

TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
MONTHLY MEETING – March 15, 2006 (12 noon – 1 p.m.)
Meeting Summary

Board Members Present: Eric Mandel, President
Ade Franklin, Vice President
Patty Overby, Secretary
Keven Sandquist, Treasurer
Roger Browne, Wastewater Bargaining Chair
Dave Crippen, Transit Bargaining Chair
John Phillips, Council of Reps. Chair

Update on Transit and Wastewater Negotiations

1. Transit (Dave Crippen): The County and TEA have jointly sent letter to PERC requesting mediation. Both sides agreed to a specific mediator and not much will happen until the mediator comes on board (1-2 months).

Discussion followed:

- Did negotiations break down that lead to going to mediation? (Response: yes.)
 - Did the Transit team put together a wage proposal and give to the County? (Response: yes, an initial wage proposal was presented by TEA to the County the end of December. The County presented their initial wage proposal to TEA the end of January. In conversation with Jim Cline, he thinks we should wait until we meet with the mediator before TEA prepares its next wage proposal.)
2. Wastewater (Roger Browne): The Bargaining Team has met once with the County since the last Regular TEA meeting. The County expressed a desire to settle the contract now with no monetary incentives, and wait 18 months then pick up negotiations for the next contract. TEA's response is that we have some issues we want to bargain. The team is meeting with the County tomorrow to discuss further.

Healthy Incentives Communicatons

Eric said there had been questions from the membership about the March 15 deadline to get on a specific plan. The County says don't worry about the deadline and that Harris needs to contact each member. King County Benefits says the March 15 deadline does not apply to TEA members and that we have until March 30. If Harris has not called close to that time, call them.

Discussion followed on:

- A member had a discussion last night with Harris who said that it is taking longer for information on assessments to come over.
- Heard from several members that when they completed their assessment and clicked on "share information" that this did not occur. He said members could still get Silver by just putting in your name, address, etc. You don't need to check "share information" button to get Silver.

Eric asked each TEA member to forward issues they are having to him so he can send to King County HR.

Update on Grievances

Roger Browne is taking the lead on the following grievances while Ade gets up to speed. Those include:

- Merit system and how it applies to Wastewater employees. The County misapplied the system. TEA grieved it and the County is in the process of fixing it to comply with the Merit application as was in effect previously
- Wastewater members on the square table who should get the July 1, 2005 increase and did not. Roger and Eric will be meeting with the County following the bargaining session tomorrow. The MOA is clear on this and he hopes TEA will prevail and members will get the increase. If a favorable response from the County isn't offered, we will take the issue to binding arbitration.
- The County's Personnel Guidelines allows for part-time schedules for .5, .75 and .8 but does not address .9. The County is considering adding the .9 for part-time schedules.

Ade Franklin reported that there are three vacancies open on the Grievance Committee. He said that he really needs someone from Transit on the Grievance Committee.

Presentation on Recommended Financial Plan (Keven Sandquist)

Keven referred to the handout and stated that he had discussed this with the Council of Representatives last week. This recommendation will be up for member vote in April.

He then reviewed the handout, which shows the results of leaving the dues at the current rate of .4 versus raising dues to .5 rate compared to the expected expenditures.

He noted that TEA's expenses now are around \$67,000. Additional expenses include: paying Jim Cline back \$22,172 this year to cover total membership representation, arbitration for both Transit units and for two grievances. There is no money included for social or an officer stipend (Council of Reps. is to look into potential stipend for TEA officers).

The costs for legal counsel are fixed at \$15.50 a person a month and will increase in April to \$16.00 a person a month.

The majority of TEA Board supports raising dues to .5%.

Discussion centered on:

- If Transit decides to go to Arbitration, does Wastewater benefit? (Roger Browne stated that both benefit. He said that although Wastewater does not have the option in negotiations for interest arbitration, Wastewater sees benefits. We used the salary information this time. All TEA members together form a larger bargaining unit than just individual Transit or Wastewater.)
- Could Transit contracts go to arbitration each contract negotiation? (Yes, just as a grievance could go to arbitration. Eric said covering these costs become a political question - are we one union and do we gain strength united. All unions have the same issue - one group/unit may end up costing more and all pay. The Board feels we are one union and we should remain united. He added that this issue was discussed with the Council of Reps. and could be discussed again at their next meeting.)
- Has there been discussion about making the new dues calculated at .45 level? (Eric said we did discuss this option, and the Board recommends the .1 increase in dues. The Financial Plan is an annual plan so members will have a chance to discuss and vote again. The Board wants to stay out of debt and have a reserve to cover unanticipated expenses. In order to accomplish this, and to avoid having another special assessment, the Board feels the .1 increase in dues is warranted.)

Report on Transit-Roads "Loan-In" Issue

Eric reported that TEA was informed of an issue around Transit's D&C management needing to hire additional staff, Transit Roads personnel face being laid off and HR's proposal is to cover this shortage in staffing by bringing Roads staff over to do work that D&C would otherwise contract out. The County acknowledges this is TEA work, that Roads staff is from Local 17, and that they are interested in an MOA basically loaning Roads staff to D&C for a set period of time.

The issue was brought to TEA Board who requested a special meeting with Transit work unit. This meeting occurred last week. There was a lot of concern raised and a petition presented. Members did not want to start down the road of non-TEA members doing TEA work and setting a precedent; that staff must be qualified. Transit members asked to have members of the Transit bargaining unit join Eric and Roger to work out if and what an agreement might be. Alex Marin and Ken Madden volunteered.

This group met last Thursday with King County and presented requirements if such a loan is to occur. Some of the issues put on the table included:

- Whatever budget arrangements are made, these would have to be TEA positions with TEA classifications for the duration;
- Qualifications have to be met - D&C management and TEA supervisors would determine this;
- The opportunity to apply for these positions be expanded to Transit and Wastewater TEA as well.

The County is considering TEA's proposal and the group will meet March 27 with management to hear whether or not they have accepted.

Discussions centered on:

- What classifications does management need? (Eric said that Judy Riley suggested a variety of Engineer, Project Management, and Project Control positions and said she would look at opportunities to have existing TEA D&C members apply for TLT positions.)
- What are we getting in return from Local 17? (Eric said that TEA gets additional TEA members, can use this as leverage for cross TEA bargaining work between WW and D&C in the future, would get reciprocal protections from Local 17 should the reverse situation ever arise, and would build better relations with both other County unions and County management.)
- Concern that Local 17 gets preferential treatment for employment. (Roger said that Local 17 doesn't get to pick - the County does. Eric emphasized any agreement would require TEA supervisors to be the hiring authority, ensuring qualification to do the work. Further, the proposed agreement would actually give preference to TEA members as well. He noted that TEA has said it wants to be different from other unions and work with management when we are assured there is no harm to existing TEA members.)
- Where would preferential hiring come in? (Eric said that it would be limited to the Transit Roads group and TEA employees if the County accepts TEA's position.)
- There are other Transit Sections/Divisions in Local 17 that have similar engineering classification structure that Roads personnel could be moved to. Why weren't those divisions asked to take Roads personnel? Concern that this degrades our position in negotiation regarding the issue that an engineer is an engineer. Transit's Speed and Reliability and Transit Route Facilities are two examples of similar engineering classifications and open positions. (Eric said this is a good question, and he would follow up with Local 17 about their vacancies. Roger said we definitely do not want to establish that an engineer is an engineer and that is why we insisted that the TLT positions be TEA status.)

Issues for the Good of the Order

What is going on with the Board and Transit Bargaining's approach on the PDQ?
(Response: this will be on the Board's next business meeting agenda.)

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Patty Overby, TEA Secretary