

MINUTES OF THE WASHTECH PLANNING COUNCIL

March 11, 2008, 6:30 PM

Chair: Marcus Courtney; all 10 members present

Old Business

Mitch McMurry expressed a concern about bringing the stewards' photos up to date on the AT&T union bulletin board. He was directed to Caele Kane, who is the focal point for maintaining this information source.

President's Report (Marcus Courtney)

Membership: We had a net loss of 19 at-large members this month due to nonpayment of dues. At AT&T we have 1,109 members. The number fluctuates up and down depending on hiring at the call center, and processing out of employees no longer in the unit.

AT&T Bargaining Unit: We opened two new grievances this month; we also are working on two Step 3 grievances. Dave Hildebrand was elected the new Chief Steward. We published the Unity newsletter. In February we had a working relations committee meeting; Pam Cleary, the corporate labor rep, attended. Bill Montgomery is getting trained in processing dues cards.

Organizing Campaigns: We have an organizing potential for a good-size unit: the 170 members of the AT&T Mobility IT Unit; 95 cards are needed. We have not had any contact with the unit since the campaign ended in December. We should follow up in the next month.

TechsUnite: We called 53 WT/TU supporters and gained 2 new at-large members. We followed up organizing leads with Alpine Communications, Bloggers Union, and a potential TechsUnite OC in Austin, Texas.

We hired for our new communications position, which will help build up our online subscribers and members. There are 48 new subscribers. We published two stories on the web: one dealing with the Obama rally and one on tech workers' preference for the WA caucuses. We wrote and sent out one news story (to ask candidates in CNN debate about H-1Bs) and sent out the UW Survey via GetActive.

Political Activities:

- Speed Matters: The Speed Matters bill passed the Senate. We are working on getting legislation passed in the house. We pulled Curt Eidem off the job to assist in grass roots organizing activities. Attended committee hearings, and meetings with legislators.
- CWA's health care for all/employee free choice act campaign was launched. Marcus attended training in Baltimore. Our member Erik Landahl is the 8th CD coordinator for the campaign.
- Marcus met with Sen. Cantwell's Chief Counsel to discuss Speed Matters, H-1B Visa, worker training, and trade issues.

Conventions and Conferences: We need a representative to the District 7 General Conference and to the District 7 Technology Conference. We need 4 delegates and 4 alternates for the COPE convention on May 5.

Future Activities:

- Health Care for All
- CWA Legislative Conference
- Wrap up Speed Matters Campaign
- Appoint committee for election of international officers of The Newspaper Guild (TNG)
- Complete server installation

Action on President's Report:

- Brian Roberts, Barbara Rader, and Dan Gillespie were appointed the election committee for the TNG election. Bill Montgomery volunteered as an assistant.
- The committee is tasked to send out election notices to such WashTech members as are part of the electorate for this election (the AT&T unit may not be included).
- Marcus committed to find out whether the AT&T unit votes in this election.
- The Council agreed to ask Emily Baty if she would be the representative to the District 7 General Conference. Brian Globerman was authorized to represent us at the District 7 Technology Conference.
- The COPE convention delegates will be chosen from among the interested persons: Dan Gillespie, Curt Eidem, Marcus Courtney, Mitch McMurry, and Rick Saling. Brian Roberts, Bill Montgomery, and Rennie Sawade are interested in being alternates.

Treasurer's Report (Rick Saling)

We are currently over budget due to lack of a subsidy from CWA in February. At-large dues were \$4100 under budget, while AT&T unit dues were \$2500 over budget (which is good). Our expenses were fairly normal. Overall, we took in about \$15,500 less than we spent in January.

Advertising: No expenses in February, have spent YTD \$314, have \$2467 left in the budget for this.

Investment of Extra Cash: We have no further information on sweep accounts. We currently have about \$117,000 total with Bank of America and thus are over the FDIC insurance limit. Rick proposed that we immediately put \$25,000 into a 3-month CD with whatever bank is paying the highest interest on <http://bankrate.com> (unless it's a bank with known problems like Countrywide, currently heading the list).

Financial Procedure Recommendations: No action has been taken on the following items. We need to move on the first one ASAP, decide who the signers on the accounts should be, and implement it.

- CWA said we should have two signatures on our bank accounts. We had heard you only need to do this for amounts over \$10K. Rick will investigate and make a recommendation.
- Over-budget items: we can legally only spend money that the membership has approved. Our bylaws say the way we get this approval is by presenting an annual budget to the membership and having it approved. So if we are over the yearly budget amount in an individual line-item, we need to specifically request approval. Our recommendation is that when this happens, we seek approval from the Planning Council.

- Credit Cards: this was also discussed at the training. Rick will summarize and make a recommendation.

Action on Treasurer's Report:

- Rick was authorized to immediately put \$25,000 into a 3-month CD. He is to seek out high interest but try to use a strong local bank with good union ties.
- The Council approved the AT&T unit dues goings \$2500 over budget for February.

Committee Chair Reports

Technology Committee (Brian Globerman): Brian discussed the readiness status of the new server. There are issues with the website, printing, hand-helds, and POS. He is working on a way for the shop stewards to have e-mail accounts on washtech.org. This can be done via either aliasing or redirecting.

Membership Committee (Dan Gillespie): The 3-part payroll authorization card is now being implemented with only a few hiccups. Dan will ask the AT&T stewards at their next meeting to help iron out these problems. The stewards' information for the workers on grievance procedures needs to be updated.

A batch of 90 3-part cards disappeared from the post office and was later recovered, although the envelope was gone. They were still in order, so it appeared that no information was compromised. The USPS Investigations Unit is investigating and will report back to us. Dan wanted to know what to do in regard to notifying these 90 workers.

The planned bargaining unit survey of AT&T workers needs to get under way soon.

Action on Membership Committee's Report:

- The Secretary will, as soon as possible, send letters to the 90 workers whose cards were mishandled, emphasizing that this did not happen while in our custody and that there is little (although some) danger of data theft.
- Executive VP Les French will appoint a task force of two to carry out the bargaining unit survey.

Communications Committee (Rennie Sawade): There has been good response from the technological community to our hiring of Priyanka Joshi as our writer. She handles the technology issues very well.

Legislative Committee (Curt Eidem): Curt encouraged the Council members to refer to him any candidates we might know who want endorsements. If they write to his committee, they will set up interviews to discuss their positions on issues relevant to WashTech's goals.

Vice Presidents' Reports

Les French discussed our potential of meeting the tasks we have set in our Strategic Plan with our recent personnel losses. We need an organizer to replace Todd Tollefson, who was in charge of the campaign to organize the AT&T Mobility IT Unit. Marcus agreed that we have a "definite staffing problem" and need to bring in someone to do much of what Todd was doing.

New Business

The Council interviewed the 2 candidates for the vacant AT&T CBU VP position. Both candidates, BJ Oriley and Emily Baty, are strong and highly experienced.

Action on New Business: After a long discussion, the Council voted to appoint Emily Baty as the new AT&T CBU VP, pending the general election of officers to be held later this year.

BJ Oriley expressed her interest in working for the union in any capacity (with or without a title), and it was the consensus that she is expected to be appointed to a committee position.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Brian Roberts
Secretary