

TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
MONTHLY MEETING – May 21, 2003 (12 noon – 1 p.m.)
Meeting Summary

Board Members Present: Ken Madden, President
Elizabeth Morgan, First Vice-President
Patty Overby, Secretary

Announcements

1. TEA's Participation in Wastewater Productivity Initiative Mediation. Ken referred to the handout and stated that TEA participated Monday in the Productivity Mediation session with Don Theiler and other unions. This is the first meeting that TEA has been invited to – this is the forum to bring any issues and concerns for resolution with management.
2. King County Council's Labor Summit. Ken referred to the handout and said that the Council's Committee of the Whole meets with the Labor Coalition on June 2. Ken will attend to represent TEA. The meeting starts around 9:30 a.m. and anyone else is also welcome to attend.
3. New Member: Shirley Marroquin, supervisor in Planning and Compliance has joined TEA.
4. Termination of Wastewater Employee. Ken stated that Dennis Olson, a TLT in Wastewater was terminated. On May 5 Dennis asked TEA for support in inquiring about reversing the termination decision. TEA has requested all information from OHRM on Dennis' dismissal and delivered the information to Jim Cline yesterday. Jim will review the information and report and will provide advice to the Board on further pursuance. The Board will determine, based on Jim's advice, whether or not further action is warranted.
5. TEA Employee Retires. Linda Balagot from Wastewater retires – a celebration will be held this afternoon for those interested in attending.
6. TEA Attends Kickoff Campaigns. Ken stated that TEA was represented at two political kickoff campaigns – Larry Gossett and Larry Phillips. He stated that Larry Gossett is a member of the County Council's Labor, Operations and Technology Committee; and Larry Phillips chairs the Council's Finance and Budget Committee and is on the Water Quality Regional Subcommittee.
7. Wage Deduction Cards. Patty has extra cards available if anyone needs them.

Status of Grievance Process (Elizabeth Morgan)

Elizabeth met with the Council of Reps. to go over initial thoughts for TEA's grievance process. She is looking for input from TEA member; will be getting advise from Jim Cline. Some of the highlights for this process include:

- Putting together a committee nominated and approved by the Board with representatives from Wastewater, Transit, and both supervisory groups. The 1st Vice President would chair this Committee.
- Deals with issues relative to TEA's contract.
- Goal is to work out issues at the lowest level and avoid having to go to an arbitrator all of the time.
- Once contract is signed, the committee will need to get up to speed on the contract. Elizabeth plans some training sessions with the committee.
- Action will be through a bylaw amendment with vote by membership.

Discussion centered on:

- What's the schedule for having something out for members to respond to? (Elizabeth hopes to get something out at the next meeting.)
- There is a guidebook for unions called "The Green Book" that would be good to look at and get some ideas. (Elizabeth will try to obtain this.)
- There is some concern by some members in Wastewater that they are under-represented. (Elizabeth said she is meeting with Wastewater supervisors and is available to meet individually to discuss further.)
- Other options available for resolving conflict such as the County's ADR program – TEA are currently using this to address an employee's issue.
- Will Bylaw amendment be advertised ahead? (yes – will also be handed out and discussed a month prior to actual action.)

Status of Contract Negotiations

Transit (Elizabeth): Transit is going to arbitration – there will be no further negotiating/mediation sessions with King County. There are 30 plus issues that the mediator will have to certify for arbitration. The mediator will send a letter to PERC outlining those issues certified for arbitration. Time will be taken up picking an arbitrator; presenting testimony to the arbitrator; with 60 days for the attorneys on both sides to complete briefs. Once the briefs are presented, the arbitrator has 90 days to rule. The ruling then gets crafted into contract language, which the membership will then vote on. TEA anticipates one year from now having a contract before the membership. TEA pays for half the cost of the arbitrator – King County the other half.

Questions raised included:

- Do dues need to be raised to cover the additional cost of arbitration? (TEA can reduce the amount it pays to Jim Cline in order to pay for arbitration; encourage those not already voluntarily contributing dues to do so.)

- Voluntary dues – are that until signing a contract so those not currently paying can slide another year. (yes – but Eric will be bringing a financial plan proposal to the members for vote. Current participation is between 70-75%.)

Wastewater (Ken): The last mediation session was held the end of April. TEA presented a wage proposal along with text for the contract. At the end of the session both the Mediator and Ron Weigelt thought TEA had made significant concessions. TEA is waiting to hear back from the County at the next sessions scheduled for May 29 and June 6. TEA felt several items did not hinge on wages and thought an alternative process should be explored. TEA negotiating team and WW management decided to meet without OHRM and Jim Cline in interest based bargaining. This group has met once and had a very productive session. The group will meet next Tuesday as well to discuss working out of class, contracting out work, job progression; part time and temporary employees and automobile use and reimbursement.

Questions included:

- If any issues are resolved, can Transit use them in their arbitration? (Transit can look at them, but they aren't binding to Transit.)
- Any reason to expect a different outcome on wages than what Transit got? (No).

Meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.

Patty Overby, TEA Secretary