

MINUTES OF THE WASHTECH PLANNING COUNCIL (PC)
January 12, 2010, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Anna Bloomquist, AT&T CBU Vice President. Also present were Brian Roberts, Les French, Rennie Sawade, and Bill Montgomery.

Reading of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of 12/8/09 were read and approved.

President's Report (Les French)

At the start of the meeting, Les introduced Suzie McAllister, who is our new CWA district staff support person upon the retirement of Linda Rasmussen. Suzie is also the state coordinator for legislative activities and will support locals' officer and steward training programs.

Les reported on developments in the newly organized AT&T Network Operations Center (NOC). Some employees there have petitioned for a decertification vote by secret ballot, which they were entitled to do within 45 days of the posting of the notice of organization. The 45 days had already lapsed, however, before the petition went to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). WashTech protested, and the petitioners hired an attorney who is arguing that the posting was improper because some of the notices disappeared from the posting places a few days after they were put up. The arguments went to a full hearing before the NLRB, and Les said he does not expect a resolution until February. This gives us time to strengthen the NOC, take care of the employees' concerns, and build a strong steward core there. Bill asked what percentage of the NOC employees submitted cards to allow us to organize there, and Les replied that it was 60 percent. Mr. Rosenblatt, the CWA lawyer on our side, has told Les that whoever loses the decision will appeal it.

Regarding conferences and conventions, Les said he would like to send as many of us as possible. There's a CWA legislative conference in July, and a District 7 conference in May. Conference delegates can be appointed, but convention delegates must be selected by vote.

Pierce County Health Care negotiations have been taking a lot of his time, Les said. Negotiations have gone to mediation and may proceed to arbitration. The county is insisting that employees contribute, which they have never had to do up till now.

Finance Committee Report (Les French for Mitchell McMurry, Treasurer)

Les reported on behalf of Mitchell, who is absent.

Les presented the current profit-and-loss statement. He noted that some line items had been changed to better reflect how the money is spent. An "Organizing" line item was added to improve tracking of those expenditures. We were over on our AT&T unit dues although the expected income from the NOC dues has not materialized yet. Nevertheless we were under budget by \$12,683. This should change next month.

We now have 70 percent of the NOC enrolled and those dues should start coming in although AT&T continues to throw obstacles in our way.

Les asked that the finance report be approved. Brian so moved, and Bill seconded.

- **Action:** The motion passed. The Finance Committee report is approved.

Membership Committee Report (Les French for Derek Stanford, Chair)

The report showed at-large membership dropping in November and leveling off in December. "The economy is killing us," said Les, "I think we need an organizing drive." The NOC, he said, is a growing potential for us, and the call centers will probably not shrink further.

Anna said there is a bad rumor at AT&T that management trainees will have to go back on the phones or be laid off. Les queried whether they would quit in this economy, and Anna said some of them would. Bill said his concern is that AT&T has frozen headcount in Bothell for over a year whereas other centers are still hiring.

Communications Committee Report (Rennie Sawade, Member and Acting Chair)

Rennie said there are a couple of more articles out in the media citing WashTech, and he was interviewed for a good half-hour by Business Week about his blog posting about Microsoft's requirement that contractors pay rent on their onsite desks.

Rennie said he's had inquiries about the benefits of joining as at-large members and thinks we need to make that clear. We might also want to put ads on Facebook, where Union Plus already has ads. He wondered whether WashTech could get on the Union Plus web site, and Suzie replied that WashTech would have to do that as part of CWA.

Bill asked how the battle against spam is going. Rennie replied that he's working on it and it's going well.

Technology Committee Report (Rennie Sawade, Chair)

Rennie said he plans to have the new web site go public before the general membership meeting on January 20. Les said we need to coordinate with TechsUnite. Rennie replied that he has upgraded TechsUnite. He also said he wants to make it easier on the new web site for at-large members to join.

Legislative Committee Report (Les French for Ian Jacobson)

Les reported that Ian is in Olympia pushing for the Legislature to pass bills, like Speed Matters, that are important to CWA. He is increasingly drawn there during the legislative session, but calls Les regularly.

Women's Task Force Report (Anna Bloomquist for Rose Hurban, Chair)

Anna said the task force will push for getting collection bins at the CWA Women's Resource Conference. Suzie said the conference will be held on April 22 or 23.

AT&T CBU Vice President's Report (Bill Montgomery)

Bill expressed his concern that we need more presence in the NOC to let them know that we're there to support them. He also expressed concern about declining numbers in Bothell 5: we have lost a couple of stewards ("And a vice president," added Les) and the company is aggressive about finding reasons to get people out. We need to get progressive discipline under control so that people are not being disciplined for simply trying to do their job.

AT&T CBU Vice President's Report (Anna Bloomquist)

Anna said she was reported to management for allegedly talking in the office about a specific grievance. The harassment involved being called into the supervisor's office to explain that what was supposedly overheard was not in fact a violation of the contract.

Good and Welfare of the Body

Chief Steward Sharon Kent's mother died, and WashTech will extend its sympathy. Organizer Malcolm Sreenan flew back to Ireland because of a death in his family. Dan Gillespie was out of town for his mother's illness in December but is now back at work. Jim Burdick's appeal of the action against him by AT&T went to Step 2 today and will have to go to a Step 3.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM. The next meeting will be at 6:30 PM, Tuesday, February 9, 2010, at Suite 200, 2900 Eastlake Ave. E., Seattle, WA, unless otherwise notified.

Brian Roberts, Secretary