

SmartZone Communications Center Collaboration Suite

augas@comcast.net

Previous Meeting Notes - Next Meeting
ScheduleSaturday, September 05, 2009 1:03:06
PM

From: jon.union@gmail.com
To: maryann.brennan@teamsters117.org
Cc:

Attachments: whistle blower form.pdf (56.5KB)

Hello all,

This is going to be a lengthy email. I will also include the text of emails from Mary Ann that some of you may have already received. I would encourage everyone to read this entire email. I apologize for being tardy getting this out to you. I have been intending it for some time.

We held an employee meeting on August 13. To my knowledge there were no "official" minutes or notes taken of the meeting so the following is as I recall things. Feel free to supplement with anything I may have forgotten or have gotten incorrectly.

The meeting was prompted by the announcement that we would begin working a fixed work schedule starting September 8. Mary Ann explained, at length, the procedure we would follow in response to the announcement. Mr. Washam is required by law to negotiate changes in working conditions with the Union. When he fails to negotiate in good faith the Union can and will file an Unfair Labor Practice complaint. This, combined with individual employee complaints of improper treatment from Mr. Washam and the outcome of the (then pending) EEO complaint should be enough "evidence" to initiate county action to correct Mr. Washam.

Questions were asked about using county time and equipment to fill out complaint forms and whether Human Resources would step in and attempt to negotiate with the union if Mr. Washam declined to do so. There was discussion whether HR would attempt to intervene in an effort to assist Mr. Washam. (Answers to some of these questions are in the email text below.)

(I have attached the correct form to use for filing complaints to this email. There were instructions to use the EEO complaint forms. Instead, the attached form is the correct form to use.)

Questions were also asked about an email sent by Albert Ugas to the appraisers requiring their answer to a question regarding physical inspections. Mary Ann composed an email at the meeting to Mr. Washam regarding this issue. The email was as follows and was mailed that same evening:

Mr. Washam: It has been brought to the Union's that an e-mail was sent to our members on August 11, 2009 requesting that they respond to the following question: In your professional opinion, why are Physical Inspections an important part of the appraisal process and needed every six years?

Can you please advise what the intent of the question is and what will be done with the information when it is received?

Thank you.

To my knowledge, there has been no response to this email. Mary Ann, can you confirm?

At the meeting Mary Ann strongly encouraged members who had complaints regarding their treatment by Mr. Washam to file complaints with HR. She indicated that it was the sheer number of these complaints that would have most effect in prompting HR to action.

Mary Ann also indicated that Mr. Washam's refusal to allow members to attend the VEBA information meetings was cause to complain as well.

(VEBA is a program that allows those who will retire in the next two years to select whether they want to place the value of their accumulated sick leave into a managed account which would be used for the purpose of covering medical expenses. Only those eligible to retire in the next two years voted on the proposal. Subsequent to this meeting, the VEBA voting results were announced as follows:

Pierce County VEBA:

The ballots regarding the members desire to participate in the Pierce County VEBA Program have been tallied. The results are as follows: The members of Teamsters Local No. 117 have elected to participate in the County's VEBA Program which will become effective August 24, 2009. The percentage of eligible sick leave cash out will be at 100%.

Mary Ann Brennan)

A point was made at the meeting that we, as employees, ought to do be involved in some effort to assure that the next Assessor-Treasurer is someone qualified for the position.

Following the meeting, emails have been exchanged with some of the members and I am including the text of those emails here for the benefit of all:

Following is Mary Ann's response to questions asked by Raquel dated September 2:

Raquel: We do have the demand to bargain letter that was posted on the Union bulletin board. I have not heard back from Washam, which is really no surprise. If and when he implements on September 7th, everyone will need to do as directed. We do not want anyone to be insubordinate. Once he implements that is when we will file the ULP. We also have another issue that we will be including and that is having employees pay for the County's mandated training and being required to use their vacation.

In answer to the questions that were asked at the August meeting. HR will offer their services to Washam in an attempt to assist him. He has control over his department, so we know he is not going to ask HR for assistant. EEOC complaints should not be filled out on County time, copied on County equipment, etc. However, once they are filed the interview process will take place on County time. We should also be filing these complaints with the EEOC office in Seattle. That will actually give us even more bang for our buck.

Mary Ann Brennan

The following is Mary Ann's email announcing an Unfair Labor Practice complaint and is dated September 3:

Good Evening Everyone. Attached is a copy of the ULP (Unfair Labor Practice) that was served on Dale Washam and Pierce County yesterday afternoon. I have also posted a copy on the Union's Bulletin Board in your office. Please pass it on to the others at their home e-mail addresses only. Also be sure not to make any copies of the document with County property and limit your discussion to lunch and breaks. I will keep everyone posted as we move through the process. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. Also, we need to set another meeting at the Tacoma Teamster Building.

Thanks and have a great three day weekend!

Mary Ann Brennan

And, from Mary Ann, dated September 3:

I'm sending this e-mail from the list of personal e-mails that I could find. This is to let you know that the Union filed a ULP (Unfair Labor Practice) against Dale Washam/Pierce County. The charge went out this afternoon. I will post a copy on the Union Bulletin Board for all to read. Please pass this on to your co-workers. Be VERY CAREFUL in your discussions and limit the discussions only to breaks or lunch break. The charge is all inclusive of his treatment of employees, retaliation, failure to bargain, changes in working conditions, etc.

I will keep you posted. I am still interested in setting up another meeting so I need you folks to give me some times and dates we could get the majority of the people together to attend. We will hold the meeting at the Tacoma Teamster Building.

Thanks.

*Mary Ann Brennan
Public Sector Coordinator
Teamsters Local No. 117
14675 Interurban Ave S Ste 307
Tukwila, WA 98168
206-441-4860 Ext. 1247
206-441-3153 - Fax*

As Mary Ann has suggested, we need to meet again in follow-up to these recent events. We have discussed meeting Wednesday, September 16, at the downtown Union Hall (where we met last time). The meeting would begin as soon as all those who indicate they are attending have had a chance to arrive. (Last time we got started about 5:45 pm and finished at about 7:30 pm.) Please plan to join us if you can. If unable to attend, please find someone who is going and share any concerns you may have with them so that your issues may be addressed.

As suggested, please use good judgement and condor in your discussions and behavior in the weeks ahead. Things can get better, but it ain't goin' ta happen fast. Be patient and give the wheels time to turn!

Enjoy the rest of your weekend.

Jon



COMPLAINT OF IMPROPER GOVERNMENTAL ACTION
(PIERCE COUNTY CODE CHAPTER 3.14 WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION)

1. COMPLAINANT (Person filing the complaint)

NAME: _____

DEPARTMENT: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

2. ALLEGED VIOLATOR (Employee accused of violation)

NAME: _____

DEPARTMENT: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

POSITION: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

3. ALLEGED IMPROPER GOVERNMENTAL ACTION (Check one)

- VIOLATES ANY STATE OR FEDERAL LAW OR PIERCE COUNTY ORDINANCE
- CONSTITUTES AN ABUSE OF AUTHORITY
- CREATES A SUBSTANTIAL OR SPECIFIC DANGER TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY
- RESULTS IN A GROSS WASTE OF PUBLIC FUNDS

4. SPECIFY CODES/LAWS VIOLATED (If known)

5. DESCRIBE THE IMPROPER GOVERNMENTAL ACTION (Include all known details such as persons involved, dates, locations, circumstances, witnesses, etc. Use additional paper as required).



6. IDENTIFY OTHERS WITH PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE (Identify and provide the name, address and telephone number, if known, of any other persons who may have personal knowledge of the alleged improper governmental action).

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NOTE: You may attach written statement of any other person who has personal knowledge of the alleged violation(s). Unsigned complaints or statements by unidentified witnesses may not be accorded the credence of a signed statement.

I HEREBY CERTIFY UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY PURSUANT TO THE LAWS OF WASHINGTON STATE THAT ALL THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS COMPLAINT, AND ANY ATTACHMENTS HERETO, ARE TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Signed by me this _____ day of _____, 20__.

Employee's signature

Pierce County employees are encouraged to report improper governmental action to the
Pierce County Human Resources Department Director
615 South 9th Street, Suite 200, Tacoma, Washington, 98405.