

# MINUTES OF THE TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee

June 16, 2007

Telephone conference call at 1:30 pm (1338) Eastern; 10:38 Pacific

Prepared by Michael D'Souza

PRESENT: Michael D'Souza, Chair; Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe; Randye Gilliam; Natalie Hill; Carl Younger; Debbie Thomas, TNG-CWA Director of Human Rights; Linda Foley, President TNG-CWA

ABSENT: Matthew Harper, Secretary; Datejje Green, Vice Chair; Sheila Lindsay.

1) Linda Foley asked committee members to work on getting support for the proposal to add four diversity members to the CWA Board. The committee had discussed this proposal at a previous meeting. The committee assured the TNG-CWA president that it will work hard to ensure that the proposition is passed at the Toronto Convention next month. Details about the proposal, which were previously circulated, are attached as Adobe Acrobat files.

2) Carl Younger Lending Library project: Carl Younger reported that the inaugural meeting on Saturday, June 9 was successful. A series of setbacks, from inclement weather to people not being able to find the location, meant that fewer than expected people attended the first session. Debbie noted that even though the numbers were small it was a very successful meeting. A report prepared by Carl on the meeting is attached at the end of these minutes. Carl has scheduled the next meeting for Tuesday, June 26 and he's expecting the number of participants to increase. This session will include the screening of the film, Management on Trial.

3) Debbie Thomas Retirement: Ms Thomas advised the committee that she will be retiring after the convention in Toronto in July this year. The committee thanked her warmly for her help and guidance over the year.

4) Web site: Randye Gilliam reported that she had just sent in material to update the website with information on the library project in Boston. She also appealed to committee members for more content material for the website. She will also include contact information for the committee. The committee agreed that this should be an [info@guildequity.org](mailto:info@guildequity.org) address rather than the individual addresses for committee members.

5) TNG convention workshop: The committee again discussed holding a workshop at the convention on equity issues. Debbie says she is organizing it.

6) Stipend: Debbie reported that the TNG received three applicants for stipend in Canada and none in the U.S. The stipend is \$400 U.S. each; two to be awarded in Canada and two in the U.S. She reported that Sujata Berry, a producer for CBC TV will receive one of the stipends to attend the South Asian Journalist Conference in New York in July. The other goes to Eric Shih an associate producer at CBC Thunder Bay who will attend the Asian American Journalist Association meeting in Miami in August.

7) Next meeting: The committee agreed to meeting again on Saturday, July 7, 2007 at 1 pm EST (10:00 am PST)

Adjournment: The committee adjourned at about 2:05 EST (11:05 PST)

## **Carl Younger report on first meeting of Lending Library in Boston:**

The Human Rights and Equity Committee, New England branch, kicked off its first discussion group meeting on Saturday June 9<sup>th</sup> at the Boston Newspaper Guild's headquarters in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Despite threatening weather, equity seeking members began to arrive.

In attendance were:

Glenda Buell, Living department The Boston Globe

Kathleen McCabe Zone reporter The Boston Globe

Rachel Leach, Outside Sales the Boston Globe

Marc Bell, Security The Boston Globe

Debbie Thomas, Human Rights Director The Newspaper Guild Washington.

Donna Marks, Region 1 Vice President, The Newspaper Guild

Dan Totten, Boston Newspaper Guild President

Scott Steeves, Boston Newspaper Guild Vice President.

Carl Younger, Executive Committee At Large and Human Rights and Equity Committee Rep. New England.

Hand outs included:

### **Potential Topics for discussion.**

Equity member unity and history.

Minorities in the workplace

The term minority

Minority employment and mentoring

Strategies for our future

Is affirmative action necessary in our current culture.

### **A list of available library videos to date**

American Dream

At the River I stand

Harlan County USA

The Navigators

Salt of the earth

Vietnam, the Philippines and India

Chinese Americans

Cambodia, Thailand and Laos

Civil Rights Journey

Black Indians: an American story

African Contributions to the United States

### **Guidelines to live by from 16<sup>th</sup> century warrior and Kensei, (Sword-saint), Miyamoto Musashi.**

- Think honestly within yourself in your dealings with all people.
- Constant Training is the only way to learn strategy
- Become familiar with every art you come across
- Understand the way of other discipline.
- Know the difference between right and wrong in all matters.
- Strive for inner judgment and an understanding of everything.
- See that which cannot be seen.
- Overlook nothing, Regardless of its Supposed insignificance.
- Do not waste time idling or second guessing after you have set your goals.

Sushi was served. The discussion went immediately to the current effect on minorities at the Boston Globe due to its current policy on layoffs, buyouts and outsourcing. It appeared to the group that minorities had taken an extremely large hit at the company and there was talk of investigating the actual numbers lost.

The conversation continued with discussions on developing cultural events at the Boston local, inviting people of various cultures to share their cultural histories and traditions and letting people know that the Newspaper Guild includes all people under its umbrella.

The basic concept of the New England program was explained by Carl Younger. "The idea is to create a family environment that members easily tap into. The Newspaper Guild is a large group of people with a lot of knowledge and resources yet to be tapped. The Newspaper Guild has members knowledgeable about a myriad of subjects. If someone wants to learn Spanish or Tai Chi there are members in our unit knowledgeable in those subjects. Why don't we start networking with our brothers and sisters in our local across the country. Study groups could be formed for work or fun or we could just ask for advice when we need it. The untapped resources in our group are amazing and its about time we took advantage of them."

Debbie Thomas, Human Rights director, Washington D.C. expanded on the concept by saying "for those people that think the union is not for them we can show them that the union is more than they think it is. The Union is a big thing made up of individuals and we do a lot more than our day to day jobs."

Carl Younger, local 31245, mentioned that the library part of the program is also an attraction to bring people in to learn about the union and our diverse cultures and history.

Dan Totten, President of the Boston Newspaper Guild local 31245, suggested that the library program could be expanded to open our arms to the public school system, to combine resources and to alleviate misconceptions of the union movement and history.

Scott Steeves, Vice President of the Boston Newspaper Guild local 31245, stated "It shouldn't take someone to be brought up on charges to make them understand the importance of the union, some people don't realize what unions have gone through to bring us what we have."

Debbie Thomas later spoke on the CWA plan to propose 4 diversity seats and reactions from the members to that proposal.

Marc Bell, Security the Boston News paper Guild stated," we need to work harder to let members know what their rights are on the job and simplify the information in the contract book to make it more understandable."

Donna Marks, TNG Region One Vice President said. "As much as it is important to go back and learn history, unions are reinventing themselves right now!" "We could partner with Jobs with Justice who represents many equity seeking groups that we could immediately become involved with to help our cause grow. Jobs with Justice helps all unions and my first experience was the Boston Newspaper Guild's rally and mock trial of Globe/NYT management. It was extremely powerful and really nudged the company to action." Donna also mentioned a tri-council meeting a few years back that she attended at the New York Guild where they gave her a beautiful labor history book presented by the authors, entitled "Ordinary People/Extraordinary Lives" which spoke about how unions built NYC and the obstacles and health risks they overcame. They all joined together in solidarity from all walks of life and the work they produced still stands today, generations after them. The book is a product of the Robert E. Wagner Library Archives at New York University. They have other resources available and she will look into them as well.

Dan Totten, then volunteered to Contact Russ Davis of Jobs with justice to see if he may be available to attend our next meeting to discuss what they do.

It was decided to have another meeting on Tuesday June 26<sup>th</sup> 5:30 pm, with:

Program introduction and explanation by Carl Younger BNG  
Guest speaker Donna Marks, TNG-CWA Region 1 Vice President.  
Russ Davis of Jobs for justice.( if his schedule allows.)  
Feature film: Management on trial, Our workplace unraveling daily

Hopefully, we can have Debbie Thomas attend as the Creator of the Human Rights and Equity Group. Her knowledge and insight are invaluable.

Kathy McCabe BNG agreed to take notes in future meetings