

NABET-CWA Local 16 Executive Board

DATE OF MEETING: March 17, 2009
ATTENDANCE: President: Paul C. Vasquez
Vice President: James J. Nolan
Secretary-Treasurer: Richard L. Gelber

Executive Board Representatives:

Unit #1: Brendan Black (MLOA)
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. Pension Update

Pension Trustee Dennis Allen reported the following:
Local 41 Vice-President Charlie Braico has replaced John Ivicsek (who resigned due to health reasons) as Trustee.
The Plan's assets stand at approximately \$575 million.
Unprecedented low short-term interest rates are creating difficulties for the traditional method of determining fund valuation, but this is being addressed.
The two-month waiting period for filing for pension benefits is to be eliminated permanently, and this has already been done for the current buyout group.

2. Steward Training

Plans for steward training are underway; the training will be conducted by NABET-CWA Sector staff representative Carrie Biggs-Adams.
A Steward Appreciation event is being looked into.

3. General Membership Meeting

President Vasquez' intention is to hold General Membership meetings during April and October in 2009 and 2010. The April Executive Board meeting will be held on Monday, April 20. Due to multiple Board member unavailabilities during April, the first 2009 General Membership meeting (along with an Executive Board meeting) will be held during May, subject to room availability.

4. CWA Convention and Annual Legislative Conference

Both the 2009 CWA Annual Convention and the Annual Legislative Conference will be held in Washington, D.C. during the last week of June. We will send either 2 or 3 delegates to the Convention. The Legislative Conference delegates are to be determined.

5. Contract Printing

The proofreading of the current contract is almost completed and will then be sent to the printer.

6. Gathering of Members

Several ideas for member social gatherings were discussed, including going to Dallas BBQ on West 72nd St. (which has a private room), and a visit to the Steinway piano factory in Queens.

7. Meeting with Stewards

Henry Plimack spoke about the need for cohesion within the Local and urged more officer visits to the various shops. Paul Vasquez indicated that some of these visits have already taken place, allowing for stewards' schedules, with more to happen in the future.

8. In-Between Meeting Activities and Procedures

Henry Plimack is concerned about the current limitations on the officers' authority to spend money between meetings of the Executive Board, so an "old business" item for the next meeting will be whether to raise the \$500 limit for spending without specific Executive Board approval.

9. Funding Requests

The Board discussed a funding request from the United Farm Workers, to which we have contributed small amounts in the past, although not recently, and which was very supportive of NABET-CWA during the 1998-99 lockout.

Motion (#09-06): To donate \$100 to the United Farm Workers.

Moved: Burgos Seconded: Gelber Passed Unanimously

10. Executive Session

(Executive Board Rep. for Unit #1 Brendan Black participated in this discussion via speakerphone.)

Motion to go into Executive Session

Moved: Nolan Seconded: Bores Passed Unanimously

Motion to come out of Executive Session

Moved: Gelber Seconded: Mazzacca Passed Unanimously

11. Safety & Health

Paul Vasquez & Henry Plimack reported on the CWA District One Safety & Health Conference, which they both recently attended:

Passage of the Employee Free Choice Act is crucial to enhancing Unions' ability to advance protections for worker safety and health. Workplace violence is an ever-increasing concern. Paul also reported to the conference on safety issues at ABC.

Current Safety Committee items:

Lighting issues in Traffic

ABC's report on the Times Square Studios taxi accident

Debris blocking exits near INCC

12. New Members

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

E. Onifer F. Cordova J. Eargle M. Matthews

Moved: Mazzacca Seconded: Bores Passed Unanimously

13. Local 16 President's Vacation

Henry Plimack brought up some concerns over the proper length of, and payment for, the Local 16 President's vacation. The Board discussed some general guidelines and this will be an "Old Business" item for the next meeting.

17. Committee Reports – Cont'd

C. Skype

The Board discussed the potential for holding conference call meetings via Skype.
A Local 16 account will be created and tested.

D. Communications

The Board discussed some possible new features for the Local 16 website.
A link to Local 16's LM-2 and the new ABC contract rates will be created.

E. Elections

Steward Elections are ongoing.

F. Grievance and Arbitration Report

A member at WABC-TV ENG was accused by management of tampering with the GPS device installed in an ENG vehicle.

The John McCurdy discharge arbitration is pending – The Company doesn't want to go forward with this on April 1, the date requested by Local 16.

A grievance has been filed over the Company's use of the Sideletter HH procedure. February 12 was the final arbitration hearing date on Marty Bell's discharge. Briefs and the arbitrator's decision are pending.

T.D. Adam Smook's suspension was resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

A grievance was filed over the suspension of a TV-MCR member working in INCC.

G. Mobilization

K. Henry is interested in producing "ribbon pins" (to demonstrate general Union solidarity at ABC) if we can find an unused color or combination.

H. Organizing

Some leads have come in from outside groups.

I. Political

Mark Rosenblatt (Radio Network) attended the the CWA District One Political Retreat and submitted a nice letter thanking the Board.

Paul Vasquez and Rich Gelber reported on the CWA District One Annual Albany Lobbying Day. Key issues promoted were PBS funding by New York State (NABET-CWA represents workers at two stations), housing policy, telecommunication regulatory matters, and the need for paid family & medical leave.

J. Special Events

See item #2 above.

K. Training

A "grant writer" hired by CWA will work with BURST on applications for training funding.

18. Old Business

A. By-Law Amendment

Secretary-Treasurer Gelber reported that the Local 16 By-Law Amendment lowering the Executive Board stipends was approved by Sector President Clark.

B. Teleprompter Negotiations

The Company is currently considering new proposals put forth by Local 16.

C. Attorney Retainer

President Vasquez reported that Local 16 General Counsel David Mintz says a retainer is mostly an accounting device and wouldn't really affect our billing very much. Henry Plimack says to expect a motion next month, regardless.

18. Old Business – Cont'd

D. CWA and Sector Leadership Meeting with E-Board

President Vasquez reported that NABET-CWA President John Clark is at NBC negotiations and CWA Region One Vice-President Chris Shelton is busy with New Jersey State employee member issues.

E. Priorities of the Local

Henry Plimack discussed his belief that Local 16's greatest priority should be the protection of the membership.

F. Conference Room Chairs

Many of the chairs in the conference room, which are about 12 years old, are broken to one degree or other. Repairs will be expensive. Orlando Burgos volunteered to get proposals from vendors for new chairs.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

The next meeting of the Executive Board is scheduled for Monday, April 20, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard L. Gelber