

MINUTES OF THE TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee

September 6, 2008

PRESENT: Michael D'Souza, Chair; Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe; Joe Lapi; Carl Younger; Randy Gilliam; Vernon Clark; Natalie Hill; Matthew Olson; Melissa Nelson, TNG-CWA Sector Rep.; Arnold Amber; Carol Rothman; Bernie Lunzer; Michael Cabanatuan;

ABSENT: Olivia James; Fareed Mohammed; Sherri Borden Colley; Lucy Witeck

MINUTES PREPARED BY MICHAEL D'SOUZA.
Checked by Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe

Budget

The committee discussed its budget with three-year projections and Bernie Lunzer's notes on the financial challenges facing the union. All the documents are attached to these minutes. Bernie told the committee the TNG-CWA is planning to use the SIF to pay for a conference on the future of the identity of the union and the HR&E Committee could attend the conference with an additional day for a face-to-face meeting that's included in the budget. The conference is expected to attract labor leaders and discuss issues such as collective bargaining. It will be open to all activists. The location is yet to be decided but Chicago is one consideration. He also said the TNG-CWA was discussing financial issues with the CWA. One of the issues is staff replacement.

Michael D'Souza said that the HR&E committee had put forward a three-year budget projection to give the executive a road map of the committee's aims, objectives and ambitions. He noted that demographic projections in the United States and Canada showed that the faces of both countries were changing with minorities becoming majorities. He said the union movement had to connect with these majorities and the HR&E Committee was presenting a map on roads that could be built. He noted that the TNG-CWA has had a director for Human Rights for decades but this position has been vacant since the Sector Conference in Toronto in 2007.

Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe suggested the TNG-CWA could work with the CWA to see if the committee would be able to work with someone already on staff working on these issues within CWA. Michael added that the CMG is working on hiring a rep to deal with Human Rights issues. The committee agreed that staffing to deal with Human Rights issues could be addressed by cooperation at multiple levels of the union. Michael Cabanatuan added that the union must re-evaluate its objectives and processes to address changing society and the HR&E had presented a good plan.

The committee agreed to pass along the budget with the three-year projection to the TNG-CWA Executive. Bernie said that the material had already been forwarded to the executive.

U.S. Election

Randy Gilliam suggested using the current election in the United States as a tool for reaching out to members of equity-seeking groups. Bernie reported that the CWA has a voter-registration and election campaign under way. Randy and Vernon Clark agreed to cooperate on a voter-registration plan. They noted that time was of the essence since registration deadlines were just about a month away.

On-line accessibility:

Joe Lapi and Arnold Amber agreed to work on accessibility on the internet. This is grounded in the presentation by Laurie McArthur of the University of Toronto. Joe and Arnold will review the available literature and work on a plan to make union Web pages better accessible to people with disabilities.

School Outreach

Carl Younger reported that the Boston local has made progress in reaching out to the school board in Quincy, Mass., about talking to students about the role of unions in society. He reported that he had sent a tentative syllabus to the school board for this program. He also reported that the local is considering including such an outreach program into the next Collective Agreement. He noted that while traditional newspapers are slipping in circulation and advertising revenues, ethnic publications are flourishing. Tapping into these communities may help the prosperity of employers. He added that such outreach would be helped if journalists and ad reps were better aware of the culture and sensibilities of these communities. He said the Boston Library project would be integrated into any outreach program.

The committee adjourned at 13:33 Eastern and agreed to meet again by telephone conference on Saturday, Sept. 27, 2008, at 2 p.m. Atlantic; 1 p.m. Eastern, 10 a.m. Pacific.

TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee

prepared by michael d'souza

Wednesday, September 3, 2008

Demographers and statisticians in the United States and Canada have pointed out that the face of both nations is changing. In not too many years the people who have long considered themselves the majority population will be the minority. Populations of people of colour, as they are referred to in the United States, and visible minorities, as they are known in Canada, will account for the majority of peoples. The number of Aboriginal people is also increasing and people with disabilities are increasingly taking their rightful place in the workplace. But within union ranks these people are not only under represented, they are largely absent. The TNG-CWA Human Rights and Equity Committee is attempting to encourage and entice members of these equity seeking groups to participate in the union movement in general and in the TNG-CWA in particular.

Introduction to budget

This budget comes from the deliberations of the TNG-CWA Sector Conference in Providence, Rhode Island held February 27 through March 2. Delegates there directed the Sector Executive Council to establish an annual budget for the standing committee on Human Rights and Equity so it has the necessary financial resources to execute its plans. This budget presentation is based on the realistic needs and aspirations of the committee.

Equity Conference

The same sector conference directed the committee to hold an equity conference. The committee held this conference in Las Vegas on Sunday, June 22, 2008 in conjunction with the CWA convention. The conference drew about 60 people over the course of the day and all participants deemed it a very successful day. The conference considered the state of the business, especially the newspaper business in the United States. The contributions unions have made to society comparing the effects on the standards of living in cities with a unionized workforce and those without using the hospitality industry as a marker. The conference also addressed meeting the needs of people with disabilities on the Internet and ways of attracting younger people to union ranks. It is now time to apply lessons learnt in 'Vegas to build the union. And that's the committee's agenda for the next few years.

Conference budget and actual expenses

The conference was budgeted at about \$22,000 and actual expenses are showing at about half that amount. The actual expenditures are expected to increase as outstanding expenses are submitted after the summer lull. In examining the actual it is noted that the speakers have not submitted travel expenses and several members of the equity committee, or their locals, have yet to submit their expenses.

Anti Discrimination Fund

When the committee struck its budget for the conference it agreed to the proposal by then President Linda Foley to draw on the Anti Discrimination Fund to pay for the conference. The committee agreed to this in light of the on-going. It was unreasonable to expect the executive to approve the committee's budget and the deadline for the conference was upon us. This fund was not, at any time, seen as the source of funding for the activities of the committee. It was an interim measure.

Future Conferences

Members of the committee have been evaluating the success of the June conference in 'Vegas and agree that it was fruitful and economical. They also agree that the conference should be an annual meeting. In years when the TNG Sector Conference is held in conjunction with the CWA meeting the conference will be held the day before the TNG meeting. This will reduce the costs of holding the meeting given that most people coming to the conference will be coming to the TNG and CWA meetings it means adding one-night's hotel costs for participants. During election years for the TNG the conference will be held the Sunday before the CWA Convention as it was this year, 2008.

Face to face meetings

Since its inception in Las Vegas in July 2006 the TNG Human Rights and Equity Committee has met in teleconference at least once a month. It has used these meetings to build trust, co-operation and cohesion. It has now become a team focused on encouraging and fostering the participation of members of equity seeking groups in the union movement. While members of the committee are at the TNG Sector Conferences the agenda of those meetings make it impossible for the committee to spend much time together; there simply too many other things demanding their attention and very limited time. The committee is now at the point where it has to spend at least a weekend discussing its plans and working out details on how those plans will be executed.

Subsidy to attend equity meetings

This programme grew organically out of the committee's discussion on ways and means of encouraging members of equity seeking groups to become involved in the union movement. The plan offers members of these groups a stipend of \$400 each to attend meetings of equity seeking groups, such as the UNITY conference or the NABJ or SAJA. Two stipends are offered in Canada and two in the United States. Applicants must write an essay on why they should receive the stipend and how it will help the union movement. Winners are picked by a name-draw from all the complete applications. In the future winners will be given half the stipend up front and the second half on writing a report on the meeting.

New Local Officers Seminar subsidy

The NLOS is the TNG-CWA's most successful training program for new local officers. It's a weekend of practical, hand-on training in dealing with such mundane, but vital, matters as keeping books and minutes to the intricacy of organizing and building a stronger union. The Human Rights and Equity Committee has encouraged locals to send members of equity seeking groups to the NLOS and encouraged the TNG to subsidize locals sending members of equity seeking groups to the NLOS. However the committee does not select the members attending NLOS or decide how many will be subsidized. Therefore this cost is not and should not be included in this budget.

Boston Library Project

This is the Carl Younger initiative in Quincy, Massachusetts. The project has had its growing pains but is now moving into attracting younger people to the union movement by reaching out to schools.

Three year projections

As has been noted earlier the committee is looking at a multi-year plan to improve participation of members of equity seeking groups in the TNG. In keeping with this vision it has prepared a three year budgetary projection which includes allowance for inflation.

Sources of funding

The work of the standing committee on Human Rights and Equity is normal union work and should be funded from general revenues. This will clearly demonstrate that the leadership of the TNG-CWA sees human rights and equity as an important part of building and nurturing the union. The Anti Discrimination Fund may be used to offset some of the costs of the annual conference on Human Rights.

**The Newspaper Guild
Standing Committee on Human Rights and Equity
Budget 2008-09**

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	
HR&E Conference	Vegas: Jun 22, 08				
	Budget	Actual to date			
Committee					
Travel	3,200.00	1,262.00		3,520.00	
Hotel	6,400.00	1,112.00	3,200.00	3,360.00	7,040.00
Misc meals, etc	1,600.00		800.00	840.00	1,760.00
Wage replacement	1,600.00		800.00	840.00	1,760.00
Speakers					
Travel	1,600.00		800.00	840.00	1,760.00
Hotel	3,200.00	909.00	1,600.00	1,680.00	3,520.00
Misc meals, etc	800.00		400.00	420.00	880.00
Fees	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,100.00	2,200.00
Reception	1,000.00	3,188.00	4,000.00	4,200.00	4,620.00
Misc	1,000.00	2,288.00	2,500.00	2,625.00	2,887.50
Total HR&E Conference	22,400.00	10,759.00	16,100.00	16,905.00	29,947.50
Subsidy to Attend Equity Mtgs					
4 at \$400	1,600.00	1,480.00	1,600.00	1,600.00	1,600.00
Subsidy Boston Library Proj.					
	1,000.00	333.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Subsidy to NLOS					
Travel 60-70-80%	2,450.00	2,450.00	2,572.50	2,701.13	2,836.18
Room & Board 50%	2,121.00	2,121.00	2,227.05	2,338.40	2,455.32
Total subsidy to NLOS	4,571.00	4,571.00	4,799.55	5,039.53	5,291.50
Face to Face Meeting					
Travel	3,200.00		3,360.00	3,528.00	3,704.40
Hotel 2 nights	6,400.00		6,720.00	7,056.00	7,408.80
Misc meals, etc	1,600.00		1,680.00	1,764.00	1,852.20
Total Face to face	11,200.00		11,760.00	12,348.00	12,965.40
TOTAL BUDGET	45,342.00		40,059.10	41,932.06	56,095.91

email from bernie lunzer:

----- Original Message -----

From: [Bernie Lunzer](#)

To: [Sheila Lindsay](#) ; MelissMNelson@aol.com ; [Joseph Lapi](#) ; [Arnold Amber](#) ; [Carol Rothman](#) ; [Carl Younger](#) ; [Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe](#) ; [Lucy Witeck](#) ; [Arnold Amber](#) ; [Sheila Lindsay](#) ; [Matthew Olson](#) ; [Randy Gilliam](#) ; [Vernon Clark](#) ; [Natalie Hill](#) ; [Randy Gilliam](#) ; [Michael D'Souza](#) ; [Joe Lapi](#) ; [Matthew Olson](#) ; [Natalie Naomi Hill](#)

Sent: Friday, September 05, 2008 9:20 AM

Subject: Re: Meeting: Sep 6 Agenda budget etc

I want the committee to know that Carol and I will work with you on your goals, and that we won't back away from our commitment. But we want the committee to understand the financial situation the Guild finds itself in. I've included the committee on the Local Officers Update that goes out monthly. I hope everyone had a chance to review the one sent out yesterday, particularly the financial attachment.

I will work with the Executive Council to finance Equity Committee work, but I think in all likelihood the best we'll be able to establish is a game plan for the remainder of this budget year that runs through April. Work on next year's budget will start in earnest in January. We are busy coordinating what that process will look like with CWA, as the internal process has shifted radically in just the last year.

I know the committee wants a face-to-face meeting. I'm hoping to build that into a Strategic Industry Fund request that we're currently putting together for our January "Future of the Industry" summit. Obviously it's critical that any discussion of the future of the media industry in North America concern itself with diversity, and our employers' ability to reflect and report on their communities. So, I believe it's possible to build a component into the SIF request, which would also allow for the get-together you want. The important thing about the SIF request is that it would be financed out of a completely different revenue source - not our operating budget.

I want everyone to understand (and I'm sharing this email with the executive council) that we will have some difficult choices ahead when it comes to funding TNG's operation. Although we can't know for certain at this juncture, we're not even sure we'll be able to fill staff vacancies when they occur (and we have one retirement pending at the end of the year). The financial pressures are intense. Although the budget shows us to be 1 percent over budget after a couple of months, CWA has taken the position that we owe them \$187,000 for last year - and I have no idea where we will come up with that. You'll see the letter from the CWA finance committee included with the finance report that went out yesterday. Further, internal discussions suggest they view us as losing as much as a quarter-million per year, when other costs are attributed to us are added in.

In addition to this, CWA has made it clear that it will be restructuring. It is my belief that they want to force mergers of "underperforming" sectors and districts. We need to have a plan that will ensure a vital media sector, that also shows our ability to pay our way, while continuing to represent and organize members. This is a lot to absorb, and unfortunately this dialogue in the larger Guild should have started a few years ago. But, I'm confident that when we are able to get the information out to our locals and leaders, that thoughtful, constructive decisions will be made about our available resources.

I look forward to working with the Equity Committee in that spirit.