

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

November 3, 2007

## Telephone Conference

PRESENT: Michael D'Souza, Chair; Randy Gilliam; Natalie Hill; Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe; Fareed Mohammed; Sheila Lindsay; Melissa Nelson TNG-CWA Sector Rep;

ABSENT: Judy Lee; Carl Younger; Vernon Clark;

## ALSO ATTENDING:

Scott Stephens, TNG Regional vice president.

MINUTES PREPARED BY MICHAEL D'SOUZA.

The committee started its meeting on schedule at 1:00 p.m. Eastern, 10:00 a.m. Pacific.

## Carl Younger Library project:

Scott Stephens reported that the TNG Human Rights executive committee, at its meeting on October 23 suggested a public event at the Boston Local offices to celebrate several festivals such as Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza and Eid. Unfortunately Carl Younger could not attend the HR&E meeting so the discussion on this was truncated. (However since our meeting on Saturday, I've talked to Carl. He'll contact some of the ethnic groups in the Boston area and members of the local executive to come up with a plan by the committee's meeting on November 24. Possibilities include having ethnic groups cater the event rather than go to restaurants; live music; seeing if the Muslim community is interested in participating given that it's Eid ul Adha, the feast of the Sacrifice on December 20)

## Outreach to journalism schools and community colleges.

Michael D'Souza reported that Arnold Amber has made contact with post secondary institutions in Canada and will share this information with the committee so it can build on the relationship.

## Conference on Equity Issues:

The TNG Human Rights executive committee, at its meeting on October 23, also suggested that this committee, the Human Rights and Equity Committee organize a conference on Equity issues. The committee spent the rest of the meeting talking about this proposal.

## Some of the points considered are:

- Sheila Lindsay reported that the issue of diversity in the workplace was raised, though marginally, at the Jobs Conference she attended at the University of Maryland. Demographics will dictate that the workplace will become more diversified as the populations in the United States and Canada change but much of that change will be at the lower ranks.
- One consideration is helping older employees cope with the technological changes sweeping the information industry. It was suggested that older worker may have to learn from the younger ones.
- Randy Gilliam also pointed out the problems with dealing with globalization of the industry as North American companies outsource their operation to other countries.
- The number of jobs is shrinking
- Other countries are already investing in training their staff in cultural sensitivities to deal with the changing workplace.
- Fareed Mohammed said union leaders should share their success so other can learn from them.
- The committee discussed holding the conference in conjunction with the UNITY Conference in Chicago in July or other meetings. In the end the committee agreed that the best time would be in June in Las Vegas, Nevada, in conjunction with the Minority Caucus of the CWA. The first day, June 21 would be devoted on the TNG Equity Conference and the second day, June 22, a joint session with the Minority Caucus. Yoko will make initial contact with the Minority Caucus.

- Scott Stephens and Melissa Nelson will look into the logistics of organizing the conference, the booking of hotel rooms etc.
- The conference will focus on Equity in the Union Movement. Topics include attracting more activists from equity seeking groups.

Conclusions:

The TNG Equity Conference be held on June 21 in Las Vegas. People attending this conference could then attend the Minority Caucus of the CWA on June 22 and those who are also delegates to the CWA will attend that convention on June 23 and 24.

While diversity issues in journalism will be a key part of the conference it will also address equity issues in other sectors represented by the TNG, such as nursing and translation services. And journalism is taken to include all sectors getting the news out such as circulation and transmission.

Sessions at the conference will include:

- Workshops and discussion on attracting and retaining members of equity seeking groups as activists and union leaders.
- Contract language to deal with equity issues such as accessibility, discrimination, carve-outs.
- Linkages to other organizations involved in equity issues.
- Academic and professional research addressing the changing workplace.

Adjournment.

The committee adjourned at 1:57 pm Eastern, 10:57 Pacific, and agreed to meet again on Saturday, November 24 at one pm Eastern, 10:00 am Pacific and again on Saturday, December 8 at the same time. The meetings are being scheduled so close together to deal with the outreach at the Carl Younger Library project and the conference on Equity issues in Las Vegas in June.