

NABET-CWA Local 16 Executive Board

DATE OF MEETING: August 6, 2008
ATTENDANCE: President: Paul Vasquez
Vice President: James J. Nolan
Secretary-Treasurer: Richard L. Gelber (Funeral)

Executive Board Representatives:

Unit #1: Brendan Black
Unit #2: William Bores
Unit #3: Gregory Ciccone
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 10:31am.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Local 16 Executive Board, held on July 9, 2008 were approved as corrected.

Moved: Mazzacca Seconded: Bores Passed Unanimously
Abstain: Black, Henry, Nolan, Plimack

2. Old Business

a. Million Member Mobilization

Local 16 has set a goal of 300 members participating in the AFL-CIO Million Member Mobilization for the Employee Free Choice Act. Executive Board Representatives will distribute flyers and response post cards.

2. Old Business – Cont'd

b. Lynda.com

Executive Board Representatives are familiarizing themselves with the on-line training web site Lynda.com in order to be of assistance once the service is made available to the general membership. Local 16 emails and flyers will advertise the rollout.

3. Grievance and Arbitration

Grievances have been filed in response to the Company requiring a member see an Independent Medical Examiner before returning to work and another member that was sent home in spite of being approved to return to work by his personal doctor. The Company then charged the employees' sick days.

Two maintenance shop grievances remain open and have been referred to arbitration.

The company has not yet posted notices for opportunities to eat as agreed upon during a grievance meeting.

The Union awaits an Arbitrator's decision concerning the 14.1B dismissal of a member.

The next arbitration session over the dismissal of a member is scheduled for September 17, 2008.

Briefs are due for an ongoing arbitration over the discipline of a staff member for allegedly working out of house.

4. Executive Session

The Executive Board moved to go into Executive Session at 11:04am.

Moved: Ciccone

Seconded: Mazzacca

Passed Unanimously

The Executive Board moved to come out of Executive Session at 11:18am.

Moved: Burgos

Seconded: Ciccone

Passed Unanimously

5. Pension Update

Brother Dennis Allen reported that the ABC/NABET-CWA Pension Plan's funding ratio is 123.7%, (assets over current liabilities). In spite of the economic turndown, the fund remains in a healthy financial position.

6. Political Report

A NABET-CWA New York State initiative to end non-compete clauses in broadcast industry employment contracts has been signed into law by Governor Paterson. Brother Brendan Black reported on a recent CWA training day for 12 members concerning political activism centered on health care issues and the Employee Free Choice initiative. Unions in Connecticut are pushing an initiative to require sick leave for freelance employees working in the state.

7. Health and Safety

Henry Plimack reported on his meeting with the General Manager of WABC-TV. He stated he was disappointed that he could not achieve a proactive safety program at Channel 7. He cited that a few weeks later a producer smelled something unusual in the atrium, but failed to report the problem. A few hours later a fire was discovered in the elevator motor, and a disruption of station operations ensued. Henry believes that a proactive safety program in the building might have prevented this incident. He believes that the Local must develop its own monitoring program until employees learn what to do when they see, hear, or smell, something unusual. Henry also reported that the ventilation system in the building, especially on the 2nd floor, remains a problem, with temperatures varying significantly in different spaces (and sometimes within the same control room).

Brothers Henry Plimack and Greg Ciccone, Local 16's Health and Safety Committee Chairman, will schedule a Health and Safety meeting with WABC-TV management.

Brother William Bores reports that NBC maintains an aggressive fire safety program including a safety video and a PowerPoint presentation, and distribution of fire egress route map and emergency telephone number stickers to all employees.

8. Health and Safety Survey

Local 16 will cooperate with CWA to produce a health and safety survey that reflects our members' work experiences. It is hoped that the survey will eventually be used as a standard survey to distribute throughout NABET-CWA and possibly the TV industry.

9. Training

BURST will use the Bexel Company to conduct a 2 day Duet training class in late September.

10. Organizing Report

The Local is pursuing three ongoing organizing drives.

11. Funding Requests

The Board considered multiple funding requests and took no action.

12. News Acquisition Center

The Union and Company met to discuss the News Acquisition Center (NAC), including how each will determine how much work is considered Union and non-Union. The Company is transferring two NABET-represented employees from the News Acquisition Center, located at 47 W., 3rd floor, to the Traffic department.

13. New York State AFL-CIO Convention

The Local will send 3 officers to the New York State AFL-CIO Convention in New York City, on August 18 and 19, 2008.

14. ABC Sports Remotes

Local 16 will coordinate with other ABC NABET-CWA Locals to send representatives to service upcoming ABC Sports remotes.

15. Membership Meeting

The Board discussed holding a Special Membership Meeting to address concerns stemming from the Sideletter 24 WABC-TV layoff.

16. Protected List

Local 16 is reviewing which officers and shop stewards are to be included on the Section 2.2(b) "Protected List".

17. Communication

Unit 7 Representative Henry Plimack proposes that the Union office maintain an electronic calendar of officer's schedules. Executive Board representatives should expand the electronic sharing of information with each other. Brother Plimack will report back on specific tools he would suggest we use.

18. Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE) Certification

Brother Nolan proposed that Local 16 study the feasibility of subsidizing members seeking various SBE certifications and SBE annual membership.

19. Legal Representation

The Board discussed the need for legal representation when meeting with management.

20. Daily Hire Short Tours

There is concern and general consensus among the Daily Hire community that short tours, (4 hour calls) are detrimental to all members.

21. Payroll Problems

Payroll problems persist, particularly concerning sick pay and short term disability. Discrepancies appear to be increasing. After pursuing the issue in the normal manner with the Company, you should also report it to: payrollproblems@nabet16.org.

22. Ideas

The Board discussed member ideas sent to the Local via the ideas@nabet16.org. Suggestions include: a contract proposal that will broaden the definition of Local 16's work beyond the term "Broadcast"; a change in Local by-laws that would prevent Union negotiators from accepting Company gag orders as a condition for Company contract concessions; wearing of red on Thursdays in solidarity with the brothers and sisters facing lay off at WABC-TV; boycott the Disney Service Awards Dinner in protest of the pending lay-off; merge with another Union; Union-provided services such as voter registration, hearing tests, etc.

23. Stewards' Guides

President Vasquez has started an initiative to develop a Shop Stewards' Guidebook. The book will include: benefits, contract and contact information. It will be in the form of a loose leaf binder that will facilitate easy updating.

24. Sideletter 24

WABC-TV has notified the Union that it will proceed with a Sideletter 24 layoff of 10 brothers and sisters during September 2008 if they do not accept buy-out packages. The members affected work in the Media Center and Graphics Operator group. The Union continues to explore all avenues of resistance.

Motion to Adjourn:

Moved: Mazzacca

Seconded: Burgos

Passed Unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William G. Bores

WB:ph
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