

**TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
MONTHLY MEETING –April 20, 2005 (12 noon – 1 p.m.)
Meeting Summary**

Board Members Present: Eric Mandel, President/Acting Treasurer
Roger Browne, 1st Vice President
Dave Crippen, 2nd Vice President
Patty Overby, Secretary
Eric Davison, Treasurer

Treasurer's Report

Eric Davison gave an update of how much was in the bank. TEA still has an outstanding debt of \$7,500 owed to Jim Cline.

Vote on Proposed Special Assessment and Proposed Bylaw Amendments

Eric Mandel stated that the vote on all issues would occur following adjournment of today's meeting at 1 p.m. He asked for 4 volunteers to help Patty count. Patty stated that this group would meet in 4G to do the actual counting. She said she had extra ballots and envelopes. Those voting need to seal their ballot in an envelope and then sign and print their name on the envelope for it to count.

Special Assessment Discussion and Vote

Eric Mandel said that it was assumed with the original special assessment policy was passed by the members that both Wastewater and Transit would be in sync in paying dues. Due to Transit arbitration going longer than expected, some people in Transit are getting subsidized. The proposed new assessment is to make everyone equal. Eric then presented a couple of examples of how the new assessment would work which would be added to the already existing special assessment. Any voluntary dues members have been paying would help offset the special assessment due to TEA.

There were no questions or discussion on this proposal.

Proposed Bylaw Amendments Discussion and Vote

1. Grievance Committee - Increase in Members

Eric said that the proposed amendment would increase the current Committee from 5 members (4 plus 1st Vice President) to 9 members (8 plus 1st Vice President). This is being done at the request of the Committee who believe more members are needed on the Committee to provide coverage of meetings with individual TEA members and investigation/research work.

Discussion centered on the following:

- Does the Committee have a quorum requirement? (Response: no)
- Do we have any information or idea of a time commitment for people participating on the Committee? (Response: it depends on the number of grievances and the amount of research and meetings required. The Committee currently meetings once a month on a regular basis. Roger said he would guess in the order of 6-8 hours a month on the average. Eric pointed out that according to the contract, management must to make accommodations for staff to do this.)
- Any discussion on the makeup of the Committee with regard to representation from Wastewater and Transit? (Response: yes - try to get a balance based on the split of current members. Current Committee includes Susan McDonald Wright, Lisa Taylor, Garrett Stronks and Dave Kingsbury).

2. Two Alternatives Proposed for Bargaining Committee

Eric said that alternative #1 proposes two committees (one for Wastewater and one for Transit) representing both staff and supervisors; supported by a larger advisory group. This alternative more reflects what TEA has been operating under.

The second alternative proposes four committees (two for Wastewater and two for Transit) with separate committees for staff and supervisors. It also proposes a fifth committee, which would be an oversight committee.

Discussion centered on:

- Is there any information on the cost of supporting two versus four committees? (Response: Eric said we have no absolute answers - the Board expects it would be more costly to have four committees but it probably would not be double the cost of two committees. Legal counsel has noted there may be some problems with four committees in terms of contradictory contract language.)
- Would there be a loss of leverage with four committees? (Eric said that the Council of Reps. recommended we stay with two committees - feel it divides the union to have four.)
- Is the supervisory group even large enough to form committees? (Response: not clear that the supervisors are supportive of four committees. Some members were recommending the alternative for four committees because they thought there were some problems. Eric said that he had met with Wastewater supervisors to explain TEA's role and when TEA can assist them versus when they need to rely on HR. He intends to also meet with the Transit supervisors.)
- Think having four committees addresses a symptom. We need to make sure people know what the process is and know that if they are being silenced where they can go to be heard.

- Support for four committees was made by a supervisor even though a small group originally brought the issue up. Concern that some TEA members do not feel they are being listened to or taken seriously when they bring up concerns. Agree there is strength in numbers and concern about divide and conquer from management. Think it is difficult for a supervisor to set aside their own views all of the time and fairly represent staff - that was the reason for proposing four committees. (Response: Eric said that the Board should be more aware and solicit input so we have a balance of views.)
- Believe there is a conflict of interest when you have supervisors negotiating for staff and vice versa. Think supervisors look at how best to get their job done even if it infringes on staff. This is the only union where both supervisors and staff are combined into one group.
- The 2nd Vice President's term (currently filled by Dave Crippen) expires September this year. Dave has completed two terms and cannot run again. Dave said he has talked with the Board about stepping down now and soliciting people who would be interested in this position now because we are beginning the next wave of contract negotiations. This would require a special election. (Some members felt Dave should continue and that TEA is faced with this situation every year.)
- It is important to have a broad spectrum of opinions in negotiating the contracts. The Wastewater survey highlighted a perceived problem between management, supervisors and the rank and file. More rank and file members need to be involved. It was noted that it is hard to get supervisors involved in contract negotiations.
- Clarify what TEA means by management. (Response: supervisors are considered part of management when they perform duties that are part of their management duties, and as such are represented by HR. When they, themselves, have actions taken against them by their manager, they can file a grievance and TEA will support them.)
- When does the next contract process begin? (Response: the Transit contract expired 12/31/04. TEA got HR to sign language that they agree to abide by the contract until a new contract or Arbitration supercedes it. We are starting next month and information will be sent to members soliciting input and involvement. Wastewater's contract expires 6/30/05 - TEA and HR are currently working on the salary survey - hope to start discussions on a new contract in two months.)

Wastewater Salary Survey

Roger Browne said that TEA and HR have been meeting regularly and hope to conclude a negotiated settlement by the end of May. This may be optimistic but he will keep members informed of progress.

There was a question on if administrative staff is included in the survey. Roger said that the County already has on their radar to update salaries for administrative staff. TEA will be looking at its own comparables for administrative staff.

PDQ/Reclassification Process for Wastewater Members

The reclassification process was held up during negotiations. HR agreed that once TEA submitted a list of members who felt they should be reclassified that HR would expedite the process. TEA has forwarded an initial batch of twelve employees, which are now with HR. HR has committed they will not send these out to an outside consultant for review, and have hired a person to review the requests. That person has been attending the joint committee dealing with salary surveys and is making it a number one priority. TEA does not know when HR will be completed with this task.

A question was raised about what is the process for Transit TEA members who feel they should be reclassified. It was suggested that perhaps those members should file a grievance with the Grievance Committee. Eric Mandel said he would check with Dave Crippen on the best way to proceed.

Good of the Order

- Transit TEA members have received their retro checks.
- TEA has been invited by County Councilmember Larry Phillips to a fund raiser salmon bake. Last year the Board decided to make some contributions to various Councilmembers' campaigns and Councilmember Phillips was one of those members. Eric said that the Bylaws call for establishing a Political Action Committee and he is soliciting members to serve on that committee. One person (Yasmin Mudah) has expressed interest. The Committee needs to develop a formal policy of when TEA contributed funds to political campaigns. The general policy followed by the Board was to contribute funds to those County political people supportive of labor and/or that might help get past a problem.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. and the group convened to count votes.

Results of Today's Vote

Following are the results of today's vote. 184 ballots were received. Of these six were disqualified leaving a total county of 178 qualified ballots.

New Special Assessment

152 Approve
13 Reject
13 Abstain

Expand Grievance Committee

156 Approve
21 Reject
1 Abstain

Two or Four Bargaining Committees

Two Bargaining Committees.. - 143 Approve
Four Bargaining Committees.. - 31 Approve
3 Abstain
1 Disqualified

Patty Overby, TEA Secretary