

NABET-CWA Local 16 Executive Board

DATE OF MEETING: January 13, 2009  
ATTENDANCE: President: Paul C. Vasquez  
Vice President: James J. Nolan  
Secretary-Treasurer: Richard L. Gelber

Executive Board Representatives:

Unit #1: Brendan Black  
Unit #2: William Bores  
Unit #3: Steve Rubbinaccio  
Unit #4: Dennis Allen  
Unit #5: Arthur Mazzacca  
Unit #6: Orlando Burgos  
Unit #7: Henry Plimack  
Unit #8: Katherine Henry

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 a.m.

**1. Scholarships**

Scholarship Committee Chairman Brendan Black suggested conducting the scholarship drawing at least one month earlier this year than has been the case in the past, in order to accommodate tuition payment schedules. No objection was noted. This will probably result in the need to determine the number of scholarships to be awarded at the February Executive Board meeting, or the March meeting at the latest.

**2. Paystubs**

ABC has announced that they will discontinue providing paper paystubs and statements of earnings for employees on direct deposit. Although the information will be available through the Disney portal, Daily Hires do not have access. The Union will investigate the issue, along with other potential contract violations.

**3. GMA Accident**

S. Rubbinaccio reported that last month a truck drove into the street-level window at Times Square Studios on a Saturday during production of Good Morning America. Plywood is still present where part of the window stood. ABC had asked in the past for concrete barriers on the sidewalk, but was turned down by the police due to pedestrian flow concerns. This is at least the fifth accident in this general location in recent years. Safety Chairman Plimack is concerned about security issues and the Union will follow up.

**4. Workers Compensation Class**

Training on Workers Compensation claim procedures will be conducted in the Local 16 office on February 5 by Vincent Rossillo of Fine, Olin, and Anderman.

**5. Funding Requests**

**a. Stella D'Oro Strike**

While not strictly a funding request (the union involved has not asked for financial help), O. Burgos brought to the Board's attention the ongoing strike at the Stella D'Oro plant in the Bronx. Members of the BCTGM union walked out in August when the new owners, a buyout firm, demanded cuts in their wages and benefits. Local 16 will see what assistance we can give and will locate members in the vicinity to reach out to.

**b. Peggy Browning Fund**

The Peggy Browning Fund is holding a benefit dinner on January 28, honoring CWA District One Vice-President Chris Shelton and others.

Motion (#09-01): To allocate \$300 for a ½ page journal ad for the Peggy Browning Fund benefit dinner.

Moved: Rubbinaccio

Seconded: Nolan

Passed Unanimously

Abstain: Burgos

**c. WGAE Awards Event**

The Writers Guild of America East is holding its annual Awards Event. Local 16 and WGAE have a close relationship, and the Guild gave us much support during our most recent contract negotiations.

Motion (#09-02): To allocate \$200 for a ¼ page journal ad for the WGAE Awards Event.

Moved: Henry

Seconded: Gelber

Passed Unanimously

**6. Pension Update**

Pension Trustee Dennis Allen reported that the Plan essentially broke even in 2008, which vindicates the Trustees' investment strategy since almost all other plans lost money during the period. The accrual rate currently stands at 0.65% for 2009 and 2010 (subject to a "pop-down" calculation on June 30, 2009, covering 2010). The "pop-up" calculation covering the entire current 3-year period, will take place at the end of 2010.



**11. Committee Reports**

A. Communications Committee

The Local 16 website will soon provide links for contacting officers and Executive Board members. H. Plimack requested that the Communications Committee either meet or be dissolved. The Board discussed the possibility of providing Local 16 e-mail addresses for members desiring them.

B. Daily Hires

A Special General Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, January 17, to discuss Daily Hire employment opportunities.

C. Elections Committee

Elections Committee Black recused himself from the current elections, since he is a candidate. Nominating petitions are due by January 30. The acting committee chairman will be Frank Schiraldi or Frank Buscaglia.

D. Finance Committee

(covered in Secretary-Treasurer's report)

E. Grievance and Arbitration report

Grievance Chairman Nolan reported that a WABC-TV grievance meeting is still pending. A new grievance was filed regarding out-times in TV-17.

We are still waiting for further information from the Company on the GMA train trip. A WABC-TV Teleprompter operator was terminated by the Company; there may be an Unfair Labor Practice charge regarding this.

Two Master Control Operators were given one-week suspensions in connection with a channel switching error, and a Network ENG maintenance engineer was suspended for six weeks for insubordination. A studio/field engineer was suspended for two days for allegedly not being present to place a microphone on talent for a special report.

The Martin Bell arbitration continues on February 12.

A suspension at WABC-TV ENG has been referred to arbitration.

The arbitrator ruled against the Union in the case over S. Kuebler's termination, and we are waiting for the arbitrator's decision in a suspension case in post-production.

F. Mobilization Committee

A handout from the CWA website regarding the Employee Free Choice Act was distributed, and more mobilization information over this issue will be forthcoming.

G. Organizing Committee

The organizing petition for the BITS group was withdrawn, but can be re-filed after six months. The Board discussed other internal groups.

[During the above discussion, D. Allen returned to the meeting.]

H. Political Committee

Al Franken was certified as the winner of the U.S. Senate race in Minnesota, but further court action will follow. Roland Burriss was appointed to the vacant U.S. Senate seat from Illinois by disgraced Governor Blagojevich, and it appears he will now be seated. CWA District One will interview candidates for NYC Public Advocate this Thursday.

**11. Committee Reports – Cont’d**

**I. Safety and Health**

Safety and Health Committee Chairman Plimack will work with CWA District One on developing a stress management program for our members. Henry requests members register for membership in the Safety Committee on the Local 16 website.

President Vasquez distributed the ergonomic survey report.

A WABC-TV safety committee meeting was held in December, and a CWA District One safety conference call was held yesterday.

**J. Training**

(see Media Sectors Conference Report)

H. Plimack suggested that the Television Academy can help with technical training.

**K. Vacation Committee**

Vacation Committee Chairman Mazzacca reported that there is no agreement at WABC-TV, but we are trying to set up meetings. A Network Vacation meeting is scheduled for January 28.

**12. New Members**

The following new members were accepted into membership contingent upon payment of initiation fees, dues, and verification of application:

A. Bridgeman

W. Penso

Moved: Mazzacca

Seconded: Black

Passed Unanimously

**13. Old Business**

**a. Local 16 Vice-President’s Office**

President Vasquez reported that Sector Vice-President Joyce will move his office to space available at Local 11. Continuation of his leave of absence is up to the Sector, which is currently paying for it.

**b. Hours for Ours**

President Vasquez reported that we are continuing to search for appropriate ways to reward members for time spent devoted to Local 16.

**14. Future of Media Conference Report**

The three media-related Sectors of the CWA held a joint conference in Baltimore over the preceding weekend. All three Local 16 officers attended and reported:

It was unique and beneficial to have the three Sectors (Newspaper Guild, NABET, and Printing) in the same room together discussing common problems and new approaches. Guest speakers were inspiring and informative. SVP Joyce gave a well-received presentation on the Sector’s Technology and Training Task Force.

