

MINUTES OF THE WASHTECH PLANNING COUNCIL (PC)
March 10, 2009, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Les French, President. Also present were Jim Burdick, Brian Roberts, Curt Eidem, Mitch McMurry, Bill Montgomery, Anna Bloomquist, and Rennie Sawade.

Reading of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of 2/10/09 were read and approved.

President's Report (Les French)

Les asked whether we should move up the general membership meeting, scheduled for 4/15, because the votes on the new AT&T contract will be counted on 4/2. He suggested it be a question and answer session on 3/26, prior to the votes being mailed, for members who have questions about voting. Jim asked whether CWA National had recommended this, and Les replied that it had. Anna then moved that instead we leave the GM meeting date as is, but convene a special Q&A meeting on 3/24 at the IUOE hall.

- **Action:** The motion died for lack of a second.

Finance Committee Report (Mitch McMurry, Treasurer)

Mitch presented the fiscal report for February and the fiscal year to date. He noted that expenditures were kept in line such that we have spent about \$30,000 less than originally budgeted.

Membership Committee Report (Les French in Place of Vacant Chair)

Les presented the statistics for February, noting that there was an uptick in at-large members while AT&T CBU membership stayed pretty level. He said he will continue working on organizing the AT&T Network Operations Center. Mitch requested that these reports give the previous figures for comparison, and Les agreed to do that. Curt asked whether the report could distinguish members from fee payers, and Les said he would have it done that way.

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

Rennie reported that there have been a lot of hits on our blog, and that the rate depends on the content. People hit it when doing searches on the Web. He said he has enabled the forum, which needs more on it and is not getting many hits yet.

Les said we need to complete building the web site and can use about \$12,000 or more that is available from the Ford Foundation grant.

Technology Committee Report (Rennie Sawade, Chair)

Rennie said he is working on a better backup plan. We need offsite storage of data, and he discussed alternatives. The Mozy system looks most promising; it costs \$6.95 per month for a Mozy server license plus \$0.50 per gigabyte stored. To finalize the plan, Rennie said he would have to look at our bandwidth requirement.

Other alternatives discussed were storage on the Bluhost web server, tape storage, wireless transmission, use of a local box, and a safe. Rennie said he would have his final proposal at the next PC meeting.

Legislative Committee Report (Curt Eidem, Chair)

This is crunch time, said Curt; people are out working for passage of the Workers Privacy Act. It is amazing, said Les, how much pressure business is bringing to bear to defeat. Curt said both of our senators are sponsors of the Employee Free Choice Act in Congress, as are all Democratic representatives. The Senate is a problem, however, because Republicans may use the cloture rule to stall the bill.

Curt identified members Ian Jacobson and Derek Stanford as energetic volunteers and requested they be named to the Legislative Committee. Les so moved.

- **Action:** The motion passed. The WashTech Legislative Committee now consists of Curt Eidem, chair; Ian Jacobson; and Derek Stanford.

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

Anna discussed the need for a peer support group at the AT&T CBU for employees with alcohol or drug problems. As it is now, AT&T requires employees to request their manager for a referral to the Employee Assistance Program. In many cases the manager is the last person they would be comfortable talking to, so nothing is done. Anna has asked AT&T if they would form a support group, but was told that won't happen. Les he sees no reason the CBU can't form a peer support group; and Curt said they could meet at his church.

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

Bill noted that AT&T is clamping down on discipline and using a score card process, which makes it much easier to write people up. Mitch commented that AT&T has begun opening offshore call centers, violating the spirit if not the letter of its collective bargaining agreements.

AT&T CBU Vice President's Report (Jim Burdick)

Jim said there has been a rash of terminations at AT&T's National Business Services, including five in one week.

Old Business

Charter Renewal: Jim reported on what is required from us by CWA International to renew our charter. He also presented and amended Brian's proposed wording for the new charter. Les moved that Jim's report be accepted with the amended wording.

- **Action:** The motion passed. The new charter will read in pertinent part "Over all work performed by freelance or agency workers eligible for Union membership who currently work on a project basis as programmers, technical writers, and other technical support staff at technology firms in the United States of America and Canada and are (as of the date of this charter) not covered by any other CWA Local; and over the AT&T Mobility Call Center based in Bothell, Washington; and over the Pierce County Emergency Management Communications Division based in Tacoma, Washington; and over the Peninsula School District No. 401 Technical Support Department based in Purdy, Washington; and such other jurisdiction as may be assigned by the Executive Board of the Union."

Leadership Award: Nominations closed with no new names submitted. The two nominees are Dan Gillespie and Mitch McMurry.

Marcus Courtney's Op-Ed Piece: Marcus submitted the text to Les, who reviewed it and approved it for publication.

Committee Chairmanships: Les said he has prospects for chairs for the Education and Membership Committees. Communication is not so critical, he said, but Education is very critical because of the ongoing need to train shop stewards. Emily Baty, the inactive current Education chair, has agreed to resign.

Local Procedures Manual: Les said he found WashTech's policies and procedures manual, which is woefully out of date and needs a task force to rewrite. Jim, Brian, and Anna volunteered to be on that task force.

Good and Welfare of the Body

Rick's mother and Mitch's mother-in-law have recently died, and Les suggested WashTech make memorials in their names by donating \$100 each to charities of the family's choosing. Curt so moved.

- **Action:** The motion passed. Les will make the arrangements.

In that regard, Curt asked whether we should take similar actions for every WashTech member who is bereaved. Les felt we should limit it to staff, officers, and past officers. Mitch asked if that would be a hard and fast rule. Brian felt it should be a guideline, subject to case-by-case decisions by the PC.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM. The next meeting will be at 6:30 PM, Tuesday, April 14, 2009, at Suite 200, 2900 Eastlake Ave. E., Seattle, WA, unless otherwise notified.

Brian Roberts, Secretary