

TEA Monthly Meeting
April 19, 2017

1. Vice President Michael Sands opened the meeting at approximately 12:05
2. Wastewater Bargaining update by Roger Browne. The bargaining committee met with County bargaining representative on April 12. Most of the discussion was about cost of living calculations. King County had a target of 2.25% with 1.75% and a bonus. TEA WW is negotiating for 3%. Discussion also revolved around the use of "total compensation" in the calculations, which would include the cost to the County of providing the benefits packages. There has been no WW management at the last 2 sessions. The next meeting is on May 3.
3. Transit Bargaining update by Elizabeth Wright. As noted previously, the arbitration hearing is scheduled in June. The hearing is open to the public and typically runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Rand Juliano asked about the topics that are being arbitrated. Elizabeth Wright said the TEA items are wages, medical benefits and executive leave. She said there is no agenda yet; it will likely be available just prior to the meeting. Rand asked if Jim will prepare a package? The answer was that typically he prepares binders. One other issue is a request for a 6-year contract.

4. Treasurer report. Elizabeth reported on the bank balances: \$208,550 in the savings account, and \$56,703 in the current account. Sally Turner asked about the cost of arbitration. Elizabeth Wright said that Jerry (absent) was the best person to respond. Currently Jim Cline's bill is the biggest expense. A WW member asked if the Transit arbitration is the biggest part of expenses paid for by dues.
5. Request for a list of grievances. Michael Sands is preparing a list of grievances for the ones that pertain to the work place. He aims to have the list ready before the next meeting.

6. VEBA discussion. It was noted that the rules for VEBA are established by the IRS. One point was: the issue is not whether TEA should be involved in VEBA accounts since TEA already has gotten involved previously. The current situation is that upon retirement, Transit members are not compelled to have VEBA accounts; WW supervisors contribute 35% of unused sick leave and 50% of unused vacation leave (up to 480 hours); WW non-supervisors contribute the 35% of unused sick leave. The IRS does not prohibit non-retirement-eligible members from voting, but TEA has historically chosen to limit votes to those who are eligible to retire. In the past, TEA had requested a list of eligible people from the County.

Mika Kaplan asked that a link to the County's VEBA be sent to members, along with a request for a response on one or more proposals for how TEA should handle the issue.

The link: <KingCounty.gov/audience/employees/benefits/retirement/VEBA.aspx>

Eric commented that it does not seem right to remove the option completely for the future and suggested holding it every year. In TEA communications about the details of VEBA, there should be no opinion issued by TEA.

Mika made a motion to send 2 or 3 proposals in an email to members. Eric seconded the motion. The motion passed. Mika also asked that the website be updated for current committee membership. Some of the committees lack the full membership contingent and we should try to fill those vacancies by discussing the vacancies at the next monthly meeting.

7. The meeting adjourned.