

Communication – Key to Success

Jeff Greenlee – SAAAL Secretary Treasurer



First of all I wish you, and your families, a Joyous, Safe and Happy Holiday Season.

So, by now you are aware that your dues have increased and this increase will generate approximately \$126,000/year more revenue. This increase was not proposed so that the Local could spend money without accountability, process or fiscal responsibility. The increase was to fully fund the Local in its representative capacities and financial commitments.

It is also important to remember that this does not have to be a permanent increase and can be subject to review in six months according to our SAAAL Constitution as it presently reads.

As we are all aware there were some problems with the printing and distribution of the last Dispatch. A very important part of my article was not printed so I want to bring to your attention that omission.

As you read what I wrote you can realize the context was important to fully understand my position on the dues increase and the process that the Constitution provides.

As I started my continued page I was discussing the August General Membership Meeting. The first paragraph that was omitted (in bold italic) was very important to the idea of what I was saying and it should have read:

“August General Membership Meeting

The August General Membership Meeting was very interesting. First of all there was the voting for the \$5.00 per Pay Period increase and it passed by a vote of 42-41.

It is important to realize that this is the first time this process has been enacted as per the Constitution. I feel the Constitution is flawed in the language of this provision and needs to be corrected. This is an issue that is important to all members and as such, all members should be allowed the opportunity to vote on the dues increase.”

This brings me to the subject of Communication with the members.

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Much of the post voting discussion concerning the dues increase was that the members at the Stations/AOs did not have an opportunity to voice their vote on the issue since the voting was done at the General Membership Meeting.

The process of voting for a dues increase in the Constitution reads as such:

ARTICLE XII REVENUES

Section 2.

The dues of this Union Shall be raised by the following methods:

- (a) By a motion at a General Membership meeting and a second to the motion, with a notice posted at least 15 days before the next General Membership meeting, and a majority vote of the members present and voting by secret ballot the dues may be raised or lowered. This action shall not be repeated within six months following the voting.*

Many members at the Stations/AOs stated that they were not aware of the vote and because most of those members that work at the Stations/AOs must work on Saturdays they are disenfranchised from the voting process on the dues increase. Since this is an issue that affects all members directly they should have the opportunity to vote.

“So as we move forward as a Labor Organization we must be fully committed to keeping our members informed and that Communication is a Key to Success!”

Much of the issue with the process was with the requirement that the “... notice posted at least 15 days before...”. The problem for the Stations/AOs is that there was no procedure in place to communicate with each Station/AO. The communication process was relying on the NewsFlash mail list, which is limited, and the SAAAL website. There is no direct communication with each Station/AO.

At the September Executive Board, I made a recommendation that the Union Office, at least once a month, send out pertinent information (Meeting Minutes/Meeting Notice/NewsFlash, etc.) to a contact at each Station/AO for posting of bulletin boards or at least put out on the swing room tables. Although it did meet with some resistance, it was adopted.

Also at the September General Membership Meeting there was much discussion about this communication problem and this recommendation was also brought up to go forward and the membership was assured that it would happen.

Well, as of this writing, it has not happened!! There are many excuses why.... but that does not excuse the fact that it did not happen.

We have now been assured, again, as of the October General Membership Meeting that the procedure of communicating with the members at the stations/AOs will happen shortly.

We have a vast area of representation, all the way from Beeville in the east to Del Rio in the west. Communication is a must and without an honest and true effort to communicate and keep the members informed, utilizing all tools available, we will fail as a representative body.

Representation does not just mean the grievance process. It is providing information to members that make them fully understand what it means to be a member of a labor organization, that representation also includes processes that are available to them, benefits of membership, and the ability to keep them fully informed.

Financial Report for September, 2019

The beginning balance for September was \$21,799.65

The check to the TPWU is higher than normal at \$1,136 because the Per Capita Dues are for three Pay Periods instead of the customary two. This will occur a couple of times a year.

We did pay \$1,300 for the renewal of our bond. This bond protects the Local from loss if an officer or official causes loss by its employees' fraudulent or dishonest actions.

We did pay out over \$1,100 for insurance coverage for Liability Insurance – if someone gets hurt on the property, and Commercial Property Insurance which covers the building from loss (fire, water, theft etc.)

We did have the expense for the Publication of the Dispatch which runs about \$2,000.

The American Express bill was reasonable with most of the expense being for airline fare to the All Craft Conference but we did get a large refund of the room reservations.

I have also noted on the financial report the “Monthly Debit Card Summary” at the bottom of the report. We are now using the Bank of America Debit Card. These debits will appear throughout the report but what I will do is summarize those Debit Card charges at the end of the report.

Monthly Totals for September

Checking Balance	\$34,149.61
(Note that we had 3 Per Capita Deposits which inflated our Checking Balance by approximately \$14,000)	
Total Deposits	\$43,595.88
Total Expenses	\$31,245.92

SSFCU Funds – there were NO Fund withdrawals for this month and the Emergency Fund (Misc./Legal) is now at the capped amount of \$40,000 and until a bill is received we will not make deposits to the account.

Final Numbers for September

BOA General Fund at the end of July	\$ 34,149.61
SSFCU Fund Balance	<u>\$ 99,641.33</u>
Total Cash Assets	\$133,790.94

Upcoming Expenses and Expenditures

October will be a 3 PP month for the full time officer and fund deposits.

October will also see some All Craft Conference expenses to include registrations, per diem and some travel expenses.

November will be Leave payout for Officers attending the All Craft Conference

November is Stewards Rebates Month

November GMM Lunch Expense

Lastly, the Trustees held their quarterly auditing of the finances for the months of June, July and August and I am proud to report that they did not find any major discrepancies; they did have some questions but nothing that could not be sufficiently explained. They also made some recommendations; please refer to the October General Membership Meeting minutes at the end of the Dispatch for specifics.

Once again... Happy Holiday Season, be safe and be sure to come out to the November General Membership Meeting.