

**TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**  
**ANNUAL MEETING – November 16, 2005 (12 noon – 1 p.m.)**  
**Meeting Summary**

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

**Final Questions on Wastewater Compensation Offer/Ballot Vote**

Eric Mandel stated that there had been a special meeting for Wastewater members this past Monday to review, discuss and answer questions about the County's proposed wage package.

This was an opportunity to answer any questions that members might still have on that proposal. There were no further questions.

Eric said that members could drop off their ballots by the end of the meeting at which point votes will be counted. Patty asked Severne Johnson to head up a group of three to do the final contract ballot count. Three members volunteered.

**President's Message**

Eric reported on the past years' highlights:

- Obtained a transit settlement on a first contract via arbitration.
- Reached agreement on the Wastewater contract other than wages, and today will be voting on the final wage package.
- Reached financial solvency.
- Increased participation in TEA by expanding the Board, forming two Bargaining Committees, and filling the Grievance Committee and Political Action Committee; as well as forming small work groups to work on such things as the salary/wages.
- Raised TEA's profile with King County, County Executive, other labor groups, and the County Council.
- Realized some grievance victories, which protects the rights of all members.
- Increased communications through more TEA Times, individual notices, and additional Council of Representatives meetings.
- Expanded the number of TEA members.

Eric said that in terms of future direction for TEA, he would like to:

- Achieve more involvement by members.
- Have in place new Wastewater and Transit contracts. He asked for employees interested in joining the Bargaining Committees for both Transit and Wastewater to let him know ASAP. That group will then elect three of its members to sit on the Negotiation Team.
- Continue building relationships with management, County Executive, other labor unions, and the County Council. He wants to continue improving relationships with management, although this does not mean sacrificing TEA's rights.

### **Introduction and Election of Officer Candidates**

Eric introduced the candidates running for the following officer positions:

Council of Representatives Chair: Valerie Garza, John Phillips, and Wyatt Wood

Transit Bargaining Committee Chair: Dave Crippen and Elizabeth Morgan

Wastewater Bargaining Committee Chair: Diane Britton and Roger Browne

Questions to the candidates included:

- To what degree would the candidates consider the business needs of TEA, specifically in terms of legal counsel performance, which the questioner felt was not adequate?
- Do all of the new elected Board positions have a vote on the Board?
- As a member of the Wastewater bargaining unit, how do I decide on the person for the Transit Bargaining Committee Chair position - what is the difference between the two candidates?
- For those not elected, will you continue to participate on existing Committees and Bargaining teams?

Patty asked for and got three different volunteers to help her count election ballots following today's meeting.

## Introduction of Financial Plan for Discussion

Eric said that a subcommittee has been meeting to look at what TEA's financial needs are and have discussed some possible options to address those needs. He stated that the subcommittee would like members' feedback on the following ideas before presenting something more formal to the members for a vote.

### 1. Dues Rate

If we leave the dues rate at the current levels (.4%) and factoring in the COLA increase for Wastewater employees, we are projecting revenues of about \$85,000 in 2006. From this, the following expenses would be deducted:

\$61,000	to Cline and Associates
\$ 1,200	for Certified Public Accountant to prepare paperwork for IRS
\$ 100	for maintenance of post office box, TEA's corporate registration with the State
\$ 600	for general business expenses
\$ 1,500	for political donations
\$ 600	for general grievance/arbitration
<u>\$ 250</u>	<u>for maintenance of TEA's web site</u>
\$ 66,000	Total Expenses

From the roughly \$20,000 left over, we need to cover dollars for Transit Arbitration, retro payment to Cline and Associates to cover under-reported TEA members; funds for education/conferences/work shops; any social activities; and a possible stipend for one or more of the TEA officers. The current dues rate will not cover all of this.

Eric pointed out that TEA has lived hand-to-mouth in terms of revenues and reserves to cover all of its expenses. From a long-term perspective, this is not a good approach. Therefore, he wanted members' feedback on increasing the dues rate of .5%, which averages out to \$2 a pay period.

The following comments were made:

- Are expenses cyclical? (Response: most are annual. Arbitration/mediation for grievances occurs every year, while Transit arbitration is cyclical.)
- Do you envision a goal or ceiling for a reserve? (Response: The subcommittee has not recommended, nor has the Board set a ceiling yet. This is something that will be addressed but we wanted to get feedback on the ideas at today's meeting. The increase in dues to a .5% would generate about another \$10,000.)
- Supports having a reserve. We will still need to pay our legal counsel, even if we are in a year where we aren't negotiating. May want to consider a per hour rate for legal counsel instead of a per member charge.

- Supports increase in dues to .5%.
- What is the cost for Transit arbitration? (Response: the cost for the initial/first contract was \$50,000 - TEA and the County each paid half of this cost per State law.)

## 2. Reduction in the Special Assessment/Initiation Fee

Currently there is an initiation fee for new members that come into TEA. It is 12 times their hourly salary rate. Given that the number of new hires a year is small and the impact on the financial plan negligible, Eric wanted to know what members thought about dropping this rate back to 4 times the hourly salary rate.

The following comments were made:

- Isn't there a cost to TEA every time we bring in a new member? (Response: yes, it affects our monthly payment to Cline and Associates. We are now paying \$1,550 a month and this will increase to around \$1,600 next year based on current members.)
- Believe that leaving the special assessment/initiation amount says there is a financial commitment and sense of ownership, which can't be overlooked. The fee is fairly low compared to what other unions' charge.
- We need to achieve our reserve and short-term goals are not funded yet. Do not support changing the rate. If a person takes the job, they know it's TEA represented and subject to the special assessment.
- New members also benefit from past negotiations and think they should help pay for that.

## 3. Potential Stipend for Some Board Officers

Eric said that several Board members put in hundreds of hours on TEA business. This includes behind the scenes work meetings with the County, County Executive, other labor unions, working to resolve grievances before they are formalized, discussing contract issues; enhancing TEA's visibility; and working on negotiations/ contracts. Even though TEA is a voluntary organization, there is a significant burden encountered to do the work required. He wanted members' feedback on a small stipend for some of the officers.

The following comments were made:

- Has anyone determined the amount of stipend? (Response: the subcommittee has done some research. For example, Cline & Associates also represents the County's deputy's office, which pay their President and Secretary 50% of their time. Eric said he was thinking of perhaps paying the President 10% of their time spent on TEA business.)
- Would the amount be paid to King County or directly to the officer if it is replacing wages? (Response: would have to check on this.)

- Think this is worth investigating and would suggest a committee be formed to do further research and make a recommendation.
- ✓ **Action: A motion was passed that a committee be put together to look into what other organizations are doing with regard to paying a stipend to some or all of the officers and report back to the Board and then to the membership at a future regular TEA meeting.**

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. to count ballots on the Wastewater wage proposal and election of officers.

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**Results of the Vote on the Wastewater Wage Proposal**

The wage proposal passed by a vote of 167 for to 11 against. 235 ballots were distributed; 178 were received (8 of these were disqualified; and there were 5 proxies).

**Results of Vote on Election of Officers**

315 ballots were distributed and 252 were received (of these there were no disqualified ballots and 1 proxy). Following are the details:

Treasurer

**Keven Sandquist** (unanimously elected)

Wastewater Bargaining Committee Chair

43 vote for Diane Britton

**194 votes for Roger Browne**

15 were blank (no vote)

Transit Bargaining Committee Chair

**110 votes for Dave Crippen**

82 votes for Elizabeth Morgan

60 were blank (no vote)

Council of Representatives Chair

48 votes for Valerie Garza

**135 votes for John Phillips**

62 votes for Wyatt Wood

7 were blank (no vote)

*Patty Overby, TEA Secretary*