

MINUTES OF THE WASHTECH PLANNING COUNCIL (PC)
October 14, 2008, 6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Les French, President, in the absence of the Executive Vice President. Six other members were present. Emily Baty, Jim Burdick, Mitchell McMurry, Brian Globerman, and Rick Saling were absent.

Reading of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of 9/9/08 were read and approved after correcting the date of today's meeting from Oct. 13 to Oct. 14.

President's Report (Les French)

Les reported that the training for our new officers, to be elected this month, will be Jan. 21-24, 2009 (4½ days), in Portland, OR. Seven persons are slated to go.

Les congratulated the Election Committee on its work.

The organizing campaign for the AT&T Network Operations Center (NOC) has met a snag. It turns out there are several other salaried members in the unit, making a total of 146 instead of 126, so we are still 10 cards short of a majority. We are still working on it.

Action Item:

- See if District 7 will subsidize part of the cost of the January training (Les said he would do this).

Executive Committee Report (Brian Roberts, Secretary)

There was no report, but there was a question as to when to install the new officers. Brian read "How to Conduct Local Union Elections," our bylaws, and our election rules, and found nothing except "The Election Committee shall communicate the final certification to the membership at the next general membership meeting" in the election rules. Our practice has been to formally install the officers at that same membership meeting in December, but we are free to have the installation earlier if we wish.

Finance Committee Report (Mitchell McMurry, Treasurer)

Les submitted the FY final report for Mitch. It shows us \$1,955.65 over budget, with an income shortfall of \$24,257.90. The PC approved the budget overrun last month, and the income shortfall is attributed to the episodic nature of our subsidies from CWA International.

Membership Committee Report (Dan Gillespie, Chair)

Dan reported that at-large membership as of 9/30 is 175, which is down because nonpaying members were purged from the rolls to update them for the officers' election. CBU membership is 1118, and there are 21,041 subscribers. 239 members are enrolled in COPE.

Les said we need to do something about the decline in at-large membership. We lack leverage with these members because we can't help them with grievances. Erik Langdahl may bring some ideas from the symposium he is attending at Harvard Law School. Les is going to a conference in Canada this weekend about offshoring.

Communications Committee Report (Rennie Sawade, Chair)

Rennie gave an update on the beta test of the new server. He also demonstrated the new splash screen, which is still on the virtual server. Les commented that we are striving for more interactivity and might even want to sponsor a blog.

Rennie said we need to get the at-large members engaged in the web site, and he is working on it. We would like to get at least one ad in a large-circulation magazine like *The Nation*; we might use Ford Foundation money for this. We need to publicize more what we're doing.

Curt Eidem commented on the schizophrenia of our local, trying to serve the needs of our members under contracts and reach out across the country at the same time. If CWA wants us to continue this way, he said, they should give us budget for it.

Les said that Erik is working for us at the national level. He's trying to get the point across that we've gone as far as we can in nationwide outreach without more resources. Les said, however, that National is reluctant to push the process until the Employee Free Choice Act passes, because it is still too easy for employers to offshore the work when employees try to organize.

Bill Montgomery passed out copies of the latest Unity newsletter (10/08), announcing our endorsements of Obama and Gregoire.

Technology Committee Report (Brian Globerman, Chair)

There was no report this time.

Legislative Committee Report (Curt Eidem, Chair)

A list was presented of the COPE expenditures in Washington state that are attributed to WashTech. Curt commented that we are one of the larger COPE contributors in Washington. "We," however, means the 239 individual WashTech members who have signed up for COPE. None of this money comes from WashTech's budget.

There was comment about the Republican candidates on the list. Les said that we tend to follow the recommendations of the State Labor Council. Barbara Rader said we need to be ready to explain to the members why we think these Republicans are good guys. Curt answered that their voting records are the likely reason, and the State Labor Council would have that information. Les said we can ask Gail Love, CWA's full-time lobbyist in Olympia.

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

Regarding outreach, Bill commented that he would like to see us targeting other high-tech companies that have call centers in this area. Examples are RealNet and Comcast.

Unfinished Business

The goal of developing new CATs is being accomplished: Bill said we now have a healthy crop of stewards. One or two more classes will be held this year.

The goal of developing a Power Point presentation is under way, but the completion date has slid to 8/1/09.

The new Membership Chair will take over the goal of surveying at-large members about their representation issues.

The goal of recruiting an organizer is on hold until after the officers' election.

Remaining Action Item Carried Over from Prior Meetings:

- Staff all committees by 12/31/08 (PC).

New Business

Dan said he needs to get address updates for the shop floor people because half of the insurance mailings were returned undeliverable. Curt replied that the chief shop stewards can get this information.

Good of the Order

Dan recommended we ask the striking IAMAW machinists if they need money or if we can help them in some other way. He also suggested we ask the Million Man Army if we can help them on the picket lines.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM. The next meeting will be at 6:30 PM, November 11, 2008, at Suite 200, 2900 Eastlake Ave. E., Seattle, WA, unless otherwise notified.

Brian Roberts, Secretary