

PTE 17 Seattle Chapter

Meeting Minutes July 13th 2017

Officers Present

Mary Davis, Vice President
Jen Lyman, Treasurer
Joe Steinmeyer, Secretary

Mary called the meeting to order at 12:00pm, with 62 members in attendance (quorum reached). Attendees introduced themselves, including PTE17 Business Representatives Ray Sugarman and Shaun Van Eyk. Minutes from the previous meeting, 6/8/17, were approved by voice vote.

Martin Luther King County Labor Council Report

Mary announced that the Council voted to endorse two candidates for Mayor, Bob Hasegawa and Jessyn Farrell.

Business Representative Report

Ray spoke about PTE17's decision to abstain from endorsing a candidate in the upcoming Mayoral Election. Local 17 staff has interviewed several candidates, and since a number of them are labor friendly, it was determined that members best interests would be served by waiting until after the primary to make an endorsement. He noted that several members have contacted the Local to express their preferences, and encouraged others to make their thoughts known.

New Business

Ray spoke about the city's increased use of temporary employees, and asked members to report issues relating to the use of temporaries to supplant full time positions. There have been instances where the city has let temporary employees go at the end of their assignments, only to turn around and hire another temporary to do the same body of work. There are different categories for temporary assignments, including long term temporary, which is an assignment of 1 to 3 years in length. Members should be mindful of assignments that go beyond the 3 year threshold, which is a violation of the contract. Local 17 has been successful in demanding the city convert temporary assignments that ran beyond the threshold to permanent positions. There was member discussion about the rights of temporary employees. The city's unreasonable 1 year probationary period for new hires was also discussed. Ray said that issue will be raised in negotiations for the next contract.

Old Business

Ray said SDHR has still not issued a directive to management requiring that changes to workplaces (space planning), be disclosed and negotiated prior to implementation, as they had agreed to do. He noted that in conversations with his counterparts with SDHR, they were often unaware of ongoing changes. Ray stressed the need for members to keep Reps informed of changes to workplaces, or signs that their workplace is about to be altered. A member asked what was being done to address the larger

issues of inadequate elevator capacity, lack of restrooms, and other concerns relating to the building as a whole, as opposed to individual work spaces. Ray said that at this point the union's best option was to address issues as they arise. Shaun added that there was a disconnect between the city and Local 17 regarding the issue of 'mandatory vs. permissive bargaining' nature of the issue. The city believes it is permissive, and may implement changes first and negotiate impacts later. PTE17 believes whether the issue is subject to mandatory bargaining or not, both sides would benefit from discussing the issues before implementing changes that may have to be reversed or altered later. A question was asked about whether an Unfair Labor Practice Complaint had been filed, as had been discussed at a previous meeting. Shaun noted that while some information related to workplace changes had been received, not enough hard data has been submitted by members to make a case before the Public Employee Relations Commission, as there is no settled case law to cite. Ray said relevant information to send to the reps is 1) signs space planning is about occur, such as people measuring your work area, 2) safety and ergonomics concerns, 3) floor capacity, 4) efficiency, 5) functionality – increased wait times at elevators, restrooms, etc. A member expressed concerns that Local 17 was allowing the city to default to a permissive mode of implementation. Shaun said that at this point SDHR Labor Relations was severely understaffed and there is currently no one there to address the issue at a macro-level, and until there is, Local 17 is obligated to address individual issues as they arise. A member asked what members can do to support the reps so they can be effective and not have to address the same issues over and over again. Ray said the most effective way issues can be resolved is by co-workers coming together with their peers to address problems as a unit, rather than individually. He said that is the value of having stewards in the workplace, as they are an effective pipeline of information.

Ulysses Hillard asked whether PTE17 would have input in the city's selection process for a new Labor Relations Director, as they have in the past. Shaun said at this point it is unlikely, although the issue was raised to the 5 Mayoral candidates the Local has interviewed.

Ulysses encouraged members who would like to become more active in the union to become stewards. There is currently steward training offered monthly to stewards and those interested in becoming one, the next one will be on July 27th. Those who wish to attend MUST rsvp by email to Ulysses Hillard or Denise Krownbell. Shaun mentioned that Nikola Davidson, who was Outreach Coordinator for PTE17, left the union recently. Her replacement is Chelsea Nelson. Her priority will be member engagement.

SPU staff received a memo recently that seemed to forbid the use of city equipment for incidental union purposes. The city has agreed to resend a memo with the correct information, but will not address the prior email that erroneously stated incidental use was forbidden.

Good of the Order

Joe Steinmeyer reported that the city had provided Nationwide Financial, the new Deferred Compensation Administer, with personal information including name, DOB and SSN for every city employee, whether they are enrolled in deferred comp or not. He expressed concerns about privacy violations and the apparent inability to close unwanted accounts. Shaun said the issue had been brought up to the Coalition of City Unions. The Coalition chairs have sent a demand letter to the city seeking information about where employee information is shared, and the city's responsibility to guard employee information. A member encouraged people enrolled in deferred comp to check their account for accuracy. A question was asked about the Retirement System and divesture from investments in fossil fuels. The Retirement Board is to

vote on the matter later this week. Leonard Piha spoke about safety issues relating to SCL substations locked entry and exit systems which pose the possibility of employees being locked in with no means of egress. He reported that SCL Safety informed him it will take a year to remedy the situation.

Mary adjourned the meeting at 1:01pm.

Minutes by Joe Steinmeyer