

MINUTES OF THE WASHTECH PLANNING COUNCIL (PC)
July 14, 2009, 6:44 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Jim Burdick, AT&T CBU Vice President. Also present were Brian Roberts, Les French, Anna Bloomquist, Mitchell McMurry, Bill Montgomery, Derek Stanford, Ian Jacobson, and Rennie Sawade. Nonvoting attendees were Rose Herbin and Dan Gillespie.

Reading of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of 6/9/09 were unavailable. The secretary promised to have them for the next PC meeting.

President's Report (Les French)

Les reviewed our committee chair vacancies: Legislative, Technology, and Equity. We have not had an Equity Committee in the past but, said Les, CWA International recommends it.

Les said we have to schedule the annual retreat of the PC and the Chief Steward, where we will discuss, among other things, the budgeting process. Ian suggested we could also discuss general election endorsements. Les recommended either the weekend of Aug. 15 or the weekend of Aug. 22. Ian moved for Aug. 22, and Anna seconded.

- **Action:** The motion passed. The PC retreat will be held the weekend of August 22, 2009.

Les then gave his International Convention report. It was exciting, he said; the delegates were all over The Hill for 2 days and met with every senator or representative from Washington state except one. All are in tune with health care legislation, and it was a particular joy talking with Maria Cantwell. There will be health care legislation by August according to Les.

Les said he has set up conference calls regarding abuse of FMLA by AT&T. On July 22 at 5 PM he will be teleconferencing with/about the AT&T situation in Evansville, Indiana. Evansville, he said, is ecstatic about our participation.

Secretary's Report (Brian Roberts)

Brian said that further work has been done on the WashTech Operating Procedures Manual (WTOPM) and that it appeared from last month's discussion that the PC's consensus was that every member of the PC should review this edition. Accordingly, he proposed to e-mail it to every member. Mitchell moved that a deadline of Aug. 11 be set for changes, and Ian seconded.

- **Action:** The motion passed. The Planning Council's input to the WTOPM is due by August 11, 2009.

The next General Membership (GM) meeting is here, tomorrow night. The meeting after that is set for late September, but an exact date and a place have not been firmed up. After discussion of scheduling for events in that period, Jim moved that the 3rd-quarter GM meeting be Sept. 30 in the Wash Tech offices. Anna seconded.

- **Action:** The motion passed. The next GM meeting after the 7/15 meeting will be September 30, 2009, in WashTech's offices.

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

Bill noted that new attendance policies go into effect in August in Bothell 1 and 2 of the AT&T CBU. He expects an epidemic of terminations of people who took time off for legitimate reasons. The company is stepping up disciplinary actions across the board, and he suspects that something is happening behind the scenes. He said that work is being shifted from Bothell to other call centers, like Evansville, which is growing fast.

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

Anna said she guarantees that AT&T will give everyone 1.5 points for attendance violations. Les said we have grounds for grievance already for what they are doing. Ian asked if they are applying the policy inconsistently across the country. Les said yes, and Anna added that they're inconsistent even between buildings in their requirements regarding doctor certificates. "That's another ground for grievance," said Les.

Finance Committee Report (Mitchell McMurry, Treasurer)

Mitchell passed out the monthly balance sheet and updated profit-and-loss statement as of June 30, 2009. Year-to-date income is slightly below the YTD budgeted income of \$265,663, which reflects a revision of the budget after loss of the CWA subsidy. Expenses, however, are under control, being some \$41,000 below actual income.

It is the Finance Committee's intention to prepare the budget for Oct. 2009 through Sep. 2010 on the basis of the objectives set at the PC retreat in August, and present it to the PC at its meeting on Sept. 15. The budget as approved by the PC will then be presented for ratification by the general membership at the GM meeting on Sept. 30, 2009.

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

Les said that WashTech has been asked to endorse Dow Constantine for King County executive and Greg Nickels for Seattle mayor. He asked for opinions on whether we should do endorsements. Ian brought up the idea of negative endorsements: since we would rather see anyone but Ross Hunter as KC exec, and would rather see anyone but Mallahan as mayor, we might consider endorsing more candidates than have asked us or saying, in effect, "Don't vote for Hunter or Mallahan."

Ian moved that we do the endorsements, but the motion died for lack of a second.

Membership Committee Report (Derek Stanford, Chair)

Derek presented the chart of statistics through the end of June. We are now getting more timely reports on AT&T membership, such that we now have a figure through the end of May. That figure is 855, down 19 from April. At-large is 170 for June, down 6 from May. Overall we remain fairly steady since September, when the membership dropped by about 100.

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

Rennie said he would like to put a "Donate \$14.87 to Dow" blurb on the web site to use against Ross Hunter. The dollar amount comes from House Bill 1487, regarding extra benefits to H-1B workers, which Microsoft put through by using Hunter. Les said we should be careful about antagonizing H-1B workers since they're part of the universe we're trying to organize.

Education Committee Report (Ian Jacobson, Chair)

Les introduced Ian, to whom he had offered the interim chairmanship, which Ian accepted, since the last PC meeting. Les asked that this appointment be approved.

- **Action:** There being no objections, Ian Sanderson by consensus is WashTech's Education Committee chair.

Ian reported on his attendance at the conference of the Union Association of Labor Educators in Baltimore. We are lucky, he said, that our problems with race and gender issues are not nearly as bad as the ones they have in the East. Les said Ian was sent to that conference because we wanted ideas on educating the workforce. Ian said we are ahead of many others in our education techniques.

Old Business

Leadership Award: Les said he will get a plaque in order to make the award.

New Business

Swearing In: The three new standing committee chairs were sworn in to their positions by Election Committee chair Dan Gillespie.

Women's Committee: There was discussion about forming the Equity Committee, which eventually focused on a Women's Committee, which is also highly recommended by International. How to do it was an issue because neither committee is mentioned in the bylaws. Anna moved that Rose be appointed as Women's Committee chair. Brian pointed out that this could not be a standing committees like the ones in the bylaws, but could be created ad hoc, then elevated later to a standing committee if the general membership approves. After amendment by Ian and seconding by Brian, the PC voted as follows:

- **Action:** Two ad hoc committees, Equity and Women's, are created.
- **Action:** Anna will write up the functions of the Women's Committee, and Jim will write up the functions of the Equity Committee, and they will report at the next PC meeting.
- **Action:** The president is empowered to appoint any WashTech member to these ad hoc committees.

Les exercised the power and appointed Rose Herbin as chair of the Women's Committee. She accepted. The Equity Committee remains unstaffed for now.

Unemployment Law Project: We received a plea from the WSLC to donate to this project, which provides legal representation and advice at no charge to help the unemployed get their benefits. Les moved that we donate \$100; Anna seconded.

- **Action:** The motion passed. WashTech will donate \$100 to the ULP.

Conventions and Conferences: Les requested that another \$4000 be added to the Conferences and Conventions budget to cover two extra trips. Mitchell pointed out that such a budget change must be approved by the general membership.

- **Action:** The request was approved, subject to ratification at the GM meeting tomorrow. It will be put on the agenda for that meeting.

Iowa City Leadership Conference: Les requested \$6000 to send up to 3 WashTech members to this conference, Sept. 20-26. He commented that we are falling far behind in our development of leadership. Again, Mitchell pointed out that such a budget change must be approved by the general membership. Ian moved that the request be granted, and Jim seconded.

- **Action:** The motion passed, subject to ratification at the GM meeting tomorrow. It will be put on the agenda for that meeting.

President's Salary: AT&T is interpreting the contract language to say that time off for union activities has a cap of 960 hours per year. Les is now up to 980 hours and has to cease all union work immediately if he is to remain an active employee of AT&T. The only solution, he feels, is for the WashTech presidency to be optionally a paid position. This change would be within the budget: WashTech is already paying for his time spent on union work, and the only additional amount would be his benefits. Mitchell moved that the request be granted, and Anna seconded. Again, this budget change must be approved by the general membership.

- **Action:** The motion passed. The post of President of WashTech shall be a paid position at the discretion of the incumbent, including such employee benefits (health insurance, 401(k), etc.) as are provided for staff in the WashTech Operating Procedures Manual. This decision is subject to ratification by the general membership.

Good and Welfare of the Body

Rick Saling's father has passed on, very shortly after the deaths of his mother and his sister. Les will prepare a memorial gift to give Rick when he is able to return to his duties at WashTech.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 PM. The next meeting will be at 6:30 PM, Tuesday, August 11, 2009, at Suite 200, 2900 Eastlake Ave. E., Seattle, WA, unless otherwise notified.

Brian Roberts, Secretary