



OTTAWA NEWSPAPER GUILD
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MINUTES - EMERGENCY EXECUTIVE

COMMITTEE MEETING: Tuesday, June 5, 2012

Attendance: Peter Bennet, Rob Bostelaar, Debbie Cole, Gord Holder, Lois Kirkup, Joanne Laucius, Jacquie Miller, Julie Oliver.

1. Call to Order by Debbie Cole at 12:08 p.m.
2. Approval of Agenda. M/ by Lois Kirkup. S/ by Joanne Laucius. CARRIED.
3. (a) Ottawa Citizen Unit - Impending Layoffs

Unit Chair Jacquie Miller had prepared a Q&A and held a discussion with ONG legal counsel.

President Debbie Cole and Member-at-Large Lois Kirkup met with Citizen representatives Debbie Bennett and Linda Ruhl on May 28. Company agreed that it had not given official notice of layoffs. Debbie and Lois notified company representatives of Guild's intention to grieve layoffs and also of our intention to seek a legal opinion on various matters.

Jacquie Miller said legal counsel's interpretation, given verbally, was that E-4 would be considered a higher classification than E-3, based on the salary language in the collective agreement. Lois Kirkup reported that the company's interpretation was that E-3 was higher because of, among other things, higher points on pay equity surveys. This would clearly be a matter that would have to be determined because of the implications for many members.

Jacquie Miller also reported that legal counsel said the freelance clause in the contract said freelancers could not be used to do the work of full-time editorial members if doing so would lead to the layoff of the full-time members.

Newsroom ONG members have been told they can apply for buyouts without prejudice, as well as applying for jobs with an expanded Postmedia Editorial Services operation in Hamilton, also without prejudice.

Jacquie Miller said that Citizen publisher/editor-in-chief Gerry Nott had indicated that information on possible buyouts was expected later in the week.

Debbie Cole reported that the Montreal Newspaper Guild had contract language requiring the offering of buyouts before layoffs, but there were no specifics on the terms of the buyouts.

Rob Bostelaar argued in favour of trying to mitigate the impact of the layoffs, i.e. fewer members. Other points of executive discussion included the protection for members hired before 1993 against layoff due to technological change, change in processes or contracting out, plus the topic of intercompany transfer of work as was discussed in past cases involving Reader Sales and Service and the Business Office.

As well, the use of student apprentices and interns was raised as an issue.

Jacque Miller was to consult again with legal counsel on these and other related issues.

The executive decided to complete preparation of an information bulletin for posting on Guild boards at the Citizen and for sending to members' home addresses, either via email or ground mail.

There was also discussion about the possible need for an emergency membership meeting, depending on whether/when the company offers formal notice about layoff numbers and job titles. A regular general membership meeting was already scheduled for Wednesday, June 13.

Martin O'Hanlon, the director of CWA/SCA Canada, already had scheduled a meeting with Postmedia chief executive Paul Godfrey on Friday, June 8.

Secretary Gord Holder reported that CWA/SCA Canada had arranged for a Final Cut Pro video editing training session to be offered for layoff-affected members in the week of July 16. Details on the location and dates of the course, plus local responsibilities, will be forthcoming from the national office.

(b) Short Shift.

It has come to the attention of the ONG that a part-time newsroom member was working four-hour shifts, apparently at his own request, to fill in for another member currently on sick leave. The executive was to send a letter to the company as a reminder of the restrictions on such arrangements, which would otherwise contravene our position that a shift is seven or 7 ½ hours.

4. New Business

5. Lost Time Notification: Debbie Cole, Lois Kirkup, Joanne Laucius, Jacque Miller, Julie Oliver.

6. Upcoming Meetings

- Next General Membership Meeting - Wednesday, June 13, 2012, 12 noon, Ottawa Citizen Conference Centre

- Next Executive Committee Meeting - Tuesday, June 19, 2012, 2 p.m. Guild office

7. Adjournment. M/ by Gord Holder. S/ by Julie Oliver. CARRIED. Meeting ended 1:30 p.m.