



Mission Statement

The Professional Employees Association is dedicated to bargain, administer, and enforce labor agreements in a responsible, prudent, and lawful manner for the overall improvement of members' working conditions, with emphasis on general advocacy, education, and communication.

From the President's Desk

by Karin Anderson, President

In Mike Wilde's *The Corner* you'll read: "What strengthens the organization or society as a whole? Participation does." Workplace strength or bargaining leverage can never be achieved alone.

Participants and Bystanders

from *Standing on Giants*, a blog by Kyle Reed, 1/31/2011

<http://thoughtsaboutnothing.com/participants-and-bystanders/>

This past week I have been reminded of what it means to be a bystander and a participant. I was reminded of the results and outcome of both.

As a **bystander** I sat and watched

As a **participant** I moved and acted

As a **bystander** I become bitter and regretful

As a **participant** I was happy and energized

As a **bystander** I missed out on opportunities

As a **participant** I created opportunities

As I start a new week I am constantly reminding myself to be a participant and not a bystander. But can I be honest with you, it is so much easier for me to be a bystander. To sit back, let things pass, and want others to come to me. It's easy for me to expect others to notice me, to serve me, to take care of me. Maybe it's the deep desire to be known, but it's easy for me to sit in the corner and feel sorry for myself.

But every night I am reminded of what it is like to be a bystander. It is a life filled with regret and missed chances. Because just as much as I want to be a bystander I desire to be a participant. Maybe it is because I am afraid of the consequences of missing out, but I think the biggest reason is that I want to be apart of life rather than letting life pass me by.

Sometimes it's easy to hit the snooze button on life and never wake up, but today I choose to participate eyes wide open ready to see what's next.

From the President's Desk continued on page 2

A willing participant is a wonderful thing for any organization. As president of PEA, I am thankful for each person who chooses to be a PEA participant – full members, stewards, board members, newsletter editors, website administrators, negotiations volunteers, those who chose to be a part of the conversation, those who attend membership meetings, and those who vote.

Today, with great appreciation and recognition of the work done in years past, I want to thank Library Steward Susan Henry for her willingness to be a PEA participant for many years.



Susan has been a staunch PEA participant through regular membership, stewarding, editing the newsletter for many years until stepping down at the end of 2011, and being a part of the

PEA “conversation.” Susan recently decided to step down from her steward position, saying: “It seems like a good time to transition my position as Steward to someone else who works out in one of the branches, while I am still working at the Library and can help them out.” Always a participant, Susan, a long time City employee, has devoted much time and effort to PEA. I’m sure we met when I came into PEA around this time of the year in 1999, and knowing her has been my pleasure ever since. She is a steadfast supporter of her co-workers and PEA and has always been informative and helpful to me and other past PEA board members. She has promised me that she will not be a stranger to PEA and will continue to contribute and support this organization. Thank you, Susan, for all your work and showing us all such a fine example of what it means to be a participant.

***** Nomination and Election Notice *****

Nominations and elections for the seven (7) executive committee positions will be held on Wednesday, October 5th during our general membership meeting at Mancini’s. Every full member is qualified to run for office. The following incumbents have informed the existing Board that they intend on running again:

President	Karin Anderson
Vice President	Regina Etoll
Treasurer	Julie Sobania
Secretary	Sara Nurmela
Personnel	Julie Kraus
Negotiations (City)	Justine Roe
Negotiations (SPPS)	Todd Larson

Nominations can be sent to Mike Wilde (mike.wilde24@gmail.com) or made on the floor at the meeting. Nominations can be made for any executive committee position. Fair share members cannot participate in the nomination process, election, or voting. Diversity is important in the healthy functioning of all organizations. Minorities are encouraged to fully participate and consider running for office.

The Corner

by Mike Wilde, Legal Counsel

A recluse, hermit and shut-in are common labels that carry one overarching characteristic: isolation. This trait is often used to describe an unfavorable disconnect with the larger society. Don't confuse them with solitude or individuality, because those descriptions celebrate what is unique and private about the single person. Those traits strengthen the individual.

But what strengthens the organization or society as a whole? Participation does. There was an acclaimed book written by Robert Putnam several years ago entitled *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. The author studies the decline of in-person social intercourse that America relied upon to create and strengthen its social fabric. Since the book was written in 2000, the author did not have the benefit of dissecting the artificial connection that we are growing all too familiar with through Facebook, Twitter and the like. My guess is that he would strongly disapprove of that detached form of participation.

Participation is necessary in our most fundamental form of society – our government. While too many don't vote, and lots don't care, the vast majority of citizens do contribute by paying taxes. In fact, the law of the land requires it and society at large usually understands that such funding is necessary for our common defense and welfare. "Tax cheat" is still a dirty name and there is plenty of speculation that one of our Presidential candidates doesn't release his tax information because it would be one more mark against him.

Taxes support our basic functions of democracy. The employees of both the City of St. Paul and our St. Paul School District also benefit from another form of democracy, namely their Union. On behalf of professional occupations, PEA has sustained a voice for the common welfare of all of the employees in the bargaining unit, regardless of whether they are regular members or fair share employees.

A skeptical reader might think, "Not me. I've gained everything by the hard work and dedication I bring to work everyday." Such an opinion would

put him or her into the isolation camp with the false notion that workplace strength or bargaining leverage is achieved alone. Yet, none of these folks could ever legitimately take credit for the great vacation benefits, health insurance, sick time or wage rates that are guaranteed in their union contract and that they enjoy without a thought.

In fact, no single person can take credit for these valuable terms of his or her employment. The beginnings of such benefits began in the 1970's when committed people stood together and entered into negotiations with the City and the Schools. Fair compensation, career ladders and workplace issues that affect all of us were discussed, debated and negotiated. Success has always been reached, albeit in varying degrees, but the process of collective bargaining has always worked for PEA. Results are then guaranteed in an enforceable collective bargaining agreement. These contracts are the building blocks for our current standard of living.

None of these things fell from the sky. Almost never has our employer contacted the bargaining unit and said "we want to offer more" or "we want to increase employee conditions." It might happen, but the common path to improvements is that little struggle we call negotiations.

With appreciation and recognition of the work done in years past, and to continue to fund operations going forward, about 80% of employees represented by PEA pay regular union dues. This is \$32.00 per month, which is likely the lowest dues amount in St. Paul and, possibly, the State. The remaining 20% of employees forfeit their voting rights and individual voice to save a mere \$4.80 per month.

To those 20% who make up PEA's fair share members, we hope you reconsider your participation. Seriously, your voice and opinion are worth a lot more than \$4.80. The work done before you, on your behalf and for the betterment of all professionals working under our contract, endures when everyone recognizes the results and benefits. Your recognition can be offered through regular

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membership and participation.

We've all been part of a crowd on a stormy, freezing night where people hurriedly flock to the entrance of a school, arena or church. It's a rush to get out of the elements and into the cozy confines of shelter. Somebody almost always holds the door open for the benefit of the quick entrance of others. When the stream is steady, someone relieves the volunteer door holder so he can get inside. The newcomer holds the door open for others. This process is repeated and repeated for everyone's

benefit. It's one of the tiny forms of social grace and interaction that we have, but it's noticeable. Everyone can surely maneuver the door by themselves, but it's in our nature to recognize the temporary doorman, give him a head nod and even relieve him of his duty so that you can participate for those in the crowd that follow.

The door has been held open for all of us. Recognize that and prop the door open for those that follow. Become a full member of your union. PEA welcomes you.

PEA's Annual Dinner / General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, October 5, 2016

Mancini's, 531 West 7th Street, St. Paul

5:30 p.m. Registration with Appetizers

6:00 p.m. Dinner

7:00 p.m. Meeting

Agenda

Introduction of Stewards and Executive Committee Members

Special Guest Speakers regarding Deferred Comp:

Michael Stein from Voya and Nikki Klosterboer from MNDPCP

Approval of April 5th General Membership Minutes

Reports of Board & Committees

Mike Wilde's Legal Counsel Update

Elections

Member Recognition

Adjournment



RSVP by Thursday, September 29th to regina.etoll@ci.stpaul.mn.us,

include your entree selection of Chicken, Steak, Walleye, or Vegetarian Pasta.

Dinner includes salad, bread, baked potato, cake & choice of coffee, tea, milk or pop.

Please let Regina know if you have any special dietary needs.

Only full members may vote and participate fully in PEA.

If you are a fair share member, please consider becoming a full member.

Minutes from

PEA General Membership meeting – April 5, 2016

Attendees: Issac Afwerke, Karin Anderson (President), Thomas Bosman, Sara Brown (Steward), Sue Butler (Steward), Kathleen Conger (Steward), Rachel Coyle (Steward), Kelly DeHaut (Steward), James Engen (Steward), Jeremy Erickson, Regina Etoll (Vice President), Benjamin Feldman, Ashley Foell, Terry Giinther, Susan Henry (Steward), Bob Huntley, Brian Karschnia, Mark Kile, Julie Kraus (Personnel Chair), Jill LaCasse (Steward), Todd Larson (SPPS Negotiations), Carol Martinson, Michael Michaud, Kelly Moch, Patrick Murphy, Joe Musolf, Sara Nurmela (Secretary & Newsletter Editor), Amanda Rice (Steward), Justine Roe (City Negotiations), Therese Scherbel (Steward), Asha Shoffner, George Simon, Jerry Skelly (Steward), Julia Sobania (Treasurer), Melanie Spellerberg, Beth Ulrich (Steward), Luke Vang (Steward), Bill Vos (Steward), Casey Walters, Angeline Wiese, Pang Yang, Chin-Ming Yin, Sara Zorn, Mike Wilde (Legal Counsel)

Meeting called to order at 6:40pm.

Introduction of Stewards and Executive Board members.

Approval of General Membership meeting minutes from December 8, 2015 – approved by all.

Legal Counsel Report and Discussion of Constitution / Bylaw Vote

Because of the possibility of the Supreme Court changing how dues may be collected by unions, the PEA executive board has proposed changes to the constitution and bylaws.

PEA has been historically apolitical. This is not a political issue. Proposed constitution / bylaw changes are intended to maintain the ability of PEA to conduct business.

There have been recent cases brought to the Supreme Court regarding the collection of union dues.

A group of California teachers were plaintiffs in a case, looking to outlaw membership in public unions. The *Freidrichs* case went to federal court in California. Basis for the case is that people who don't want to pay dues shouldn't have to due to freedom of association. Case was lost at the lower court, and was appealed to the court of appeals. 9th circuit court ruled against them, chose to uphold the *Abood* case – since everyone benefits from the collectively bargained agreement.

The *Freidrichs* case was to be heard by the Supreme Court – and was assumed to receive a 5 to 4 vote to outlaw collection of fair share dues. Intent is to break down public unions by eliminating revenue stream. Justice Scalia passed away, making the vote 4 to 4. There is no change to the law for now.

26 states in the US are now right-to-work. (Which do not allow collection of fair share dues.) Outside of a contract, most employees are 'at-will' employees. Employment at will means you can quit whenever you want for any reason, employer can also fire you for any reason at any time.

If you have a collectively bargained agreement, it applies to everyone, does not discriminate. Currently cannot 'opt-out' of dues.

The proposed changes are to charge a reasonable service fee for services conducted by the union in the event that collection of fair share dues outlawed. (Services including representation at

grievances, appeals, hearings, etc.) A fee schedule has not been decided yet, but would be at attorney rates and fees for the executive board.

Questions & Answers from Membership

Q: What happens if on the verge of 'trouble', a non-dues-paying member decides that they now want to be a dues paying member in order to have services covered?

A: Proposed change states that association will waive nonmember fees for representation if the nonmember becomes a member 90 days BEFORE the grievance occurs.

Q: What happens if after their grievance they want to opt out of paying dues again?

A: It is a possibility, has not really been discussed by the board.

Q: If outlawing of fair share dues collection did pass, how would fees be collected if not through payroll?

A: We would bill the nonmember for the time and work spent on their issue.

Q: What is the frequency of, or how often are there grievances?

A: We have a fair amount of grievances for around 300 employees. Approximately 5-6 a month, with 2-3 hearings or so a year.

Q: Of those grievances, how many are fair share members?

A: Because of fair representation, we don't track this information.

Q: In Wisconsin, has the lack of unions changed job titles and descriptions?

A: All job description/title changes currently have to go through PEA. In Wisconsin, they can change the requirements as they want, and hire/fire people for whatever reason they like. Simplified example: "I like your shoes", you're hired. "I don't like your shoes", you're fired.

Q: Has this type of change (collection for services by union on behalf of non-dues paying member) been deemed illegal in any other state?

A: The proposed language changes were pulled from a Nevada case that had implemented such changes.

Proposed changes to Article II

ARTICLE II

Membership

1. The Association recognizes its responsibility as exclusive bargaining agent and agrees to fairly represent all employees in the bargaining unit. Any person, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual preference, disability, or political belief, who meets any of the requirements defined hereafter, shall be eligible for membership in the Association.

* * *

3. Fair Share members shall include any employee for whom this Association is designated as exclusive bargaining agent and who has elected to not join the Association and pays Fair Share dues. Fair Share members are prohibited from voting, attending contract votes, holding office or steward positions, or introducing new business items during scheduled meetings. If Fair Share monthly assessments under PELRA (Minn. Stat. § 179A) are ever prohibited under law, the Association shall charge nonmembers of the Association a reasonable service fee or fees for representation in grievances, appeals, and/or hearings. The Association will waive the nonmember fees for such representation if the nonmember has voluntarily become a member at least ninety (90) days before the grievance occurs. The Executive Committee shall determine the service fees once per year.

5. Dues and fees:

* * *

e. Payroll deductions shall be the preferred method of payment for dues.

f. Nonmembers will be charged reasonable service fees for representation in grievances, appeals, and/or hearings, subject to Article II.3 (above), if Fair Share monthly assessments are prohibited under law.

Motion by Karin Anderson, seconded by Regina Etoll.

Unanimous decision to vote on proposed changes by raised-hand ballot.

If proposed changes are approved, they would become effective immediately.

Unanimous vote in favor of proposed changes to Article II by regular members present.

Proposed Changes to Article IV

ARTICLE IV

Terms of Office and Elections

2. A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President ninety (90) days prior to the date of the general membership meeting at which elections are to be held prior to the end of the current term. The Committee shall submit at least one name for each office and chair to the membership at the election meeting.

Proposed changes to Article IV unanimously approved by regular members present (raised-hand ballot).

President's Report

Labor Management Committee for Health Insurance (LMCHI) for the city currently isn't very busy.

LMCHI for SPPS – is looking for someone to serve on that committee. Talk to a SPPS steward or Todd Larson if interested.

Treasurer's Report

Fund balance = \$91,805.87

Expenditures are running a little higher than income right now. Negotiation team meeting lunches are an example of a current additional expense.

The executive board is talking about maintaining budget and looking at cutting expenses.

Committee Chair Reports

Personnel

235 city, 81 SPPS, 316 total members

School District Negotiations

Have had a few meetings, have used some tools that help establish their platform. Have 2 more meetings in the next couple weeks. Have been meeting nearly weekly since they are in the middle of negotiations.

City Negotiations

Have met once with the city to present our proposal to the city (March 11). They meet with the city again this Thursday. There are 4 more meetings scheduled, not sure if they will all be needed.

Q: What is the strategy for timing of negotiations?

A: With SPPS, timing is more strategic – to follow teacher's negotiations. With the city, much less strategic as far as timing. LMCHI is a cooperative effort to coordinate health care for multiple bargaining units.

Q: What are we asking for in negotiations this year?

A: We've asked for: 4% raise for 3 years, an increased deferred comp match from \$250 to \$400/year, ability to carry over more vacation from year to year, increased uniform allowance, and to fix some contract language. Is one of the best times to bring up issues – temporary, provisional employees, etc. are an example of an issue brought forth.

Both bargaining units are looking to increase retirement contributions by the employer. In order to get money the employers will match, employees have to participate. (Currently there is only around 50% participation in deferred comp.)

There are a lot of PEA members that are stagnant, no real upward movement. Significantly more plateauing of career opportunities. Existing positions are stagnant, but they are hiring in more advanced position from outside, which isn't really helping diversity. There are lateral hires at the upper levels. Temporary and provisional employees are being used more often. We are trying to address that.

Old/New Business

None brought to floor

Announcements

Next steward meeting – Tuesday, July 12.

Next general membership meeting – Wednesday, October 5.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41pm.



Professional Employees Association

CITY OF SAINT PAUL & INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625

www.peaonline.org

Executive Committee

President	Karin Anderson <i>karin.anderson@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	CAO – 750 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8765
Vice President	Regina Etoll <i>regina.etoll@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	CAO – 500 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8726
Treasurer	Julie Sobania <i>julia.sobania@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	Public Works – 1500 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6139
Secretary	Sara Nurmela <i>peanewsletter@gmail.com</i>	HREEO – 280 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8974
Personnel	Julie Kraus <i>julie.kraus@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	CAO – 400 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8776
School Negotiations	Todd Larson <i>todd.larson@spps.org</i> <i>peanegotiations.spps@gmail.com</i>	SCHOOLS – 1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-1813
City Negotiations	Justine Roe <i>justine.roe@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i> <i>peanegotiationscity@gmail.com</i>	WATER – 1900 Rice St., 55113	651-266-1628

Staff & Others

Legal Counsel	Mike Wilde, Esq. <i>mike.wilde24@gmail.com</i>	545 7th St. W Saint Paul, MN 55102	612-227-8425
Newsletter	Sara Nurmela <i>peanewsletter@gmail.com</i>	HREEO – 280 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8974
Webpage <i>www.peaonline.org</i>	John Larson <i>john.larson@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	Libraries (SPPL) – 90 W 4th St., 55102	651-266-7044
Mailing Address	Professional Employees Association	PO Box 7333 Saint Paul, MN 55107-0333	

Stewards

CAO / OFS / HREEO / Mayor's Office / Council Res / HR	Amanda Rice <i>amanda.rice@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	500 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8737
DSI	Mary Gleich <i>mary.gleich@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	375 Jackson St., Suite 220, 55101	651-266-1935
Fire & Emergency Management	Jill LaCasse <i>jill.lacasse@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	645 Randolph Ave., 55102	651-228-6257
Libraries	Susan Henry <i>susan.henry@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	Saint Anthony Park Branch, 2245 Como Ave., 55108	651-642-0411
Libraries	Kathleen Conger <i>kathleen.conger@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	Rondo Community Outreach Library, 461 Dale St., 55103	651-266-7431
Libraries	Therese Scherbel <i>therese.scherbel@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	George Latimer Central Library 90 W 4th Street, 55102	651-266-7048
OTC	Luke Vang <i>luke.vang@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	600 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6789
Parks & Recreation	Rachel Coyle <i>rachel.coyle@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1100 North Hamline Avenue 55108	651-632-2431
PED	Beth Ulrich <i>beth.ulrich@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1400 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6689
Police	Kelly DeHaut <i>kelly.dehaut@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	367 Grove St., 55101	651-266-5606
Public Health	Sue Butler <i>sue.butler@co.ramsey.mn.us</i>	555 Cedar St., 55101	651-266-1321
Public Works	Bill Vos <i>bill.vos@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	900 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6113
School District	Jim Engen <i>jim.engen@spps.org</i>	360 Colborne St., 55102	651-767-8346
School District	Dominique Murray <i>dominique.murray@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-8307
School District	Jerry Skelly <i>jerry.skelly@spps.org</i>	360 Colborne St., 55102	763-422-9624
Water	Sarah Brown <i>sarah.brown@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1900 Rice St., 55113	651-266-1635