



# Delegate Meeting Minutes

**Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO**

**January 24, 2010**

Meeting called to order at 6:39P

**New Delegate Sworn In:**  
Donald Havard (IUOE 99),  
Villareal Johnson (WTU 6)

**Minutes (December):** December minutes approved with addition of Sandra Falwell (DCNA) as present

**Financial Report:** December report received as distributed

**Board actions:**

- IUEC 10 Graduation Dinner: \$250 approved for ad in program book; MD Delegate Tom Hucker Reception: Tabled until April; Council member Obie Patterson Reception: \$250 approved for tickets.  
- The Board also recommended the Council endorse and participate in the Living Wages, Healthy Communities Coalition. UFCW Local 400's Mark Federici reported on Walmart's plans to try to open 4 stores in DC as well as in other urban areas across the country. He warned that Walmart would be claiming to be doing this to provide jobs and to serve underserved communities, but the real reason is that the company must expand — by selling cut-rate merchandise and paying low wages— to keep making money, it's just that simple. They're here to make money, nothing more or less. Federici urged support and participation in the coalition. Beth Painter, UFCW IU, reported that Walmart executive pay is

tied directly to growth and discussed the coalition's plans to spread the word about Walmart's real agenda, which includes up to 20 stores in DC, and bring the same community-draining to DC that it's already brought to the suburban and rural areas they've already saturated across the country. We'll be out canvassing every weekend across the city. President Williams said this is another example of the familiar "race to the bottom" we've seen in other industries in recent years. DC Jobs with Justice's Mackenzie Baris discussed the ways that Walmart is employing "classic divide and conquer strategies, including lining up the First Lady to endorse their pledge to provide inexpensive healthy food to low-income communities. Extensive and spirited discussion ensued. It was moved and seconded to endorse the Living Wages, Healthy Communities Coalitions.

**Union Cities**

*Mobilization Coordinator Chris Garlock reported:*

- Upcoming events: Mexico Day of Action, February 16, 12-1P, Mexican Embassy. Jeff Vogt, Deputy Director, International Affairs Department AFL-CIO said that Mexico is a priority this year, especially with international solidarity week of global action around Mexico, with a dozen or so rallies around the country. Vogt spoke of the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively; in Mexico,

employers will negotiate sweetheart "protection" contracts with fake unions before even opening up the business and when workers try to form their own unions they face all sorts of obstacles, including being threatened and beaten by thugs and the government itself. They are forced to vote verbally, not through secret ballot after running a gauntlet, sometimes with snarling dogs. In DC the event is February 16 from 12-1:30P at the Mexican Embassy on Pennsylvania Avenue, with Mine Workers President Cecil Roberts leading the charge, along with Metro Council President Jos Willlams, focusing on mine workers and mine safety and the mine workers union -- one of the true democratic unions in Mexico -- which have been under attack by the government.

- 2011 Directory (final draft): This week is last chance for updates! Email or call with any changes.

**Community Services Agency**

*CSA Executive Director Kathleen McKirchy reported:*

- Bowling Tournament: Sunday, January 30, 10A & 1P at Crofton; still slots available  
- Building Futures: continuing partnership with Prince George's Community College for pre-apprenticeship training  
- Early bird alert: Labor Night at the Nats scheduled for July 29 vs. NY Mets

**COPE**

*DC- Assistant Political &*

*Legislative Coordinator Alya Solomon reported:*

- On January 6 the DC Democratic State Committee chose Sekou Biddle, to temporarily fill Kwame Brown's seat as an At-Large Councilmember on the City Council. Sekou is a former Ward 4 Board of Education member, who supported former DC Mayor Fenty's re-election campaign for Mayor and who supported the position of the former DC School's Chancellor, Michelle Rhee. On April 26 a special Election open to all party affiliations will be held City Wide to fill the seat permanently. Six council members and Mayor Gray have endorsed the interim Councilmember Sekou Biddle but the concern is that, challengers like Vincent Orange, who has name recognition in DC, will split the vote giving a good chance to a Republican challenger to win. Also, the City Council only budgeted \$590,000 for the cost of this special Election but it is now estimated to cost \$829,000. Because of the cost of the special election, the District is considering opening only 16 voting centers, instead of all 143 precincts where residents can cast ballots at any of the centers over three days.  
- New DC Council Committee Assignments we discussed  
- DC COPE meetings every 2nd Tuesday of the month; let Alya know if you want to be added to the notice list

*Maryland— Political & Legislative Coordinator Rick Powell reported:*

- 2011 Annapolis Legislative Session: If you have bills and want President Williams to testify, give us as much advance notice as possible and keep us posted on your issues. Not planning to have the Monday night meetings as we did two years ago, at least at this point. Will let you know if that changes.  
- Tri-County COPE Meeting January 25th, 7 PM LaPlata & 4th Tuesdays after that.  
- Metropolitan-Washington Alliance For Progressive Solutions (MAPS) Coalition: working with new coalition looking at the impact of budget cuts on public employees and deal with the vilification of public employees, including calling them "pension pigs" in a San Francisco article this morning. Stay tuned in Union City.

#### **Affiliate Reports**

*DC Jobs With Justice:* Lead organizer Mackenzie Baris reported that a goodbye party is set for this Friday at 3P-5P for organizer Ruth Castel-Branco, who's heading to South Africa for school.  
- *CIR Vanessa Dixon:* reported a 3% raise across the board; Doctor's Council: furloughs -- possibly citywide -- to start President's Day. Some RIFs possible too. Also wants to raise the issue of Mayor Gray's transition, where labor members were apparently not contacted for transition meetings and so on. President Williams responded, noting there was a screw-up and not just with labor, where folks who were supposed to be involved were not contacted. But the vast majority of us were not contacted and we have brought this up with the Mayor, who has pledged to correct this, and I will stay on this and keep you posted.

- *Geri Lee; WHC NNU:* hos-

pital agreed to return to table after we threatened a 1-day strike; we've agreed not to strike for 90- days but that expires in mid-Feb and there hasn't been much movement so a job action is possible in March. The good news is that -- as first reported in Union City -- I got my job back just before Christmas. But there are still eight nurses out, but since I was supposedly the "worst one" we feel that my win sets a precedent.  
- *Eartha Isaac, 2978 AFGE:* upcoming furlough and RIFs mean that DC locals will have a lot of issues coming before the Council, and because we didn't endorse the current Council Chair we need a strategy to get to Kwame Brown. President Williams noted that 7 votes get any issue on the agenda, and we plan to be meeting with the Chair to bring labor's agenda as soon as we finalize this.

- *Rick Ehrmann, Newspaper Guild/CWA 32035:* in June contracts at the Washington Post and Baltimore Sun will expire, so it's going to be a difficult row to hoe so we'll need your support. Also, the hardworking staff at the Metro Washington Council has negotiated its first contract with the Council, with the assistance and support of the Council President.

- *John Cusick (AFM 161-710):* thanks for the support with the Washington Ballet in efforts to get live music for the Nutcracker performances; we were not successful but we succeeded in educating the public, not giving the Ballet a free ride, and empowering our members. It was a big deal for us and we thank you for this. And we're pleased that we'll have all-union music at this year's Evening With Labor and we urge all locals to use live, union music for your events.

- *Trina Tocco, International*

*Labor Rights Forum:* reminder that 2011 is the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist fire, a pivotal moment that sparked a lot of health and safety laws in the United States. We're working with the Council on some possible activities. Also working with a tour of Bangladesh workers who make our clothes, and where a fire recently killed many workers. Also recently released a report on this issue. Finally, Valentine's Day is coming up, so we're looking at airing a film on The Dark Side of Chocolate to see the faces of the workers who create the chocolate we love to eat.

- Steve Courtien, Washington Building & Construction Trades Council: Pulte homes demonstration was a success; 200 of us shut down their meeting; thanks for publicizing this event.  
- *Robert Mayfield (AFGE 2978):* AFGE Legislative Conference Feb 7-9 coming up; we're also worried about the upcoming furloughs and rifs.

#### **Meeting adjourned 8:33P**

*50/50 raffle winner: \$30 to Eartha Isaac (AFGE 2978)*

#### **Delegate Attendance**

*Dena Briscoe (APWU, Nation's Capital and Southern MD Local)*

*Avis Buchanan (AFGE 2782)*

*Caleb Burris (NASPSO)*

*Barbara Childs (AFSA 4)*

*Cynthia Collins (SEIU 400 PG)*

*John Cusick (AFM 161-710)*

*Vanessa Dixon (Doctors Council DC / AFSCME NUHHCE)*

*Rick Ehrmann (NEWSPAPER GUILD 35)*

*Sandra Falwell (DCNA)*

*Ronald Freeland (Laborers 657)*

*Jo Freeman (NWU/UAW 1981 2)*

*Harry Geety (IUOE 99)*

*Larry Greenhill (IBEW 26)*

*Bridget Hamilton (American Income Life)*

*David Hershfield (AFGE Council 1 12)*

*George Hogan (IBEW 26)*

*Eartha Isaac (AFGE 2978)*

*Geri Lee (Nurses United)*

*William Linehan (IUOE 10)*

*Kendall Martin (Ironworkers Local 5)*

*Yvette Martin-Gross (AFGE 631)*

*Robert Mayfield (AFGE Local 2978)*

*Elaine Newman (NCAUR)*

*Victor Reyes (LABORERS 657)*

*David Richardson (AFGE)*

*Clifton Savoy (Sheet Metal Workers 100)*

*Saul Schniderman (AFSCME 2910)*

*Mark Sexton (IUOE 99)*

*Eric Starin (OPEIU 2)*

*Trina Tocco (International Labor Rights Fund)*

*John Walker (AFGE 383)*

*Gerald Warrick (Laborers 657)*