



**OTTAWA NEWSPAPER GUILD**  
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## **MINUTES OF GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

### **Wednesday, December 12, 2012**

1. Membership meeting called to order by Debbie Cole at 12:07 p.m.
2. **Adoption of Agenda**  
M/ by Lois Kirkup to approve the agenda. S/ by Bruce Campbell. CARRIED.
3. **Adoption of Minutes**  
M/ by Gord Holder to adopt the Minutes of September 19, 2012 General Membership meeting. S/ by Tony Lofaro. CARRIED.
4. **President's Report**

(a) Executive activity since last general meeting: President Debbie Cole reported on a recent meeting with Citizen HR representatives regarding a loss of work for part-time ramp attendants starting in January 2013. Though it wasn't yet known how many of the six part-time employees would be retained, it was expected to be 2-3. Notice of potential buyouts were posted. Two of the affected members would qualify for double payout because of pre-1993 hire dates.

Another Citizen employee who had been transferred out of Guild jurisdiction was brought back for occasional hours in the newsroom.

The ONG executive was also tracking freelance material in the newspaper. This info was being gathered in preparation for bargaining in 2013.

There was also discussion of a meeting with Citizen HR reps regarding the Postmedia retirement plan. Every current or retired employee who was in the plan received a letter from Postmedia regarding 10-year repayment plan to address a \$30 million underfunding; Postmedia has made regular payments of \$8 million annually and additional solvency payments of \$14 million. If that five-year repayment plan was changed to 10 years, Postmedia would save about \$3 million annually. If less than one-third of members objected by Dec. 31, 2012, the plan would proceed. There have been discussions involving CWA/SCA Canada, but information is still being collected. A \$126M underfunding estimate was based on winding up the pension plan, members were told. ONG had the right to object or not on behalf of the 119 participating pension members as of Dec. 31, 2011. Members were told that union officials had discussed using the application to gain creation of a membership seat on an advisory board for the pension plan and to obtain more information on the plan. President Debbie Cole said the plan had not been at solvency for some time.

The province of Ontario had a pension benefit regulation that would make up some of the difference, and it was estimated that this would bring the effective solvency level for Postmedia's plan to 86 per cent, up from the 72 per cent mentioned in the report as of Dec. 31, 2011.

Members were told that the consensus of the executive was that there was no reason not to object to Postmedia's application to pension regulators. Postmedia has conceded that the \$3M annual saving under a 10-year solvency recovery plan would not make a difference in whether the company survived. ONG represented 119 current members who were in the pension plan.

Other unions' members have received similar notice letters from Postmedia. Executive Member-at-Large Lois Kirkup was to contact the president of the CEP local in Vancouver for consultation.

It was reported that there are about 2,800 members in the pension plan, including 600 retirees and 1,600 current Postmedia employees.

Question: Could contribution rates be increased for current employees. It was believed that they could be. More information was to be obtained, and this issue was to be part of discussions between unions and Postmedia.

Retirees were told that Tony Cote, the retiree Member-at-Large on the ONG executive, would be happy to answer their questions.

The deadline for registering objections to Postmedia's application for a 10-year solvency restoration process was Dec. 31, 2012.

Members were told that the ONG executive's existing position was to object unless concessions were obtained, such as gaining representation on a pension plan advisory board.

## 5. **Financial Report**

(a) Update: [see attachment] Treasurer Peter Bennet reported that there was a deficit budget for the current fiscal year, but there was a small surplus of \$385 for November.

(b) Audit Report: Audited financial statements for 2011-2012 fiscal year were presented by Treasurer Peter Bennet. The Defence Fund was reported to have had a surplus of \$75,000, down from \$96,000 in the previous year because of arbitration/grievance costs. The General Fund showed a surplus of \$10,000; revenue was down \$13,000 from previous year, but expenses were down \$10,000. No concerns were reported by the auditors.

Copies of the audited statements would be available for inspection by members at the ONG office.

(c) Executive Honoraria for 2013:

M/ by Lois Kirkup. S/ by Dawn Butler. Resolved that honoraria be set as: President \$2,000; Treasurer \$1,500; Vice-President \$600; Secretary \$600. CARRIED.

6. **Unit Reports**

(a) CTV Ottawa: Unit Co-chairs have reported announced plans to lay off one full-time and one part-time member as part of the station's switch to a web-first strategy.

(b) DLR International: The collective agreement has expired and CWA/SCA Canada staff rep Dave Wilson had been trying to schedule negotiations with the company owner. That process was not expected to be lengthy.

(c) Delta Reprographics: No report.

(d) Ottawa Citizen: An arbitration hearing for a member working in the Building Services department had been scheduled for two days, but the case was settled on the first day and the member had been given back two of the four vacation days he had been forced to use after being refused permission to report for work following a medical incident until a medical certificate was provided. This had been done in other cases involving return from extended sick leave or LTD, but ONG's position was that this request by the company was not allowed in all cases and was not allowed to be unreasonable, as was done in this case.

7. **New Business**

(a) Elections Committee –

(b) Executive elections – Vacant Member-at-large position; no election held.

(c) Delegates to TNG Sector Conference and CWA Convention - April 2013 (Pittsburg) M/ by Lois Kirkup. S/ by Jeff Parks. Resolved that President Debbie Cole and Secretary Gord Holder be the ONG delegates at the TNG Sector Conference in April 2013, and that President Debbie Cole be the ONG delegate for the CWA Convention, also in April 2013.

8. **Other Business**

In response to a question from a Citizen member of ONG, members were reminded that schedules were to be posted with two weeks notice. The executive was to address Citizen management about posting requirements.

9. **Adjournment**

M/ by Bruce Campbell. S/ by Dawn Butler. Meeting ended at 12:58 p.m. CARRIED.

No separate Citizen Unit meeting held; Postmedia Retirement Plan - see President's activity report.

No separate CTV Ottawa Unit meeting held.