



# Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO

---

## DELEGATE MEETING MINUTES: June 17, 2013

**Meeting called to order** at 6:37pm at Kaiser Permanente's Total Health Center by President Jos Williams.

**Welcome:** President Williams introduced the Council's hosts at Kaiser -- including Keith Montgomery, Leonard Phillips, David Russell and Alex Thompson -- commending Kaiser for its great relationship with labor and noting that "They participate actively in the Bowling Tournament, the Golf Tournament, and more." Montgomery welcomed the Board to the Center, gave a brief overview of the services they offer and showed a short film about the historic relationship between Kaiser and their unions. The Capitol Hill health center is one of five such health facilities in the area; the short video about KP's labor background explored how the company's labor-management partnership helps provide "better healthcare and a better, more empowered work environment." Montgomery also said that Kaiser is "a union company; 4,000 out of 6,000 workers are union represented, through UFCW 400, UFCW 27 and OPEIU 2.

**New delegate** sworn in: George Farenthold, OPEIU 277 (AIL)

**Special Guest:** President Williams then introduced Karen Andre, DC Mayor Gray's new Labor Liaison. Andre said that she's "looking forward to working with labor to connect," and pledged that she's "ready to do the grunt work to cut through the red tape and help all workers, families, people of the District." Andre shared her background as an immigration attorney "fighting to win rights for immigrants," and she has also worked for unions, and now in this new position will be "trying to benefit you all and the residents of the city." Andre shared her background, which includes coming from a union family. "My grandmother came here from Haiti to make a better life. She worked on Wall Street as a cleaner, and was a long-time member of SEIU 32BJ who's now comfortably retired, thanks to her union pension." Andre provided her email address -- karen.andre@dc.gov -- so folks

can get in touch with her directly.

**Minutes** (May): Moved and seconded to accept. Approved. May minutes correction: "Chained CPI" (not chain CPI).

**Financial Report** (May): Moved and seconded to receive. Approved.

**Correspondence:** It was moved, seconded and approved to make the following expenditures: MontCo NAACP 5-May Freedom Fund Dinner \$200 (2 tickets); CLUW DC 30-Jun Gloria Johnson Luncheon \$175 (1/2 page ad); Sheet Metal 100 20-Sep Golf Tourney \$250.00 (tee).

### **Community Services Agency**

Labor Night at the Nats (7/19): tickets are still available.

CSA Program Update: just graduated 15 folks from the Building Futures program, working to get them into apprenticeship programs and jobs; started Hospitality Express 4 Success class two weeks ago, 15-week training and then will work to get them placed in good union jobs in the hospitality industry.

### **Union Cities**

Unite Here 23 Fight For A Fair Contract At Nationals Stadium: Emilio Abate reported that 800 of his members work for Levy at the Nationals Baseball stadium. Pearl Bailey, a grill cook at the stadium, told delegates that "I love my job, love the fans; we're fighting for training on the job. I need better training; I don't want to stay a grill cook all my life; I want to learn and move up. Please come out on Wednesday, June 19." "Freedom to Work, Freedom to Live" Rally & March on Wednesday 6/19 at 5p at Navy Memorial.

Local Taxi Driver Organizing Update: PG taxi drivers Fisseha Tesfaye, Ammanuel Gebrewold and Eskindir reported that "We're asking Gaylord for a visible taxi stand; local drivers have been pushed out by a multi-



## DELEGATE MEETING MINUTES: May 20, 2013

national corporation. Thanks for letting us come and speak about our issue. We've been there since 2008 when the hotel opened; but there's no taxi stand on the entire National Harbor site, so we have to use the hotel's private property and pay them a fee, then we got pushed out and replaced by Veolia's black sedans. We had to work 12-15 hours a day to make a living before this and now we've just been kicked out. They took all our dreams away. This is a fight about a big multinational taking jobs away from small local workers; they've done this across the country." Next demonstration set for Friday, 6/21. President Williams noted that "We've been trying to work with the PG government to resolve this issue politically."

Low-Wage DC Workers Strike Update: Courtney Shackelford from Ben & Jerry's at Union Station told delegates that "On the weekend I work by myself and it's crazy during the summer; got to serve, clean, restock. It's too much for one person. But the owner doesn't want to pay more to get more workers; we're supposed to clock out by 9p but I don't clock out until I'm done (applause). I don't care. I loved going on strike; why can't my voice be heard too? I appreciate your support, it makes a real difference. I just hope that this movement really makes something happen." Added Antonio Vanegas, speaking in Spanish: "I work at the Reagan Building and started at \$6:50 an hour, working 72-hour weeks and I never got paid for overtime. So that's why I joined this campaign and as soon as I did, my employer started retaliating against me. Started checking IDs, which they never did before; security called ICE to detain me. I know that I was singled out for standing up against injustices. It surprised me that the government hasn't supported us in this fight for justice. This is an uphill battle; everything you can do to help is much appreciated; thanks for coming out in the past and in the future." President Williams brought the resolution of support for the Good Jobs Campaign approved at the Executive Board, with the added language that it be forwarded to the AFL-CIO with a request that it take appropriate action.

Worker Struggle At Alta Bicycle Share Update: Anibal Apuente reported that the bike-sharing company "has over 2,000 bikes, multiple stations and thousands of riders daily. Over 20% use it to go to and from work; it's been great for the city, but that success comes at a great cost to the workers. Mechanics don't have insurance, for instance. Alta is one of the biggest

bike-share companies in the US; \$15 million DOL contract with the city, but they're not abiding by the contract in terms of pay, and we can't sue them because of the Service Contract Act. Been fighting this for more than two years; workers have been injured. Long, hard and dangerous work. We're fighting for proper pay and benefits. Press conference and action this Friday. President Williams pledged the Council's support and asked Union Cities Coordinator Chris Garlock to follow up with the workers to determine their best course of action going forward.

Great Labor Arts Exchange: Fran Owens, LHF outreach coordinator, invited delegates to attend the upcoming GLAE June 28-30, promising an exciting and informative event. A special \$50 day pass is also available this year.

DC Labor FilmFest Update: still time to reserve ad space in the program guide; 2013 dates set for October 11-13.

President Williams – with regret -- reported that after nearly two years, "Assistant Mobilizer Julia Kann is moving on" and expressed his deep appreciation for all her enthusiasm and hard work for the Council, its affiliates and the labor movement. Union Cities Coordinator Chris Garlock especially noted her inspirational effect on the Council and the movement and said that he was sure she would continue to be a vibrant part of the movement, noting that this has been the case for both Andy and Adam, former UC Assistant Mobilizers. Julia thanked President Williams, Chris "and the entire Council staff and indeed all the delegates and affiliates, for teaching me so much over the last two years and giving me such a tremendous opportunity. See you on the picket line!"

Upcoming events:

"Local Labor Communicators Gathering (6/20), Film: The United States of ALEC (6/24), Sequestration: A Union Fights Back (6/26), DC JwJ "I'll Be There" Awards (6/27), Film: The United States of ALEC (6/27), 2013 Great Labor Arts Exchange (7/28), Gloria T. Johnson Awards Luncheon (6/30)

### COPE Report

*DC COPE Report*  
FY 2014 Budget Request Act of 2013 – Fire Fighter's Overtime



## DELEGATE MEETING MINUTES: May 20, 2013

DC COPE Chair Fred Allen (GCC/IBT) reported that “In the fine print of the FY 2014 Budget Request Act, Mayor Gray has asked Congress to wipe away a \$36 million debt owed by the city in back-pay to the fire fighters for an overtime case dating back to 2007. Because this would set a negative precedent for future cases, we have asked the City Council to remove the language from the Budget Request Act. The City Council unanimously voted to do so during its first budget vote on May 22. It is expected to come up for a final vote on June 18.”

### *District of Columbia Primary Date Alteration Amendment Act of 2013*

Allen reported that “This bill – introduced by Mendelson, Evans, Wells, McDuffie and Bonds – proposes to alter the date of DC Primary elections for President, City Council and House of Representatives from the first Tuesday in April to the second Tuesday in June. The bill was referred to the Committee on Government Operations and a hearing was held on May 29th. The bill is expected to pass before the summer recess and the law is expected to take effect by the 2014 Primary.”

### *Large Retailer Accountability Act of 2013*

Allen said that “This bill – introduced by Chairman Mendelson and co-sponsored by Bonds, Orange, Catania, Alexander, Cheh, Evans, Graham, Bowser, Wells, Barry and Grosso – is intended to require large retailers (over 75,000 square feet, whose parent company grosses a billion dollars annually) to pay their employees a living wage. The bill was referred to the Committee on Business, Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, chaired by CM Orange. The committee held a hearing on March 20th and the bill was marked-up and passed the committee on May 31st. However, the committee voted to remove the square footage requirement. This bill will now target businesses such as Apple, Banana Republic and others because they earn a billion dollars a year. After discussions with CM Orange, he believes he has secured the 7 votes needed for the passage of the bill without the square footage requirement. 9 votes are needed to make it veto-proof. The bill is expected to come before the full Council for a first vote before the summer recess.” UFCW’s Mike Wilson reported that “Walmart and company have been swarming the Council trying to kill the bill” and encouraged turnout for the DC City Council Committee of the Whole vote on Tuesday, 6/18, to make sure the bill is voted out of committee.”

June 26 is the likely initial vote in the Council.

Allen also noted that the DC COPE has made a recommendation to the Executive Board to send a letter to Mayor Gray requesting that he drop the lawsuit relating to prevailing wage for workers on the CityCenterDC project. Unanimous vote to approve.

### *MD COPE Reports:*

**Scorecard Committee Update:** Political Coordinator Rick Powell reported that “The Scorecard committee is making progress. We have identified 33 State Senate and House Bills to score. The committee will be working on those bills over the summer.”

**2014 Election Mapping Update:** Powell reported that “The committee is working on the budget for the first-tier campaigns we plan to work on in 2014 to be presented to the Executive Board at the September meeting.”

**Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee Boycott Update:** Finally, Powell reported that “A progressive coalition made up of unions, political allies, and community partners has been formed around general principles that include bringing transparency and working family values back to the Democratic Party in Montgomery and Prince George’s counties. A committee has been formed to plan and conduct a Progressive Leadership Summit this fall. Further details will be provided as the work on the Summit continues.”

### **President's Report**

President Williams introduced Thomas Blanton (Mid-Atlantic Carpenters), who introduced Marco Garcia (202-341-5550), Venezuelan trade representative, who was a bus driver trade unionist, like Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez. Garcia reported briefly on the recent trade union delegation to Venezuela in April. President Williams suggested possibly setting up a report-back on their trip and current situation in Venezuela.

**WPFW Update:** Williams reported that SAG-AFTRA last month sent a demand letter to WPFW management “but we don’t know the current status of that demand. We’ll follow up in Union City.”



## DELEGATE MEETING MINUTES: May 20, 2013

### Reports of Delegates

JWJ DC: Nikki Lewis reported on the upcoming 11th annual JWJ DC "I'll Be There" Awards on June 27, "honoring folks like Ann Hoffman, the GW Progressive Union, DC EJC and Rabbi Bob Saks of JUFJ. She also announced that Roger Newell (IBT) is stepping down after 10 years as JWJ DC Chair "and we'll have a nice surprise announcement about his legacy." She also reminded delegates that Jos Williams will be the MC for the evening.

ATU 689: Pedro Cruz (ATU 689) reported on a planned citywide forum event on 7/17 event 6p at the Church of Perpetual Health in Anacostia about transit privatization. He also expressed ATU's thanks "to the unions who have invited us to speak to your members about this campaign; the move to privatize continues to move forward and so must we; stay tuned for updates and details."

ARA MD/DC: Frank Stella reported on a planned July 2 ARA rally against the "chained CPI" for Social Security, which could cost as much as \$9,000 per person per year in adjustments.

DC CLUW: Donna Brockington, DC CLUW, reminded delegates of the upcoming Gloria Johnson Awards Luncheon 6/30 at ATU 689.

President Williams asked delegates to consider recessing meetings for July and August, as usual, to reconvene on the third Monday in September; approved.

Moved and seconded to adjourn at 8:25pm. Approved.

### DELEGATE ATTENDANCE

*(may be incomplete due to lack of sign-in sheet; please email [Streethat@dclabor.org](mailto:Streethat@dclabor.org) to add your name)*

Thomas Blanton  
I Chuck Clay  
Benito Diaz  
David Hershfield  
Edward Hill  
Ann Hoffman  
Elaine Newman  
Virginia Rodino  
Frank Stella

Also attending: Marcos Garcia