

## **Delegate's Report:**

It was an honor to represent 638 votes (the average number of members for the last 12 months) at both The News Guild (TNG) Sector Conference last August 4 and 5, as well as the CWA Convention on August 6-8 in Pittsburgh, PA. It was a first for this Local and I thank you for granting me the privilege.

The proceedings were fast-paced, with lots to learn and digest: from the structure of our organizations, procedures and protocol. For anyone with a desire to know how our Union works at every level, the role of officers as decision-makers, and the work of committees in creating policy, this is an invaluable experience. In addition, being in the company of fellow activists and delegates from throughout our state and nation, is a highly motivating and enlightening experience. The eight hour days are only part of the effort, as other necessary preparation and networking made for long days and evenings. Agendas for all events were dense and tightly managed, which kept all discussions moving. I am providing copies to the Local for your review and make myself available for any questions you, the members, may have. The following is a list of highlights from the many topics on agenda:

### **TNG Sector Conference (on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of TNG merger with CWA):**

After an overnight flight I hit the ground running—literally—on Friday, August 04 and joined the other roughly 70 delegates from the Media sector throughout the U.S. and Canada. The core content was modules on Mobilizing, Resolutions, Social Media Impact, Gender Bias in Wages and Right to Report.

Resolution Requiring the Use of Certified Interpreters: Introduced our Local to promote certification standards and avoid the dilution of contract wages, the Resolution was adopted as policy by the Guild as a best practice to be promoted. At the CWA level, I took to the mic to urge a similar national measure since the deadlines had passed for a resolution there.

Other Resolutions: A central theme was a Right to Report resolution that urged for assaults and violent acts on reporters to be made felonies across the nation, given the current climate against the news media. There was a call for correcting gender bias in compensation, supported by studies prepared by locals. I had presented two other resolutions concerning special consideration and resources for locals in temporary administration, in order to safeguard members' interests but they were not adopted by the Committee.

Reports: Budget and committee reports followed, including a Strategic Industry Fund (SIF) grant process that is available to locals—ours included-- for special mobilizing efforts and special circumstances. This can help with particularly difficult bargaining when more resources are needed, mobilizing of our members or into other sectors of our industry. Other topics of discussion included improving member outreach, signing up Agency Fee Payers and implementing the CWA Strong campaign (see below).

### **CWA Convention:**

As one of nearly 1,700 delegates, I participated in floor discussions and took your votes to the floor.

Free Online Resources: Attended a workshop for free web hosting and tools to communicate to members, including creating fast bulletins and increasing traffic to a Local's Facebook pages.

Appeal of the Temporary Administration: Exercising our due process rights, this delegate met with the Appeals Committee, but later withdrew the Appeal based on feedback for our position and the best way

forward. The Committee reviewed our case and found “serious arrears” in per caps of \$22,000 (report attached). TNG had strong reactions to our appeal and would fight bitterly. In the end, withdrawal was a way to avoid acrimony and confrontation, opting for mutual respect. Many Guild members expressed support for our local and encouraged us to quickly get back to business with new elections. Having a presence and an opportunity to be heard was important, regardless of the result. I received many positive remarks for our strides to move forward, correcting the per caps and coming to the Convention.

CWA Strong: The theme of the convention and present focus for our union is to mobilize, engage our members, sign up Agency Fee Payers and strengthen our presence, resisting the attacks on unionism. Locals were given an opportunity to sign a pledge and I endorsed the commitment on our behalf.

Resolutions: These affect policy and how business of the union is conducted. Support was expressed for the CWA Strong campaign, the Right to Report that bans assaults on reporters, a new replacement NAFTA, a fair national tax code, and opposition to Islamophobia.

Committee Reports: Similar to resolutions but less binding on the whole union are the findings of the Women’s Committee, Civil Rights and Equity, Retired Members, Rules, Appeals and others. A strong commitment to social justice and civil rights topped the list: equal pay, prison labor, LGBTQ homeless youth, police body cams and others.

Pediatric AIDS: CWA support to efforts at eradicating AIDS has been crucial and the ongoing financial support by the national and several locals makes a difference. The call is to end PedAIDS by 2020.

Financial Report: With reports on six major funds (General, Strategic, Growth, etc.), the focus was containing cost overruns.

Interpreter Services: Your delegate pitched the importance of our growth industry and need for interpreters to coalesce around common issues. Our services are crucial to a sound democracy and it was evident in a small scale as the Puerto Rico delegates needed an interpreter but got overlooked by CWA staff on the first day. Because of our work ethic, this delegate helped interpret one session.

Constitutional Amendments: A key component of the Convention is the deliberation of amendments to the CWA Constitution. This was a true process of deliberation, generating debate and focused interest to achieve concrete results! There were proposals for Age Limits for CWA officers (defeated), to stop publication of the CWA Newsletter by mail (tabled indefinitely), increased power to impose a Temporary Administration in cases other than theft (partly defeated, with strong dissenters), Jurisdictional Disputes between Telecom Sectors (defeated) and changing the Notice requirements for appeals (defeated).

With that, I conclude the report on my tour of duty. It was an exhausting but very motivating exercise and I recommend the experience, as only then can our voice be heard in the larger union; we gain from the support and experience of others, while providing our common experience.

Thank you all for your vote of confidence and support, thanks Carrie for facilitating the process.

Warm regards from your delegate,

Juan Ramirez