

## **PEA General Membership meeting — October 14, 2020**

*Attendees:* Brian Balfanz, Beth Baumgartner, Jeremy Berger, Mary Ann Berglund, Peter Borgen, Christine Boulware, Charles Colvin, Kathleen Conger, Rosemary Dolata, Jim Engen, Regina Etoll, Marie Franchett, Jim Giebel, Mary Grimm, Jean Hehn, Mary Henke-Haney, Xenia Hernandez, Scott Hvizdos, Bob Huntley, Jim Jeffery, Vaughn Kelly, Mary Knox, Julie Kraus, Patty Lammers, Janos McGhie, Joe Musolf, Wendy Neurer, Sara Nurmela, Brianna Nyquist, Clare Pillsbury, Jeanette Rebar, Gessner Rivas, Justine Roe, Peter Rudrud, Paul Sawyer, Therese Scherbel, Asha Shoffner, Leslie Spring, Michele Swanson, Alicia Thoj, Beth Ulrich, Zong Vang, Shannon Veeraboina, Tricia Wehrle, Hunwen Westman, See (CJ) Yang, Sarah Zorn, Mike Wilde, meejoluj's iphone, LOTT Zoom, LCL (she/her), 612-322-3209, 16127

Meeting called to order at 6:05pm.

Meeting held virtually via Zoom.

Introduction of stewards, special committee members, and executive committee members. Thank you for all of your hard work for PEA.

### **Secretary's Report**

April 8, 2020 general membership meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic stay at home orders from Governor Walz.

Minutes from October 3, 2019 general membership meeting (as printed in the Q1 2020 newsletter) approved as written. Motion by Julie Kraus, seconded by Jeremy Berger.

If any edits are needed, please let Sara Nurmela or a board member know.

### **Treasurer's Report – Beth Ulrich**

\$101,336.71 end of September

Funds are up approx. \$3400 from this time last year. Most likely due to virtual versus in-person meetings.

### **Committee Chair Reports**

#### **Personnel – Julie Kraus**

As of October 2019:

City: 280 total represented, 32 are nonmembers

Schools: 102 total represented, 23 are nonmembers

Total: 382 total represented, 55 are nonmembers

As of October 14, 2020:

City: 293 total represented, 35 are nonmembers

Schools: 105 total represented, 22 are nonmembers

Total: 398 total represented, 57 are nonmembers

### **Member Outreach & Education Coordinator – Jeremy Berger**

Jeremy Berger – still sending out new member packets. Can currently not send out battery charge packs (lithium ion batteries) – as it is illegal to send them through the mail.

### **School District Negotiations – Vaughn Kelly**

After a long negotiations process, the contract has been signed. Some benefits have been expanded, and clarification of another benefit. A couple action items are still pending to take care of some of the new benefits. Increase in bereavement leave – will not need to use sick time for bereavement purposes. Please email Jim Vollmer if you used any bereavement leave in 2020. Need to act on new benefit – approved list of certifications that will earn you a full step increase. Will need to use the district tool which is in Oracle/PeopleSoft system to enter your certifications. Need to have a full scanned copy of your certification. Stewards should have additional information.

Have seen an increase on last paycheck 1.5% retroactive to the beginning of 2020 Should see supplemental pay. January 2021 – 2% increase. SPPS is no longer taking out a \$0.50 service fee for deduction of union dues. Luckily the schools have not experienced layoffs. If an employee is PERA eligible and gets laid off, they can receive a payout of their sick time. If have been employed with district for 10 years, can get sick time paid out.

### **Labor Management Committee Health Care Committee — LMCHCC (School District) – Charlie Colvin**

Increased deductibles in exchange for lower premiums. Vaughn noted that health insurance issues were a big part of negotiations but was a “no go” on changes from the SPPS. School district said that everyone gets same amount from the school for health coverage. Premiums are taken out pre-tax.

Health Partners & PEIP were the only responses to the request for quotes for the school district’s health insurance plan. Heard that PEIP increased rates from original quotes during health insurance issues last year. The committee asked Health Partners what they are doing to help control costs, but they did not really have a response.

District sent out email regarding open enrollment today.

### **City Negotiations – Joe Musolf**

Joe states he has a great committee of seven members, including himself. There is a good range of tenure with the city and departments throughout the city. The city contract ends at the end of 2020.

The negotiations process will include information gathering, sorting through it, schedule negotiations. Will be soliciting as much info as possible from the membership.

Plan to send a survey out to city PEA members hopefully next week. Will hold a couple virtual open house meetings for members in November. Already have a list of concerns and negotiation topics from the membership.

When ultimately sit down with the city for negotiations, it is important that the negotiations committee is representing PEA’s membership. Contact Joe with comments, questions, or feedback.

## **Labor Management Committee on Health Insurance — LMCHI (City)**

Karin Anderson was not present at the meeting, Regina gave an update.

City is currently in the process of open enrollment, it ends at midnight on October 23. This year \$500 of medical flex spending can roll over to 2021. Claims submissions for 2020 must be incurred before December 31. Parking claims must be submitted by January 30. Daycare flex deadline is February 15. Additional incentive available for wellness activities.

Don't forget to save a copy of your benefits statement when doing open enrollment and save it as proof. Virtual open enrollment sessions are being held – please attend one or view a recording if you have questions about open enrollment.

Next year there are premium increases for health insurance coverage – approximately 3% increase.

## **Vice President's Update – Justine Roe**

Human Resources (City) has been busy with job spec revisions. Requested to see redlined versions of these revised job specs.

## **Legal Counsel Update**

Overview of some issues handled in the past year:

- Were able to settle a grievance at the mediation step.
- Began negotiations with school district. Mike states that Vaughn and Charlie were modest regarding the work they put in for negotiations. Their negotiations survey for schools had an almost 70% response rate.
- Some regular JAQ issues, did contemplate changing the steward allocations, but has been postponed.
- Labor management committees for both schools and the city have been active.
- A couple probation challenges.
- Worked out a process for when a member no longer wants to be a member.
- Some general departmental issues were resolved.
- An out of title grievance that went to step 3 that was resolved to the satisfaction of the employee.

On March 16, everything changed due to COVID-19. Everything was “unprecedented” – can they do this? Can they do that? Insurance companies claiming it is an ‘act of god’ exception. Members have been really patient. Most people had good ideas. Scores of virtual meetings, MOA, meet and confer with the City, work assignment issues, monitored layoffs and potential layoffs. Monitor temporary workers, exposure pay – we weren't the only union with these types of issues. Lots of questions about what the employer can do. Both schools and city have been working to avoid layoffs.

Successful school district negotiations, city negotiations to start soon.

It has been a year unlike any other. The workplace has changed dramatically.

Charlie Colvin gave great thanks to Mike for his work and that he is a valuable asset to PEA.

## **New Business / Discussion**

No new business from the floor.

During the election process, some questions raised about inclusion on the executive board. Mike noted that executive board members are not hand picking their successor, nominations are open from all members. Discussion amongst all for how to include members in leadership roles. Suggestion that if members want to be involved to join a committee or contact the executive board. It was mentioned that those that step up do it as a sense of duty to their peers.

A steward mentioned that it has been rare when people are nominated or board positions are challenged. Not many members step up. Being a steward is a way to get involved in a leadership role.

There is an ongoing question for how to get members engaged with the union. Questions about inclusion of black and indigenous people of color. How can we encourage younger workers to get involved with jobs that are 'not flashy'?

Asha asked for a list of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) PEA members. She offered to email them and bring them together to talk about how we want to be involved.

Within the membership of PEA right now, how do we involve more BIPOC members? Regina would like to connect with Asha about this to brainstorm.

## **Elections**

On July 10, notice of election was distributed via email through stewards. Notice of election was also printed in the August newsletter. No one has stepped forward in response to these notices. Mike asked for nominations from the floor for each of the executive board positions. No nominations.

There are attendance requirements that must be met – must have attended at least one general membership meeting in the past year. This attendance requirement was waived this year due to the cancellation of the April 2020 general membership meeting.

Mike requested any nominations from the floor for each of the following positions, but there were no additional nominations.

Position — candidate(s)

Positions running unopposed, no nominations from the floor — approved by acclamation by members present at the meeting.

President — Regina Etoll

Vice President — Justine Roe

Treasurer — Beth Ulrich

Secretary — Sara Nurmela

Personnel — Julie Kraus

School District Negotiations Chair — Vaughn Kelly

City Negotiations Chair – Joe Musolf

## **Member Recognition**

Almost 20 years ago PEA started a member recognition award – the John F Blackstone Member of the Year award.

This year we had a handful of people that would have been worthy of this award.

Jeremy Berger has tons of energy, is extremely pleasant, and is really reaching out to new employees to encourage them to become members of PEA. Congratulations Jeremy on being the recipient of the PEA John Blackstone Member of the Year.

Jeremy said thank you, and that he really likes bringing people together and trying to make the world a better place.

Meeting adjourned at 7:39pm.