

## **PTE 17 Seattle Chapter**

### **Meeting Minutes August 10<sup>th</sup> 2017**

#### **Officers Present**

Denise Krownbell, President

Mary Davis, Vice President

Joe Steinmeyer, Secretary

Denise called the meeting to order at 12:05pm, with 24 members in attendance (quorum reached). Attendees introduced themselves, including PTE 17 Business Representative Shaun Van Eyk. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved, with one abstention. Denise thanked Mary for chairing the July meeting in her absence, and noted that Jen Lyman, Chapter Treasurer, was absent today due to illness.

#### **Business Representative Report**

Shaun relayed news of the passing of long time (28 years) Local 17 member and city employee Linda Liago Tinman. Linda served on the Local 17 Charity Fund Board as well as Shop Steward, and was active in the Filipino community.

Shaun also announced the upcoming departure of Business Representative Guadalupe Perez, effective September 1<sup>st</sup>. Guadalupe has been a fearless Rep. for 11 years. She and her family have relocated to California, and she will be working remotely from there in the interim. Amy Bowles, currently Rep. for the COPPEA and Clark County Chapters, will move to the Seattle Chapter in the next few weeks. Denise and Shaun suggested members C.C. another Steward and the other Reps on any email sent to Guadalupe to assist in a smooth transition.

#### **Martin Luther King County Labor Council Report**

There is currently no Member Representative on the Council Shaun said the regular meeting of the MLKLC had been canceled, although a special meeting was called to endorse candidates in the primary election. Local 17 chose not to endorse a Mayoral candidate in the primary, due to the number of labor friendly candidates in the race. Ulysses Hillard asked that the Local consider endorsing Carrie Moon over Jennie Durkan in the general election. Shaun said that of all the candidates in the primary, Moon was the one who did not reach out to meet with the Local, or ask for our endorsement. Joe Steinmeyer asked that she be considered for an endorsement anyway.

#### **Shop Stewards Reports**

Denise noted that she has received several reports of possible bullying behavior by managers. She said that as a member of the Contract Negotiating Committee, she had tried to raise the issue during bargaining sessions. The city was unwilling to address the issue, while recognizing that to do so would generate a large body of complaints about management. Denise promises to bring the issue back to the table during upcoming contract talks. Other items to be bargained are wages and the use of temporary

employees. Ariska Thompson recounted a bullying issue in her workplace, where the manager has historically picked on a specific employee.

### **Old Business**

Shaun reported no movement in the ongoing talks with the city about the 'space planning' the city has undertaken, the goal of which is to cram as many people into as small an area as possible. There is disagreement as to whether the work place changes being made are subject to mandatory (the effects of the changes are so great that bargaining must take place prior to implementation) or permissive (the effects are minor and any issues that arise can be bargained after implementation). In the interim, the union has intervened where there is knowledge of changes, and has been effective at including employee input in the decision making process. Member communication to stewards or reps about upcoming changes to workplaces, even if only rumored, is crucial to that effort. Denise asked that for any member at SMT on floors 28, 29, 30, 32, 35, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 54, 55, 58 who would be willing to walk through their floor and fill note numbers of cubicles in use, etc., to contact her. She has a spreadsheet available to aid in the gathering of relevant info. Please email her if interested in participating. Denise also suggested speaking to your manager to see where they stand of the issue. If they see problems with proposed changes, they can be a great ally in working to make improvements that benefit the employees they are responsible for. Ulysses noted that unfavorable press coverage of the city's botched IT consolidation could end up stopping it in its tracks, and wondered what might happen if the press were to become aware of the cost and waste associated with 'space planning'. Denise noted that as concerned citizens, members have always had the freedom to reach out to the fourth estate.

Shaun addressed the ongoing issue at SPU revolving around a memo the department issued that stated the incidental use of city property for union related business was forbidden. SPU agreed to issue a memo stating the correct policy, which allows for such incidental use, but has not yet done so. The latest word is the memo will be released in the next week. Denise thanked Ulysses and fellow steward Tim Lowry for their continuing attention to the issue.

### **New Business**

Shaun spoke about the release of employees' personal data to third party vendors by the city. During the city's recent change in the Deferred Compensation Plan administrators from Prudential to Nationwide, it was discovered that the city has provided both companies with the names, addresses and social security numbers of every employee. Both companies used this information to create shell accounts for every employee, whether they are enrolled in the program or not. The city's position is this was done for the employees' convenience, and would make it easier for employees who are not currently enrolled to participate in the future, should they choose to do so. Employee information is also shared with third party vendors who perform background checks for certain city jobs. Shaun said the Coalition of City Unions has submitted an information request to the city to ascertain who the city is sharing employee info with and what safeguards are in place to protect it. The city's response was that this has been the way they historically have operated. The coalition informed the city that privacy laws have changed to reflect the way data is used in the present. The city has committed to working with their payroll vendor, ADP, to find a way to limit the transfer of personal information to only those employees who wish to participate in a particular program. The coalition is pursuing the issue to make sure no employee data is unnecessarily transferred to any third party, and adequate safeguards are in place to protect it when it is shared. Bob Gambil spoke about the limited access to monies placed in

deferred compensation plans. Participants may not withdraw funds before retirement without penalty except to roll them into another retirement account.

Mary reported that the Chapter Officers met with PTE 17 Executive Director Behnaz Nelson to discuss the Fair Representation Policy adopted by the Executive Board in August 2014. The policy limited each Chapter to no more than two members serving on the Executive Board at any time. This policy was enacted during a time when relations between the Seattle Chapter and the Local's leadership were severely strained. There were procedural issues rising from the way the policy was enacted, and Behnaz encouraged the E Board to rescind it. This was done by unanimous vote at the June 2017 E Board meeting. There will be two positions on the Board open for elections this fall; all members are encouraged to run.

Denise reported that she has received emails from members wanting to know why Chapter meetings are held at lunchtime at SMT and no other locations. She explained that in the past, meetings were held in the evening at the PTE 17 offices. Attendance at these meetings was poor, and at times it was a struggle to reach a quorum of 20 members in attendance. Meetings were moved to a downtown location, although they were still held in the evenings. Attendance was still a problem, so the decision was made to hold them at noon, which dramatically improved attendance. Skype and other electronic methods of communication were discussed, but logistics are a problem. It was suggested that a meeting be held at a remote site on an annual basis to allow more members to attend. Members are encouraged to suggest other ideas that would facilitate more participation by members who work outside the downtown area.

Denise adjourned the meeting at 1:00pm

Minutes by Joe Steinmeyer