



Professional Employees Association, Inc.

PROFESSIONAL VIEW

PEA'S NEWSLETTER FOR JULY-SEPTEMBER, 2005

www.peaonline.org

President's Update **by David Peterson**

The Executive Committee has continued its schedule of monthly Tuesday night meetings at the union office.

The agenda is dominated by committee reports, negotiation topics, and the Business Agent/Legal Council Report on current grievances and other issues.

Some of the other current activities and discussion:

Discussion of the process for obtaining a new steward for Public Health employees;

Discussion of the change in the City Voluntary Leave of Absence Policy, were the leave must be for at least 40 consecutive hours;

Discussion of a change in policy were city and district employees who are required to have a commercial drivers license (CDL), may be disciplined as a result of traffic violations in the person vehicles on the own time (conforming to federal requirements);

Reaffirming procedures to investigate potential grievances (stewards are encouraged to handle step 1 in the grievance process);

Reviewing the reclassification of some PEA members as "occasional drivers" instead of "regular drivers", resulting in a lower mileage reimbursement;

Reviewing Library LMC information from Mary Ann Miller, especially a Libraries Competency Matrix proposal, (Mary Ann Miller serves as the PEA representative to the Libraries Labor Management Committee);

PEA's representation at the City's 2005 New Employee Orientation meeting held on July 13th;

PEA made its annual \$50 donation to the City Employee picnic fund, as has occurred with past practice;

Organizing general office clean up and filing arrangements;

Assignment of reading a report on Civil Service Rules protection was assigned to all Executive Committee members;

Setting the date and agenda for the next Executive Committee and Steward combined meeting on September 6, 2005, (these meetings provide in-service training to Stewards);

Under the initiative of John Larson, the PEA website (www.peaonline.org) has become an excellent source of information and updates for PEA members.

The Executive Committee has continued to be involved and active. I would like to again thank all the active PEA members for their support.

City Negotiations Committee Report

On behalf of the negotiations committee, I would like to thank everyone who responded to the survey, came to meetings and offered their opinions to the committee during the last year. Special thanks go to Mary Ann Miller and Karin Anderson, both former Negotiations Committee chairs, who gave up many hours of their time to serve on the committee and guide me through the process, and to Mike Wilde, our oh-so-knowledgeable Business Agent and Legal Counsel. I encourage everyone to consider serving on the Negotiations Committee for the next round of bargaining. There is some work involved, but it is truly an educational experience.

For those members who were unable to make it to either of the voting sessions, below is the summary of the bargaining agreement that was distributed at the contract vote. The contract was approved by the membership.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheila Winderlich

A note from the Editor: See p. 6 and 7 for more information on the City contract!

Update on Change in PEA's Banking Facilities Submitted by Rhonda Gillquist, Treasurer

At the February 1, 2005 Executive Board meeting, the Executive Board agreed to change PEA's banking facilities to the City and County Employees Credit Union. A money market account, checking account, and two certificates of deposits have been set up at the City and County Employees Credit Union. There is one certificate of deposit and a checking account remaining at TCF which will be transferred to the City and County Employees Credit Union at the end of this year.

PEA Calendar of Events 2005

September 6th Combined Steward-Executive
Committee Meeting
Joseph's Grill – 5:00 PM

December 7th General Membership Meeting
(with elections)
Mancini's – 5:30 PM

2006

March Combined Steward-Executive
Committee Meeting
TBA – 5:00 PM

June General Membership Meeting
TBA – 5:30 PM

Ongoing The Executive Committee generally
meets the first Tuesday of the month at
the union office at 5:30.

Minimum Wage Law Changes
(House Files 48/Senate Files 3/Chapter 44)
Submitted by David Peterson, PEA President

As of August 1, 2005, the State of Minnesota has new minimum wage rates.

- The “**small employers**” rate increased from \$4.90 an hour to **\$5.25 an hour**. (A small employer is defined as any enterprise whose annual gross volume of sales made or done is less than \$625,000.)

- The “**large employers**” rate increased from \$5.15 an hour to **\$6.15 an hour**. (A large employer is defined as any enterprise whose annual gross volume of sales made or done is not less than \$625,000.)

- The “**training wage**” rate increased from \$4.25 an hour to **\$4.90 an hour**. An employer may pay this wage to new employees who are under the age of 20 during their first 90 consecutive days of employment. The new employee may not displace a permanent or current employee.

School District Negotiation Update
Submitted by Jaber Alsiddiqui

The School District has met twice to plan the next round of negotiation. As you all know, our contract will end on December 31, 2005. Our goal is to get a tentative agreement with the district before that. We developed a survey to get your ideas and feedback on the current contract and what changes you like to see in the new contract. The survey will be emailed to you as soon as we finalize the very last details. At this time, I encourage all of you to take a look at our current contract and contact any of the committee members about your concerns or suggestion. A copy of the contract is available on the district web sit: http://hr.spps.org/Union_Contracts.html.

I would also like to hear your feedback on our negotiation process for the last two years. Send your comments to any of the following committee members:
John Atkins, Lyla Griffin, David Peterson, Jennifer Pozanc, Colleen Shields, Mike Wilde, and myself.

IMPORTANT POINTS
Forwarded by David Peterson, PEA President

Recently, the Academy Award nominations were announced. Can you name the last half dozen Oscar winners for best actor and actress? Here are some more questions.

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America contest.
4. Name 10 people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer prize.
5. Name the last decade’s worth of World Series winners.

How did you do?

The point is, none of us remember the head liners of yesterday. These are no second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies.

Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here is another quiz. See how you do with this one:

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
5. Think of five people with whom you enjoy spending time.
6. Name half a dozen heroes whose stories have inspired you.

Easier?

The lesson: The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most awards.

They are the ones that care.

PEA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
JUNE 7, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Peterson, President; Rhonda Gillquist, Treasurer; Karin Anderson, Personnel Chair; Sheila Winderlich, City Negotiations Chair; Jaber Alsiddiqui, ISD Negotiations Chair, Mike Wilde, Business Agent and Brian Krawiecki, Secretary.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: The minutes of the December General Membership Meeting were adopted as presented.

BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT (see attached report):

Mike has helped to settle a potential grievance involving a retired PEA member. Mike advised caution when retiring to make sure your supervisor approves your retirement exit strategy so you don't get accused of job abandonment. Mike has been involved with out Contract mediation with the City. The Mediator has asked for confidentiality with the mediation progress so there is nothing that can be divulged at this time. The average increases for public sector employees for this year is 2.72% however the City is not offering anything - 0.0 %. This is the same offer that AFSCME has received. The Police received a "market rate adjustment" and they receive premiums for job duties and assignments. There have been PEA members that have been reclassified for mileage reimbursement to occasional drivers. This has resulted in lower reimbursements for some PEA members. There is a Competency Matrix Model that is being developed and will be used by the library. PEA will review the Memorandum Of Understanding from the City for the Libraries Competency Matrix Model. Mike encourages PEA members to vote quickly on our Bargaining Contract when the contract proposal is finalized..

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel: There are 17 new members in PEA since the last General Membership Meeting last December. A special welcome recognition was given to the new members in attendance. There have been 14 members that have left PEA since the December meeting. Currently the PEA membership consists of 247 City employees and 65 School District employees for a total of 312 PEA Members. Karin read a long sincere "thank you" letter from past President Steven Roy for PEA's recognition for his years of service to PEA.

City Negotiations: Sheila honored the Mediators request for confidentiality and did not give a report at this time.

Treasurer: PEA's finances are in good shape and the proposed changes to the By-Laws will not be a problem with the proposed budget.

ISD Negotiations: The ISD Contract ends after December 2005. The School District budget deficit should not affect PEA members. The teachers contract expires June 2005.. PEA contract negotiations usually follow the teachers union. Special welcome to new PEA members in the School District: Jennifer Pozanc and Joseph Munnich.

PEA BY-LAWS CHANGES Presented by Karin Anderson.

Article IV - Changed to address Executive Board vacancy.

Article VII - City Negotiations Chair, ISD Negotiations Chair and Personnel Chair change in remuneration. **MOTION by Bruce Riebe** to accept the changes as presented. Second by Casey Walters **MOTION CARRIES.** See <http://www.peaonline.org/bylaws.html> for a complete copy of the current By-Laws.

ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT Conducted by Mike Wilde.

Kay Wittgenstein has agreed to run for Vice President. Having no other nominees from the floor there was a **MOTION by Mary Ann Miller** for a White Ballot Vote to elect Kay Wittgenstein as Vice President. Second by Bruce Riebe. **MOTION CARRIES.**

OLD BUSINESS: none

NEW BUSINESS: Introduction of new members in attendance: Wendy Underwood, PED; Jennifer Pozanc and Joseph Munnich, ISD

GIFT CERTIFICATES Borders gift certificates were awarded to: Armstead Smith, Kathleen Conger, Martha Hill and Dave Sundmark. Rainbow gift certificates were awarded to: Jim Jeffery and Steve Lorbach.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:45pm

The Legal Corner
By Mike Wilde

Labor Day passed with less fanfare than I'm used to. It is usually pretty common to open up the newspaper or turn on the political news programs and catch up on the state of organized labor. But with the devastation that Hurricane Katrina unleashed on our Gulf coast, it is no wonder that all attention was focused there. The lack of attention, even though it was justified, made me uneasy. I began to wonder whether this holiday is drifting from its purpose and becoming just another day away from the grind. My thoughts were not settled when I went to the annual St. Paul Labor Day picnic. The attendance was probably 10 or 15% of what it was the year before. Granted that V.P. Candidate John Edwards rallied at the picnic last year and it was a very heated election year. But I still couldn't justify all of the open space and sparse crowd.

I have theories about why organized labor is getting less attention, but they're only theories. Maybe we are no longer convinced that people working together can achieve things that those working alone cannot. Maybe we secretly harbor grandiose beliefs that we are better workers, more valuable, than the individual down the hall. And perhaps this thought makes our society believe that anything achieved for the good of all is not good enough for us individually. Maybe we're just abandoning our commitments to one another and the idea that all honest and hard work should be fairly rewarded. Could it be that we are replacing that commitment with the highly individualistic notion that "*what I have achieved I've done on my own and I look to no person or organization for assistance.*" I had an uncle who used to talk like that, but nobody ever pointed out the contradictions when his wife served him three meals a day or when his business partner cut him slack when he got very sick or that his father-in-law originally brought him into the family business on relations alone. No he was a self-made hypocrite alright, but maybe that's the way society is going.

Regardless of the theories or my concerns over Labor Day, facts always help me understand things. Consider these facts and decide whether collective bargaining is good for you and your family. A new report by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) details the difference collective bargaining can make in workers' lives:

Eighty-eight percent of private-sector union workers have access to retirement benefits through their jobs, compared with only 56 percent of nonunion workers.

Seventy-three percent of union workers have access to defined-benefit pension plans, compared with 16 percent of nonunion workers.

Ninety-two percent of union workers have access to job-based health care benefits, compared with 68 percent of nonunion workers.

Seventy-three percent of union workers have access to job-provided dental care, 57 percent have vision care and 87 percent have prescription drug coverage, compared with 43 percent, 26 percent and 61 percent among nonunion workers, respectively.

Nonunion workers' required health insurance premiums were over \$1,000 more per year than what union workers had to contribute, on average.

Union workers also are more likely than nonunion workers to have access to job-based life insurance (65 percent vs. 50 percent) and short-term disability benefits (67 percent vs. 37 percent).

Eighty-seven percent of union members have access to paid holidays and 86 percent had paid vacations, compared with 75 percent and 77 percent of nonunion workers, respectively.

Fifty-eight percent of union workers are offered education benefits, compared with 48 percent of nonunion work.

PEA 2005-06 CONTRACT SUMMARY

Contract Duration	Covers Jan. 1, 2005 through Dec. 31, 2007 [3 years]
Wages	2005: 0% increase 2006: 2.5% general increase, plus an added \$0.20 per hr [or the salary equivalent] to all employees at 15 yr. step, eliminate the Step B (6 mo. step) effective Jan. 1 2006 with all those employees at Step B moving to 1 yr. step on Jan. 1, 2006 2007: 2.5% general increase
Sick Leave	Reduce the sick leave accrual from 15 days/ year to 14 days/year effective Jan. 1, 2007
Floating Holidays	Effective 1/1/06 we roll the two floating holidays into the vacation accrual schedule thereby adding 2 days for everyone with two (2) floating holidays.
Vacation	All vacation accrual will be based on the calendar years worked instead of the hours actually worked. This serves as a benefit for part-time employees.
Mileage	Union would agree to City's interpretation and newly implemented reimbursement of mileage expenses that subjects all per diem reimbursement to taxes. An employee's itemization might keep such per diem non-taxable. However, all rates remain the same. This would dismiss grievance. Art. 15.3 modified so that City provides parking location at Employer's choice within reasonable distance of the work site. Art. 15.4 removes the requirement that employees maintain insurance in amounts of \$100,000/\$300,000 for personal injury and \$25,000 for property or \$300,000 in liability insurance. Now employees are required to maintain only state minimum.
Sunday Premiums	Effective 1/1/06 <i>Sunday premium</i> for LIBRARY employees will compensate such employees with a 4.0% differential for all Sunday hours, but the existing <i>night differential</i> will be reduced from 5.0% to 4.0% for the LIBRARY employees. Such differential payments will now be solidified in CBA language.
Negotiations	PEA will be compensated up to 8 hours of paid time for each day of negotiations to be apportioned by PEA to its existing negotiations team.
Severance	The threshold levels of sick hours needed to reach existing severance dollar amounts will be reduced by 100 hours at every interval (level) to compensate for the loss of the sick day that is mentioned above. This becomes effective 1/1/07.

Health Insurance

All health insurance contribution changes are retroactive back to January 1, 2005.

Rate changes will follow City pattern for all other union bargaining agreements and are being finalized in MOU w/ all other City bargaining units.

Single

2005:	City Contribution	Employee Share
Deductible	\$ 377.41	\$ 0.00
Classic	\$ 418.12	\$ 4.91
Primary	\$ 408.26	\$ 33.60
Plus	\$ 404.20	\$ 22.27
2006:		
Old Deductible	\$ 409.49	\$ 0.00
Classic	\$ 450.20	\$ 8.79
Primary	\$433.08	\$ 46.34
Plus	\$ 429.02	\$ 33.70
High Deductible (new)	\$ 331.75	\$ 0.00 *\$70.00* monthly to Ee's PEHP as incentive
2007:		
Old Deductible	\$ 446.34	(rates unknown at this time)
Classic	\$ 487.05	(rates unknown at this time)
Primary	\$ 461.60	(rates unknown at this time)
Plus	\$ 457.54	(rates unknown at this time)
High Deductible	\$ 361.61	\$ 0.00 * 76.25 * monthly to Ee's PEHP as incentive

* money back incentive * are being negotiated in MOU

Family

2005: \$ 772.58 City Contribution for all plans

2006: \$ 827.40 City Contribution for all plans

2007: \$ 901.86 City Contribution for all plans

2005 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT	DAVID PETERSON	SCHOOLS - 360 Colborne, 55102	696-9626
VICE PRES,	KAY WITTGENSTEIN	PHD - 555 Cedar St., 55101	266-1285
TREASURER	RHONDA GILQUIST	SPPD - 367 Grove St., 55101	266-5544
SECRETARY	BRIAN KRAWIECKI	LIEP - 350 St. Peter St., #300, 55102	266-9134
NEGOTIATIONS			
CITY	SHEILA WINDERLICH	LIBRARY - MMC, 2109 Wilson Ave., 55119	501-6309
SCHOOL	JABER ALSIDDIQUI	SCHOOLS - 360 Colborne, 55102	767-8352
PERSONNEL	KARIN ANDERSON	CAO - 550 City Hall, 15 W. Kellogg, 55102	266-8765

STEWARDS

CAO	REGINA ETOLL	500 City Hall, 15 W. Kellogg, 55102	266-8740
FIRE	PAULA PETERSON	100 E. 11 th St., 55101	228-6203
LIBRARIES			
CENTRAL	SUSAN HENRY	MMC, 2109 Wilson Ave., 55119	501-6305
PART TIME	SUSAN McMAHON	Highland Pk, 1974 Ford Pkwy., 55116	699-6756
BRANCHES	MARY ANN MILLER	St. Anthony, 2245 Carter Ave., 55101	642-0411
LIEP	FRANK BERG	350 St. Peter St., #300, 55102.	266-9072
OFS	CORRINE HAAS	160 City Hall, 15 W. Kellogg, 55102	266-8815
PARKS & REC	JAMEL ANDERSON	300 CH Annex, 25 W. 4 th St., 55102	266-6361
P.E.D.	CRAIG O'BRIEN	1100 CH Annex, 25 W. 4 th St., 55102	266-6695
POLICE	MARSHA PANOS	367 Grove St., 55101	292-3781
PUB. HEALTH	KAY WITTGENSTEIN	555 Cedar St., 55101	266-1285
SCHOOL DIST.	LYLA GRIFFIN	360 Colborne, 55102	767-8288
	COLLEEN SHIELDS	360 Colborne, 55102	767-3472
TMS & PW	BRUCE RIEBE	700 CH Annex, 25 W. 4 th St., 55102	266-6091
WATER	ISSAC AFWERKE	1900 N. Rice, 55113	266-6267

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