International to restaff our organizer position. We will continue to try to organize the Network Operations Center.

We currently have 4 step 1 grievances, 3 step 2, and 8 step 3, with one arbitration and one request for arbitration. Most grievance filings are about terminations or written discipline notices.

The governor signed the Speed Matters legislation in April; it creates a study commission to plan for building a statewide high-speed internet system. As part of the Speed Matters campaign, Marcus met with the Washington Utilities Commission regarding a study to map broadband access in the state. We will be hosting workshops on the Strategic Initiative Fund (SIF), which is the CWA campaign to secure comprehensive health care reform and passage of the Employee Free Choice Act. Legislative issues we are following also include H-1B legislation and the TAA Act.

Membership (Dan Gillespie)

Dan stated that the website subscribers have expressed interest in having an interest group they can meet with. We will be holding coffeeklatsches in the WashTech office where subscribers can meet members and discuss their common interests.

Jim Burdick said we are getting bad publicity at AT&T for not cutting off employees who don't pay their dues or their COPE subscriptions. Dan answered that such action is to be taken by AT&T HR, and he and Les will talk to the shop stewards about finding a solution.

Legislative Report (Curt Eidem)

Curt put out a call for recruits to help with the health care initiative in congressional districts 1, 7, and 8. At least 20 point people are needed to attend the training meeting in July, which is the launch date. The training will be half a day, with paid time off for those who are in a bargaining unit. These trainees will also help push for passage of the employee Free Choice Act.

Someone asked what qualifications the recruits need. Curt answered "Just the desire."

Curt also wants volunteers in order to start organizing a political action committee very soon because we need to deal with candidates who will be seeking our endorsements.

Kellie Case said there is a problem with getting such messages out to the members because the AT&T Unity newsletter is not distributed evenly or regularly. There was much discussion about the nature of the problem and how to improve it.

Technology Report (Brian Globerman)

Marcus reported for Brian: The issue of all stewards getting their own e-mail accounts has been solved by giving each of them a WashTech address. We have authorized the purchase of new equipment for Priyanka Joshi, and for the stewards to use in the WashTech office.

Communications Report (Rennie Sawade)

Rennie is looking at redesign of the website to add logging, media (video/audio), and dynamic content to make it more interesting and interactive.

Our radio advertising starts Tuesday on AM 1090 on the Thom Hartmann show. a 1-minute ad, recorded by Thom, will run 3 days next week, 2 days the following week, and 2 days the week after that. Rennie will get the exact times and e-mail the information to the members.

Kellie Case asked if we are advertising for people to join WashTech. Marcus answered yes; Rennie answered that the content of the message is that, if tech workers have concerns about their employment issues, joining WashTech can help them deal with them.

Bill Montgomery asked if we could put surveys on the website. Rennie answered yes, we are now planning some polls to publish there. He gave out his e-mail address, rennies@washtech.org, for those who want to share ideas on improving the website. Marcus commented that the purpose of the website is conflicted: it has a public face and we also use it to communicate to the members. We are having conversations on how to make it better for both purposes.

Kellie Case asked if we could consider putting the Unity newsletter on the website to improve readership.

VP Reports: Executive VP (Les French)

Les said we have two big issues we have to address in our bargaining this year: health care, and coordination with other bargaining across the country. Bargaining between AT&T and its CWA locals begins June 4 in Atlanta. We need to give rank-and-file input to that local's bargaining committee, and the others across the nation, about what we need in terms of a health care agreement. There is a URL posted on the bargaining unit bulletin boards that individual members can use for this purpose.

As the bargaining proceeds in other regions, this will give our bargaining committee continuing feedback on what positions AT&T is taking and what terms we may expect from them. It is extremely important that CWA have a concerted effort in bargaining with AT&T across the country.

Kellie Case emphasized that, for all members to participate in this, we have to find better ways to communicate with them.

VP Reports: AT&T CBU VP (Bill Montgomery)

Bill reinforced the importance of using the URL to respond to the health care bargaining issues. The vice presidents will make sure that plenty of information is available on the bargaining unit bulletin boards.

IV. Resolutions

Payment for Technology Services

The treasurer submitted a proposal to pay an invoice for \$2500.00 for technology services recently rendered and previously authorized by this body. The motion passed.

District 7 Vice President Election

Marcus asked the body for unanimous support for Brenda Roberts in the election for District 7 vice president. After much discussion of her qualifications and those of the other two candidates, the motion was passed.

Change to Bylaws

Secretary Brian Roberts proposed a change to Article 13F of the bylaws to make it consistent with the CWA Constitution in regard to succession when the president resigns. There was much discussion, and the change, as finally seconded, reads:

In case of a vacancy in the office of President, the Executive Vice President shall immediately assume all responsibilities of that office and succeed to that office. Vacancies in any other elected position shall be filled with appointments by the Planning Council, subject to approval by the General Assembly by consensus or, if necessary, by majority vote.

As the bylaws require, the change will be voted on at the next General Membership meeting after being advertised. In the meantime, as required by the body, the secretary will have the amendment reviewed by Rick Sorensen at District 7.

Appointment of AT&T CBU Vice President

The body approved the appointment of Emily Baty as the new CBU vice president for the AT&T bargaining unit.

V. Unfinished Business

AT&T Pay Disparity Grievances (Pat Ray)

The District is negotiating with AT&T to get a settlement of Pat Ray's pay disparity grievance.

VI. New Business

No new business.

VII. Good of the Order

Bill Montgomery expressed his thanks to our writing staff for the articles recently published.

Adjournment was moved and seconded. The next General Membership meeting will be at 6:00 PM, September 23, 2008, location to be announced. The final meeting of 2008 will be on Dec. 9.