

MINUTES OF THE TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee

August 8, 2009

PRESENT: Carl Younger, Carol Rothman, Matthew Olson, Vernon Clark, Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe, Arnold Amber, Melissa Nelson, Ka Yan Ng, Bernie Lunzer, Sheila Lindsay, Natalie Hill

Younger asked if it's possible to list new events on the committee's Web site. Carol Rothman said it could be done if someone can track down future meetings. Vernon Clark said he could do that.

Rothman noted that this would be for next year's schedule of things like of minority-journalist meetings. She said it could help us to have a Guild presence at these meetings.

Clark reported that some members were planning to attend NABJ's conference to pass out bumper stickers and wristbands and encourage people to stay in touch with the Guild.

Younger wondered whether these members would be eligible for a stipend.

Rothman said that the committee could request a stipend to pay for members to go if they can report back to us, possibly in the Guild Reporter.

Younger referred to communications or a request from ILCA.

Sheila Lindsay explained that ILCA members are people who work in labor communications. Their conference is coming up in September. Bernie Lunzer noted that the meeting is in Pittsburgh, before the AFL-CIO meeting.

Lindsay said she needed to get more clarification on what they're looking for. Lunzer said he'd get more information from Andy Zipser.

Younger referred to Lunzer's e-mail regarding the Minority Leadership Institute, explaining that the CWA board won't be considering candidates from the Guild and CWA Canada this year.

He proposed that we look at our mission statement and what we should work on next.

Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe suggested projects that operate more on the local level. Clark added that doing outreach at local level is important, with a dwindling number of minorities at shops. Younger observed that it seems to be a national trend. Younger wondered if that was something to propose to district councils: Survey the membership they represent, match it up to ask companies for up-to-date information on minority makeup?

Clark said he's only black male reporter in the newsroom of the Philadelphia Inquirer. He thinks companies want to slide under the radar on their hiring practices. Younger asked if it's the same in Canada. Arnold Amber said that it is in some places; in others, diversity numbers have improved because of so many buyouts of senior, white people.

Younger proposed that we publish our findings in the Guild Reporter.

Amber said that companies might use such a report to attack seniority provisions in our contracts. He's suggested that it's more important to focus on rehire situations, how employers are doing with hiring right now.

Younger said that our next step should be a proposal to district councils.

Melissa Nelson said the committee needs to get together a set of questions/topics for the survey.

Younger asked for volunteers to take it on:

Clark, Kuramoto-Eidsmoe, Lindsay and Natalie Hill volunteered. Nelson also said she would help.

Younger said that after we've rated them, maybe we can give them some sort of commendation on the best ones, and ask for meetings with companies that have a problem. Maybe this is something locals and district councils could do. Kuramoto-Eidsmoe suggested annual or regular check-backs in the future.

Lunzer said that he and Younger would be meeting with equity-seeking group in the industry at the AAJA convention in Boston. He said they would report back at the next meeting.

Clark asked if there was a time/date for call for the smaller group.

Lindsay suggested that the group could start from e-mail and then schedule a call if necessary.

The committee's next call was scheduled for 10 a.m. PT/1 p.m. ET on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2009.

The call was adjourned at 10:56 a.m.