

MINUTES OF THE TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee

February 28, 2009

PRESENT: Michael D'Souza, Chair; Randy Gilliam; Matthew Olson; Carl Younger; Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe; Ka Yan Ng and Matthew Olsen

Melissa Nelson, TNG-CWA Director of Collective Bargaining;
Sheila Lindsay, Chair SEC HRE Committee; Arnold Amber, Director, CWA-SCA Canada; Bernie Lunzer, President, TNG-CWA

ABSENT: Vernon Clark; Natalie Hill and Vincent Proteau

MINUTES PREPARED BY MICHAEL D'SOUZA.

Checked by Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe

Budget: Bernie Lunzer elaborated on an e-mail he sent to the committee chair that morning. He said that the tight fiscal conditions and widespread layoffs in the industry are putting the TNG's budget under enormous pressure. He said that the TNG Executive was looking for a budget from the committee on what it actually expected to spend. He emphasized that this was not a retreat from a commitment to equity and diversity within the union but a search for a more precisely defined budget.

He also said that there would be important district meetings on the Sunday between the TNG Sector Conference and CWA Convention in Washington in June. That's the day the HR&E Committee is considering for its conference on equity issues. He said it was likely that the TNG Sector Conference will conclude by noon on the Saturday.

Michael explained that the budget presented by the committee is as precise as it can be and is refined as more details are available. He also said the committee was to discuss what items it would keep in the agenda.

Bernie then left the meeting.

Yoko suggested that the committee hold its meeting on the Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. The committee agreed to explore this option after a better understanding of when the TNG Sector Conference really would end. One option is to hold a committee face-to-face meeting on Saturday afternoon and a conference on Human Rights and Equity on Sunday morning.

The committee agreed that it should be able to get speakers for the HR&E Conference from Washington, reducing costs of holding the meeting. The committee also agreed that most speakers, if not all speakers, should come from equity-seeking groups.

Carl will look into finding people to speak about how members of equity-seeking groups can deal with the current problems in the communication industry.

Sheila will look into getting speakers to speak about dealing with issues affecting non-journalists in areas such as circulation and the support operations of the communications industry and the professional staff, such as nurses and translators.

The committee noted that Vernon, who had sent his regrets for missing the meeting, was already exploring ideas for alternative ownership of the media.

The committee also said the conference could look into how training resources of the TNG and CWA may be used to address challenges faced by members of equity-seeking groups. Michael said he and Arnold could work a presentation on the Canadian experience.

The committee agreed to a few refinements to its budget for presentation to the TNG Executive.

On other matters, Carl reported that he is continuing to research the so-called ethnic media. He also said he had been approached by Russ Davis of Jobs With Justice in Massachusetts about working together on reaching out to minorities regarding the Employee Free Choice Act. Sheila, Carl and Randye agreed to work with Jobs With Justice about participating in the TNG HR&E conference.

The committee adjourned at 13:56 eastern and agreed to meet again, in telephone conference on Saturday, March 14, at 13:00 Eastern (10:00 Pacific)

