

Delegate's Meeting Minutes DRAFT FOR APPROVAL

Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO

October 20, 2008

Called to order 6:50P.

Minutes: September minutes approved as distributed. (Note to amend the September minutes to add Vance Ayres, Washington Building and Construction Trades Council (WBCTC), as attending the Delegate and Executive Board meetings.)

Financial Report: President

Delegate attendance:

Allen, Fred GCIU 538-C
Ayres, Vance WBCTC
Baxter, Randall AFSCME COUNCIL 26 3976
Benson, Brian IATSE 22
Bridges, Linda OPEIU 2
Cernak, Louis IUOE 99
Collins, Cynthia SEIU 400 PG
Dixon, Vanessa Doctors Council of DC
Dobson, Sean Progressive Maryland-Dugan, Dan FIRE FIGHTERS 36
Eitches, Eddie AFGE Council 1 476
Ferruffino, Ruben Dario LABORERS 657
Fields, Daniel SEIU 722
Frederick, Anthony LABORERS 657
Freeland, Ronald LABORERS 657
Freeman, Jo NWU/UAW 1981 2
Gaines, Riley IBEW 26
Garland, Anthony ATU 689
Goldman, Carl AFSCME Council 26
Hershfield, David AFGE Council 1 12
Hoffman, Ann NWU/UAW 1981 2
Hogan, George IBEW 26
Johnson, George AFSCME Council 20
Kahraman, Joe NEWSPAPER GUILD 32035
Lowery, Jim IUOE 10
Newman, Elaine L. NCAUR
Reed, Carnell SEIU 400 PG
Reyes, Victor LABORERS 657
Richards, Leslie NEA/UDCFA
Schniderman, Saul AFSCME 2910
Sewell, Rodney LABORERS 657
Sexton, Mark IUOE 99
Shelton-Martin, Wanda OPEIU 153
Starin, Eric OPEIU 2
Stern, Edward AFGE 12
Tarlau, Jimmy CWA 2336
Warrick, Gerald LABORERS 657

Williams reported that the Board decided to postpone action on the September Financial Report until the November 17 meeting. Decision approved by Delegates.

Correspondence:

- Prince George's NAACP: 21st Hester V. King Freedom Fund Dinner 10/17 (\$100 contribution).
- George Leventhal: Reception and fundraiser for Montgomery County Councilmember George Leventhal 10/26 (\$100 contribution).
- Maryland State NAACP: Maryland State NAACP Labor Luncheon honoring ATU 689 President Jackie Jeter 10/31 (\$740 for a full page ad and four tickets).
- UFCW Minority Coalition: Annual Ball honoring UFCW 400 President James Lowthers 11/8 (\$1300 for ½ page and two tickets).
- Boilermakers 193: Local 193 Scholarship Dinner and Dance 11/15 (\$100 Honor Roll contribution).
- International Labor Communications Association: Annual Media Awards Luncheon where UNION CITY & Council website will receive awards 11/21 (\$1000 for table and 1/2 page ad).
- Help the Homeless Walk: Fundraiser walk to raise money for programs aiding the homeless in DC 11/22 (\$250 donation).

- Progressive Maryland: Annual Gala 12/3 (\$350 for 1/4 page ad)
- Roofers 30: Retirees Luncheon (date uncertain) (No Action).
- National Black Caucus of State Legislators: 2008 dues for the NBCSL Labor Round Table (\$250 for dues).

Total: \$4090

Other Correspondence:

- United Transportation Incorporated: Workers won a 2nd union contract. Workers represented by the International Association of Machinists.
- WPFW: Response to President Williams' letter on Zimbabwe. Planning to set up a radio forum to discuss the situation in Zimbabwe with equal time for all parties.
- Oseh Shalom: Thanked the Council for contribution honoring union member Cantor Charlie's 25th anniversary.

Community Services

Agency

Executive Director Kathleen McKirchy reported:

- Golf Tournament: Thanks for all your support. This year's tourney was a big success. We raised \$16,000 which allows us to keep going through the end of the year.

- Bowling Tournament: Scheduled for January 25 at the Crofton Bowling Centre. Now accepting registrations for teams.
- United Way/Combined Federal Campaigns: Started the campaigns in early September and they end around the holidays. We need help getting out materials to membership. Information and flyers for each campaign are in the back.

Union City

President Williams reported:

- Labor FilmFest Report: Another successful year! We had 46 different screenings this year. Over 2,000 people turned out, including 1,000 at the main AFI FilmFest, many of them first-time FilmFest attendees. We also signed up hundreds for UNION CITY. We also had monthly screenings at venues including the AFL-CIO, AFT, DOL, NLC, SEIU, E Street Cinema, DC EJC, IBEW & AFI. We are working on adding more. We also received good coverage in the Post, Express, Examiner, City Paper as well as had the Filmfest blogged on the IndieExpress website (<http://indieexpress.com/>). Working with organizers in other cities to get Labor FilmFests started, including Dublin, Ireland (where FilmFest Director Chris Garlock is now), Cincinnati

& Toronto.

- Better Website Trainings: Working on putting together more trainings to start after the elections; watch UNION CITY for updates
- Street Heat Actions: Workers' Rights Board: Date changed from October 21 to Thursday, November 20 at 6:30P at the Wilson Building. This year's hearing will focus on Mayor Fenty's attacks on public sector workers and the community.
- International Labor Communications Association Awards Lunch: Friday, November 20 starting at 11:45A at the AFL-CIO. Union City and the Council website won awards this year. Tickets and/or an ad space to celebrate the Union City/website awards are still available.

COPE

Political Coordinator Rick Powell reported:

- Northern Virginia Labor 2008: Assistant Political Coordinator Alya Mbamba is coordinating the Council's participation for the walks in NoVA. The last two Saturdays over 200 showed up, including members of the Metro Council Executive Board. Folks walked out of Annandale, Manassas and Herndon. I worked in Virginia in 1996, 2000, and 2004 and have never seen this much participation; I am confident we will win. I have never seen this kind of participation. Assistant Political Coordinator Alya Mbamba will be contacting people about walks and GOTV efforts. Phonebanking also continues at the AFL-CIO. President Williams reported that he

is really pleased about the affiliate participation, including from the Laborers, UFCW (in Pennsylvania and Virginia), the Washington Building and Construction Trades Council, SEIU (in Ohio and Virginia), UNITE HERE and other locals. Many of the participants are from DC and Maryland. Mbamba reported about the Saturday, October 25 GOTV rally at 9A in Annandale, VA. Thank you for sending out people and make sure you tell us what people are doing so we can recognize them at this year's Evening with Labor Awards dinner. People who cannot participate in walks can phonebank in Annandale, Herndon and the AFL-CIO.

- Maryland Labor 2008: Denise Riley, Maryland/DC State AFL-CIO Political Director, reported that the State Fed is working in the First and Sixth Congressional districts in Maryland, walking and phonebanking for labor-endorsed candidates. The State Fed is also organizing a bus to Richmond to do Labor walks on Saturday, November 1 (bus leaves from IUEC 10 at 8A and returns from Richmond at 5P). If it rains, we will put people on the phones. President Williams reported that people who do not have a car and cannot get out to the IUEC 10 offices, can walk/phonebank in Northern Virginia or phonebank at the AFL-CIO. Riley reported that labor-endorsed candidate in the First congressional district, Frank Kravotil (D), is two points ahead. This race is a top priority for
- Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and we are pretty confident Kravotil will win. Jennifer Dougherty, labor-endorsed candidate in the Sixth congressional district, is down by six points but we are doing what we can to help her. Check out the State Fed blog (www.mddcaflcio.blogspot.com) for updates on activities. Dan Dugan, IAFF 36, added that the IAFF International Union sent letters out to all its members in the First district asking them to support Kravotil.
- Tri-County COPE: Jim Lowery, IUEC 10, reported that phonebanking continues in Calvert and Charles Counties and the Building Trades are putting up signs throughout the two counties. He also reported on the prevailing wage effort in Charles County. It has been referred back to the County Commission for Commissioners to take a closer look at it. Also working to educate commissioners on apprenticeship programs. Reminded Delegates that Tri-County meets every fourth Thursday of the month; next meeting is this Thursday, October 23.
- Prince George's COPE: East Campus Project: Powell reported that progress is being made on the East Campus project. The project is being scaled back. A coalition of unions and community organizations are working on it.
- DC COPE: Powell reported that the DC COPE recommended the endorsement of

take a no position - which allows each union to endorse their preferred candidate - in the second At-Large seat. The COPE also endorsed Eleanor Holmes Norton for the House of Representatives and Paul Strauss for the DC Shadow Senate seat. Discussion ensued about not taking a position on the second At-Large seat. Delegates seconded and approved endorsements. Mbamba reported that registered DC voters can do walk-in absentee ballot voting starting today through November 3 at the DC Board of Elections and Ethics Office.

Reports from Delegates

- Vanessa Dixon, DC Doctors Council: Reported that the Fenty administration is planning to contract out hundreds of jobs at the DC Community Services Agency Department of Mental Health and two public hospitals (not affiliated with the Metro Council CSA). The contracting out will erode services, cause the loss of hundreds of union jobs, etc. Workers are organizing against the outsourcing and trying to get the DC City Council to pass a moratorium on privatization. Asked the Metro Council for assistance and support on the campaign. McKirchy reminded Delegates that this is a CSA, as well as a political issue, since workers may need help after being laid off. Delegates seconded and approved support.
- Dan Fields, SEIU 722: Washington Hospital Center workers won a new three-year contract that provides wage increases, bonuses for workers for not calling out sick and maintained holiday time. We

didn't give up a lot. 85% of members approved the contract.

- Leslie Richards, NEA/UDC Faculty Association: The New President of UDC has moved to abolish the University Senate and put into place his own handpicked senate. Asked that UNION CITY run a story on the issue.
- Bruce Wolf, OPEIU 2: The "We are One Movement" Concert is scheduled for November 15 at 7P at the Westminster Presbyterian Church. The event is a cultural event, like the DC Labor Filmfest, that will raise funds for the Metro Council CSA and DC United for Peace and Justice.
- Cynthia Collins, SEIU 400PG: Prince George's County workers won a wage increase of 3% over the next four months.
- Joe Kahraman, Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild 35: Working on a contract extension at the Washington Post. Hoping to also get union representation for website workers. The Baltimore Sun is going the opposite direction, fighting to get rid of union coverage for its workers.
- Ruth Castel-Branco, DC Jobs with Justice: Connect-DC rally is scheduled for October 31 at 9A outside the Wilson Building to make sure the new Verizon-DC City Council FiOS agreement respects workers and the community. Distributed a letter of support for the campaign to Delegates. Jimmy Tarrlau, CWA District 2, reported that Verizon is dragging its feet about how long it will take to deploy FiOS and how it will hire DC residents for

the new jobs created. A public hearing on the agreement will be held after the rally this Friday. Fred Allen, GCC/IBT 538-C, reported that the current agreement will exclude FiOS expansion in Wards 5, 7 and 8. Castel-Branco also reported on the Workers' Rights Board hearing scheduled for November 20 at the Wilson Building from 6:30-8:30P. We are hoping the hearing will raise the profile of the attacks on public sector workers and how it will affect public health and safety.

- Ann Hoffman, UAW/NWU 2, DC Vote: DC Vote will hold a Veterans Day rally for DC Voting Rights Tuesday, November 11 at noon at Upper Senate Park.
- Fred Allen, GCC/IBT 538-C: The DC Democratic State Committee is accepting petitions for candidates for their Board and it would be great to have more unionists on the Board.

Official Meeting Adjourned at 7:30P

50/50 raffle: Bruce Wolf, OPEIU 2, won \$22.

Special Guest: Bill Fletcher: President Williams introduced Bill Fletcher, who he called a "colleague, friend, ally." "He is a teacher, educator and trade unionist and a strong voice for things we need to change in order to build the labor movement." "Our movement has been dying," said Fletcher. Fletcher – co-author of *Solidarity Divided: The Crisis in Organized Labor and A New Path Toward Social Justice* – discussed the crisis in labor and the need to revitalize the labor movement to

become a broader social movement for the working class. "We have built a movement that has seen itself as a special interest," said Fletcher. "Most of the movement is not thinking about how we can help the working class as a whole... What we lack is an overarching movement for social change." Fletcher also criticized the AFL-CIO-Change to Win split – which he said failed as an opportunity for a broad debate on the labor movement's direction and has been ineffective in revitalizing labor as a movement for social change – and labor's "absence" on the current economic crisis and reluctance to pressure labor-endorsed candidates after they take office. Though critical, Fletcher laid out a framework for revitalizing the movement, including an emphasis on member education, the development of a working class agenda, a national workers' debate on the labor movement and its direction, building ongoing electoral organizations that work beyond elections, supporting and encouraging workers to run for office, and rebuilding a strong American left.