



TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA

AFL / CIO

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LOCAL 562

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Membership Update

2/18/2009

On Jan 29 the first Joint negotiating Committee meeting with the NMB took place at the ATD office in DFW. Steve Gukelberger was unable to attend due to the fact that he was attending Arbitration training at the National Labor College in Maryland so I attended in his place. This meeting was essentially a "meet and greet" where the mediator was introduced to the committee and shown a PowerPoint presentation put together by the International highlighting the Joint Committees position on negotiations.

The Mediator for the Joint Committee is Terri Brown. Unfortunately she comes from management at Amtrak, where they recently settled a contract after eight years in mediation. The next meeting with the NMB for joint is scheduled for March 24 at the Flagship Academy in Dallas.

On February 2 we had our E-board meeting. The selection of Shop Stewards took place at this meeting. Some members expressed disappointment that the board did not select based on who had the most signatures on their petitions. The problem with that is that there is no way to have an accurate election between two candidates through petitions, the same member can sign multiple petitions so selection by such a means would not necessarily reflect the will of the majority but simply who was more persistent at collecting signatures. The current practice as outlined in the Bylaws has Shop Stewards serve at the discretion of the board although the verbiage can be somewhat misleading.

In order to be considered for the position of Shop Steward the candidate must collect signatures from a percentage of the members on the shift they work and the board considers how well the person would work with the Section Chairman. That is the current process. The thought process behind this is that the Shop Stewards work for the Local Executive board that is voted in by the members. If the steward is not performing up to the expectations of the board they can remove the steward.

If the membership finds this process unsatisfactory they have the right to change it. They can choose to have stewards who are elected by majority vote by making a motion to amend the Bylaws at a regular membership meeting. Some Locals have direct majority vote for stewards in their Bylaws.

On February 3 the Executive Board met with Local Management. The big topic was the budget. The proposed budget for the Northeast Division would leave the Northeast over manned by

around 40 people. No station closures were discussed and management expected that the reduction could be met through normal attrition and by offering the VBR to line station mechanics where overages occur. A quick review of LGA(159mechs) and JFK(364mechs) revealed up to 150 people who will be 55 or over this year and would qualify for the VBR and that's not counting the five other smaller stations {BOS(88),EWR(23),PHL(17),DCA(35),RDU(25)} that make up the Northeast Division (711 Total).

On February 5 John Young, Paul Lancia and I attended a meeting arranged by Dave Virella and Local 501 with the TWU International and the company to explain the Kasher DRC32 implementation. John Young pointed out that despite the fact the company used a computer program errors were still being made. While many of the dates have been corrected several errors remain. Hopefully they will be corrected soon so we can proceed with our Spring bids.

This week the M&R negotiating committee met at the ATD offices in Dallas. Since our last meeting the TWU had filed for mediation so this was an internal meeting meaning that it was a meeting of just the negotiating committee. We did not meet with the company nor discuss any articles or proposals of the Contract, instead it was more of a strategy session where the group broke off into smaller groups to work on certain aspects of the negotiations strategy. I was part of a group designated to work on a PowerPoint presentation outlining our position to the NMB. I worked on this with Bob Zimmerman(DFW), Steve Luis(TUL), Johnny Griffith(AFW) and Tony Bernal (MIA).

Our first meeting with the NMB is scheduled for the second week of March.

Next week, on February 25 and 26 I will be attending the Presidents Council Meeting. This will be the first such meeting since November of 2008.

The JFK/LGA meeting will be on February 27. Meetings times have been altered to facilitate Night shift workers. Instead of attending a meeting in the morning, after working all night, then fighting traffic home night shift workers can attend prior to their shift. Parking should be more accessible and traffic should be lighter, hopefully this will mean a better turnout.

Fraternally;



Bob Owens
President Local 562