



The Corner

by Mike Wilde, Legal Counsel

We've all laughed at the memes of working from home or the YouTube bloopers of all that can go wrong with the pandemic-induced home office. Much of the humor pokes fun at how challenging it can be when there is no distinction between home and work. Yet in many sectors, these obstacles don't seem to have slowed productivity. In fact, a common question to arise during our Covid-19 pandemic is "how will this change our workplace?"

Perhaps one of the few silver linings to these difficult times will be the forced paradigm shift away from our concept of traditional office work. The majority of professional employees in PEA have had a single work place, often an office, cubicle or station. By way of standard operations, and in our contract, the normal workday is comprised of five 8-hour days that typically span Monday through Friday. This 9-to-5 existence has admittedly been stretched beyond these strict confines in recent years. For example, cell phone availability often results in getting emergency, or even routine, calls and texts in the evenings and on weekends. It's also fair to say a lot of spouses probably complain when their partner decides to bring the work computer on vacation too, because it results in compulsive checking of emails.

Things have changed dramatically for nearly all of us. It's no longer a matter of being stretched beyond the normal work times, or having new locations or several locations. It also requires creating your own new routine and scheduling. When you wake up, what you wear, morning interactions with family and pets, lack of traffic and physical isolation are just some of the questions that one faces now that they are a remote employee. Despite these challenges and changes, a recent survey of 4700 workers found that only 12% wanted to return to traditional office work. A full 72% wanted a hybrid model.

Some employers are recognizing that empty office space has not resulted in lost production. Ninety-four percent of 800 employers surveyed by Mercer, an HR and workplace benefits consulting firm, said that productivity was the same as or

higher than it was before the pandemic, even with their employees working remotely. As is often the case, the bottom line says it all. It is very probable that co-worker interruptions, water cooler chit-chat, unnecessary meetings, traffic delays and lunch interruptions have all been reduced overall because people are alone with their work and their deadlines. If it works for the employer and their production needs, you can safely bet many of these changes are here to stay.

Also, as tedious as they've become, the zoom meetings and virtual equivalents, have at least made meetings more efficient. They certainly seem shorter to me. This also introduces the changing of the tools we will use at work. Whether its education, medicine, or traditional office work, the video or phone meeting is now a central element to our new work place. It is foreseeable that other innovative technologies will emerge to even improve the remote work model.

This has quickly evolved into much more than a hypothetical question for the future. These changes are taking place now. People are making changes to their residence with much less consideration as to where their work is physically located because they can. If your physical presence is not needed and your employer is seeing greater productivity from remote situations, people are at liberty to live a great distance away from what would traditionally be their office.

If you've made it to the end of this article and have some thoughts about City or School District work environments, I'd love to hear your comments. How could PEA organize our members' interests to secure important opportunities and safeguards in the new, emerging work world? How has remote working benefited you? Or frustrated you? I welcome your emails to *mike.wilde24@gmail.com*. We're currently negotiating with the City so the time is ripe. Weigh in on this development and share ideas that will help us take ownership in the future of professional government work in St. Paul.

Ways to get more involved with PEA

by Patty Lammers, steward & city negotiations committee member

1. Attend PEA General Membership Meetings

Two general membership meetings are held each year (April 14, 2021 & October 13, 2021). Why attend the meetings? We conduct important business at the meetings that effect your jobs on several levels. We elect union leadership and you can't vote if you don't show up. You have a chance meet other union members. You might be surprised how you can find ways to partner across departments by meetings your union members. If that doesn't motivate you then maybe food will. The PEA pays for your dinners (when we can meet in person again).

2. Read Your Contract

Do you have a copy of your contract? Have you read your contract? By reading and understanding your contract you will have a better opportunity to know if your rights or co-workers' rights are being violated. You also will better understand your benefits.

3. Review the PEA Webpage <http://peaonline.org>

Our webpage had great information including copies of contracts, who your union leaders are, newsletters, and meeting information.



4. Get to Know Your Steward

Your steward is your accessible resource for contract questions, grievance issues, and someone when you just need to talk.

5. Join a Committee

There are committees for the City and SPPS contract negotiations, and we are looking for members to help with outreach.

6. Find Out More About Your Union Leadership

PEA has a strong dedicated Executive Committee consisting of our President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Personnel Chair, City Negotiations Chair, & SPPS Negotiations Chair. All of whom are open to answering any questions you may have.

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.

PEA Calendar of Events 2021

add these dates to your calendar!

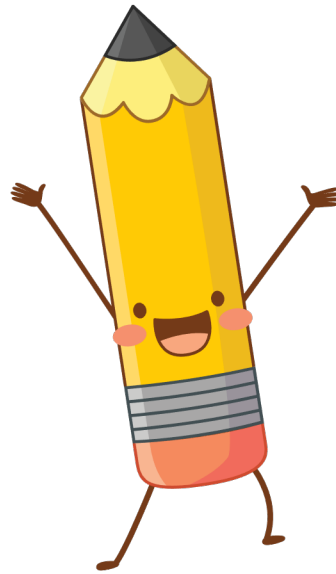
- Wednesday, April 14General Membership Meeting
- Wednesday, July 14 Executive Board & Stewards Meeting
- Wednesday, October 13.....General Membership Meeting

Help Wanted!

PEA
Member Education &
Outreach Coordinator

Be the Face of PEA!

Meet and
greet new
members &
distribute
welcome
packets



Enjoy
monthly
stipend
monthly dues
waived

Interested? Contact justine.roe@ci.stpaul.mn.us

*Please join the Executive Committee
and fellow members for*

PEA's General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

5:30 p.m.

Agenda

- Introduction of Stewards and Executive Committee
- Adoption of minutes from the October 14, 2020
General Membership meeting
- Legal Counsel Update
- Executive Committee Reports
 - President and/or Vice President
 - Treasurer
 - Personnel
 - SPPS Negotiations
 - City Negotiations
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjourn

Please RSVP to justine.roe@ci.stpaul.mn.us

The meeting link will be sent prior to April 14



Professional Employees Association

CITY OF SAINT PAUL & INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625

www.peaonline.org

Executive Committee

President	Regina Etoll <i>regina.etoll@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i> <i>PEAmyunion@gmail.com</i>	CAO – 500 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8726
Vice President	Justine Roe <i>justine.roe@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	WATER – 1900 Rice St., 55113	651-266-1628
Treasurer	Beth Ulrich <i>beth.ulrich@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	PED – 1400 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6689
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	Vaughn Kelly <i>vaughn.kelly@spps.org</i> <i>peanegotiations.spps@gmail.com</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-1682
City Negotiations	Joe Musolf <i>joe.musolf@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	PED – 1400 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6594

Staff & Others

Legal Counsel	Mike Wilde, Esq. <i>mike.wilde24@gmail.com</i>	545 7th St. W Saint Paul, MN 55102	612-227-8425
Member Outreach & Education Coordinator	vacant		
LMCHI (City)	Karin Anderson <i>karin.anderson@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	CAO – 700 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8765
LMCHC (SPPS)	Charlie Colvin <i>charles.colvin@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-6309
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

DSI, Police, Public Health	Brian Balfanz <i>brian.balfanz@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	367 Grove St., 55101	651-266-5531
Fire, Emergency Management, CAO, OFS	Patricia Lammers <i>patricia.lammers@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	367 Grove St., 55101	651-266-5455
Libraries	Peter Borgen <i>peter.borgen@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i> <i>PeterBorgenUnionSteward@gmail.com</i>	Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Parkway, 55116	651-695-3700
Libraries	Kathleen Conger <i>kathleen.conger@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	George Latimer Central Library 90 W 4th Street, 55102	651-266-7000
Libraries	Therese Scherbel <i>therese.scherbel@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	George Latimer Central Library 90 W 4th Street, 55102	651-266-7048
OTC / HREEO	Luke Vang <i>luke.vang@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	600 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6789
Parks & Recreation	Mary Henke-Haney <i>mary.henke-haney@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1100 North Hamline Ave., 55108	651-248-6500
PED	Sarah Zorn <i>sarah.zorn@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1100 City Hall Annex 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6570
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	Brianna Nyquist <i>brianna.nyquist@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-1807
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