

PTE 17 Seattle Chapter

Meeting Minutes March 9, 2017

Chapter officers present

Denise Krownbell, President
Mary Davis, Vice President
Joe Steinmeyer, Secretary

Meeting was called to order by Denise at 12:00 pm, with 41 members present (quorum reached). Attendees introduced themselves, including PTE 17 Business Rep. Guadalupe Perez. Also present were Chris Peguero from the city Race and Social Justice Core Team, and Cassandra Da Costa from Seattle Dept. of Human Resources. Minutes of the previous meeting, 2/9/17, were approved by voice vote, with one abstention.

Officers Reports

Denise reported the departure of Chapter Treasurer Gabriela Vega Kock. Gabriela is returning to her roots on the east coast, leaving the Treasurer position vacant. Denise explained the responsibilities of the position and asked for volunteers to fill the vacancy. Jennifer (Jen) Lyman volunteered to serve as Treasurer. Denise affirmed Jennifer's position as Treasurer in accordance with PTE 17 bylaws.

MLK Labor Council Report

Ulysses and Guadalupe reported on efforts by the council to encourage attendance to the May 1st March for Workers Rights. Guadalupe noted the ongoing threats to organized labor and the importance of member participation in making their voice heard. Members in attendance overwhelmingly supported the idea of Local 17 requesting that the Mayor Close city departments and allow employees to attend the march.

Business Rep Report

Guadalupe reviewed the issue of "space planning" efforts by management, their right to implement changes to member's work spaces, and the Union's right to bargain impacts on members. She explained the difference between permissive bargaining (impacts are unforeseen, or not clear until after changes are made) and mandatory bargaining (impact of change are foreseeable and immediate). To date, management has argued that this issue should be subject to permissive bargaining, while Local 17 has maintained the impacts are foreseeable and immediate. After several meetings, management has agreed to mandatory bargaining on the issue. Guadalupe introduced Cassandra Da Costa, Labor Negotiator from SDHR to speak about efforts going forward by management to involve employees and the Union prior to implementation. She said city departments will be notified within two weeks to contact SDHR prior to implementing changes, and SDHR will then contact the appropriate Union to negotiate impacts. Mary Davis asked what the driving force behind "space planning" is. Casandra said it was initiated within individual departments. Several members relayed to Casandra their experiences with altered work space. Cassandra encouraged employees who have already had work spaces adversely impacted to request an ergonomics assessment.

New Business

Denise introduced Chris Peguero from the city Race and Social Justice Core Team to speak about the racially charged behavior arising after the recent general election. Chris identified the protected classes recognized by the City of Seattle, noting that Seattle guarantees protections beyond state and federal policy. He reviewed a letter from City of Seattle Affinity and Employee Groups to Mayor Murry, Director of SDHR Susan Coskey, and Director of Seattle Office for Civil Rights Patricia Lally outlining actions the City needs to take to address hostility towards employees who are members of protected classes. He said they have responded and have committed to working with employee groups to address this issue. Chris also encouraged employees who witness this behavior to step in. Stefanie Hegland brought up the issue of weapons in the workplace, including discussions of weapon ownership. Denise suggested she contact Natalie Hunter to add that to the list of actions.

Chris also provided information on sharing reports of immigration raids via social media, as well as copies of the state anti-harassment law, the city's fair employment policy, and other relevant policies.

Stewards Reports

Several Stewards reported incidences of possible skimming of Bargaining Unit work, where duties previously assigned to members is being re-assigned to managers. Stewards are working with Business Reps to resolve these issues and file grievances where appropriate.

Meeting was adjourned by Denise at 1:01 pm.

Minutes by Joe Steinmeyer