

Tuesday, November 4, 2011

## Conference Call Minutes October 30, 2011

Alex, L. 869, Brett, L. 1700, Dick, L. 235, Frank, L. 909, George, L. 12, Judy, L. 600, Martha, L. 869, Nick, 1112, Reggie, L. 600, Ron, L. 600, Scott, L. 551, Steve, L. 600, Wendy, L. 22, XNate, L. 2184

Chair – Frank,

Minutes - Wendy

Summary of our experience in contract campaigns:

Scott - L.174 voted no early after the Shop Chair went against it and that encouraged my local to vote no. People in my plant were not happy with the contract and were not afraid to stand against it. Later came threats by the International and that affected the vote elsewhere.

Alex – We did a good job for a relatively small number of people, leaflets were timely, we need more people working with us in different locals. Production workers are glad skilled trades voted the contract down, because they think it might help them out.

Martha – Chrysler folks pissed off at lesser bonuses than GM and Ford, production voted no too at Warren Stamping, rank and file was glad Caravan recommended a no vote, and were not scared by the threat of arbitration. The International is violating the duty of fair representation by not getting back with skilled trades members to ask why they voted no, skilled trades are up in arms, they should reach out to production to build broader unity.

Nick - At Lordstown, a lot of people were on the fence and afraid of arbitration. They said 75% voted yes, but we're not sure it was a fair vote. The Local President was afraid of our ability to influence a no vote and put out a leaflet against us. Everyone saw our leaflet and it got people thinking. People will be wanting a much better contract in 2015.

Reggie – Ford retirees were unhappy with the contract.

Judy – There were people working with us who decided to vote for the contract, fear of loss of work assigned to particular plants was an issue.

Ron – There was strike sentiment at Ford in advance, which brought threats by the leadership to scare people saying they were not returning to talks, but would proceed immediately to a strike. Some previously “no concessions” local leaders in the Truck plant recommended the contract which broke our unity. The vote was not a fair one. As during the last contract vote, plastic buckets were passed down the line to collect votes. The high no vote at Chrysler showed a willingness to stand up despite the fact they had a worse situation than GM and Ford.

Steve and Reggie – Plastic buckets mean the vote was not legitimate. An appeal should be submitted.

Ron – We appealed last time when this happened and they said we needed more witnesses. We should try again.

Frank – International did not have COLA or "inflation protection" on their agenda. Only because AWC talked up COLA, did International announce "inflation protection" bonuses as part of agreements; and 2 tier workers got more due to our pressure. Local leaders were in lockstep because of fear their plant wouldn't get work.

George – At Jeep it passed by only 3 to 4 percent, and trades voted it down. The Shop Chair is freaking out and turning on Committeepeople and Stewards. We should file an appeal protesting the IEB decision that skilled trades voted no on "economic issues" and not skilled trades issues. Skilled trades voted against the contract in '73, and the International claimed then also that it was due to "economic reasons". There was an appeal that said the union must conduct an "investigation". They are claiming a conference call with the local leaders was such an investigation. We should say it was not. If they gave the trades two ballots, one for economic and one for skilled issues, they would know for sure if the contract was voted down on skilled issues. Workers at Jeep in Toledo are ready to support such an appeal and maybe a petition campaign.

Sergio Marchionne will be in Toledo on Friday. Will let us know if there is a rally. Will work on news release.

XNate – L. 2164 passed the national contract by only 25 votes, and voted down local agreement.

#### Where we go from here: short term

Autoworker Caravan will support Chrysler skilled trades appeal re separate ratification

Wendy – We should have a rally at the auto show like we have done the last few years. Try to tie in the contract issues like end two tier, return of COLA, raises, democracy in the union, put green jobs in empty plants. We should fully support the Occupy movement which will hopefully still be around to join us.

There will a demonstration Tues., Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> at DTE headquarters in Detroit protesting gas cut-offs.

Also, there is a Labor Notes Detroit organizing school which expects to draw a number of autoworkers. It's a good chance to convince more autoworkers to begin to see themselves as organizers.

Ron- Good idea, there will be more than just autoworkers, but we could request some time set aside for us to meet separately.

Frank – Agree we should do the rally again and keep up our emphasis on green jobs

Martha – We need a celebration of the vote no people. Anchor Bar after the rally would be good as well as local celebrations at Warren Stamping and Local 600.

Supporting Occupy Detroit is very important. A labor working group has been established which meets on Mondays at the Hazen Pingree statue in Grand Circus Park. (Since our call the labor working group working with local unions has called for a Day of Solidarity with Occupy Detroit. Sun., Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 gather at Hart Plaza, 2:30 march to Grand Circus, bring donations)

#### Where we go from here: long term

Nick – We need to think about by-laws and a constitution. We need local chapters and should start working now on electing delegates to the next convention in 2014. We need to revitalize the New Directions model. We might have problems using the UAW logo, and need our own.

Perhaps we should become a non-profit and go for 501C-3 status.

Scott – Nick as some good ideas. We should worry about copy-rite protection, and consider 501(c3).

Martha – Cautions against getting too formal. Prefers steering committee, subcommittees, and a membership organization. We should avoid 501 (c3) because it would limit us in what we could do.

Alex – We could do on line registration.

George – In the old days they would accuse us of “dual unionism”. They might return to that charge. We’re trying to change the union not get a different one.

Wendy - The history in the UAW is that we have tried to have a network with a yearly meeting when we have not been strong enough for a caucus. We are really too weak for a national caucus right now. But we should be working to try to build local groups where possible.

Subcommittee on organization set up – volunteers: Nick, Martha, Wendy, Scott, Frank

Need subcommittee for Auto Show Rally, will ask for volunteers on google group lists.

Announcements

Frank encouraged people to participate in the “Close the School of the Americas” event which officially supported by the UAW.

Martha: we should support Jobs With Justice "Green Jobs" rally - Friday Nov 4th

George: will send details re: Sergio Marchionne appearance in Toledo

Next meeting set for Sunday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>, 7:30. We want to continue on Sunday to encourage 2<sup>nd</sup> Shift participation.