

Service Employees International Union
Local 715

**THE CITY OF PALO ALTO
CHAPTER
BYLAWS**

Revised September 2005

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ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The City of Palo Alto Chapter hereinafter referred to as the Chapter, is a recognized Chapter of Service Workers Local 715, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), AFL-CIO and complies with all Bylaws of Local 715 and SEIU and hereby incorporates such Bylaws as its own.

ARTICLE 2 - JURISDICTION

The jurisdiction of the Chapter shall be all workers employed by the City of Palo Alto with the exception of management, confidential and public safety personnel.

ARTICLE 3 - OBJECTIVES

Section 1 - Objectives of the Chapter

The objectives of this Chapter shall be to improve the wages, hours and working conditions of its members, to promote active participation of its members in the decision-making processes of the employer, to promote the economic, political, intellectual and social welfare of its members and to represent them in disputes with the employer and in collective bargaining.

Section 2 - Objective of the Bylaws

The objective of these Bylaws is to provide rules of acceptable self-government, not in conflict with any higher authority.

ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Eligibility

Any person employed within the jurisdiction of this Chapter shall be eligible for membership in accordance with these Bylaws and shall become a member or pay a fee in accordance with the bargaining unit contract.

Section 2 - No Discrimination

There shall be no discrimination against any member or applicant for membership for reason of race, color, sex, age, sexual preference, disabilities, creed, religion, national origin, political opinion, first language spoken or affiliations.

Section 3 - Good Standing

A member who has paid the full dues obligation shall be determined to be in good standing with the Local Union.

ARTICLE 5- STRUCTURE

Section 1 - Chapter Structure

The structure of this Chapter shall consist of a General Membership and a Chapter Council.

Section 2 - General Membership

The General Membership is the body authorized to take lawful action, consistent with these Bylaws, and to act in behalf of the Chapter.

Section 3 - Chapter Council

The affairs of this Chapter shall be conducted through the Chapter Council. The Chapter Council shall insure that the policies and directives of the General Membership are being followed and shall report on all matters which in its judgment require consideration by the Chapter or which may have been committed to the Chapter Council by the General Membership. In addition, the actions of the Chapter Council shall be printed and distributed at the next General Membership meeting. In the absence of a quorum at a regular General Membership meeting, the Chapter Council shall be authorized to act in the name of the Chapter.

ARTICLE 6 - CHAPTER COUNCIL

Section 1 - Structure

The Chapter Council shall consist of the Officers, and the Delegate and Alternate Delegate to the Local Union Executive Board. Duly elected Stewards and the Chief Steward shall also be voting members of the Chapter Council.

Section 2 - Meetings

The Chapter Council shall meet at least once in each month at a scheduled time and place known to the membership. Special meetings may be called by the Chapter Chairperson upon written request of five members of the Chapter Council. Written notification indicating the reason for the meeting shall be given three days in advance except in the case of emergency. Minutes of regular and special meetings shall be recorded and presented in writing at the next regular meeting.

Section 3 - Quorum and Agenda

A majority (of a minimum of 12, whichever is less) of the Chapter Council shall comprise a quorum, provided there are at least two Officers present. The Chapter Chairperson shall cause an agenda to be presented for each meeting of the Chapter Council prior to that meeting and, whenever possible, a copy of the agenda shall be distributed with the notice of the meeting to all Chapter Council members.

Section 4 - Absences

Members of the Chapter Council who cannot attend a meeting shall notify the Chapter Chairperson that they will be absent and state a bonafide reason for such absence. The Chapter Chairperson may excuse the member subject to the approval of the Chapter Council. In the event any Officer or Delegate or Alternate fails to attend three consecutive Chapter Council meetings, without excuse, the Chapter Chairperson shall declare that member's seat vacant. In the case of Stewards, the members in their representation area shall be notified of their absence.

Section 5 - Special Meetings

The Chapter Chairperson shall be able to call special Chapter Council meetings without prior written notice in such cases where s/he deems the time factor is of urgency and the issue demands immediate attention, or when s/he feels a strategic position of the Chapter would be lost by hesitation. S/he shall make a reasonable effort to contact all Council members. Minutes shall be presented at the following Council meeting.

Section 6 - Regular Order of Business

The Regular Order of Business for Chapter Council meetings, subject to waiver upon proper motion, shall be:

- a. Roll Call of Officers
- b. Presentation and Approval of Minutes
- c. Reports
- d. Unfinished Business
- e. New Business
- f. Good and Welfare
- g. Adjournment

Section 7-Parliamentarian

The Chapter Chair may appoint a Parliamentarian to advise the Chapter Chair in matters to maintain parliamentary order in Chapter meetings, if s/he deems it necessary.

ARTICLE 7 – OFFICERS

The Officers of this Chapter shall be a Chapter Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson and Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 1 - Duties of the Chapter Chairperson

The Chapter Chairperson shall be the presiding officer of the Chapter and shall preside over all General Membership and Chapter Council meetings; shall have general supervision of the work of the Chapter, in coordination with the union staff and in accordance with the Bylaws; shall have authority to act in all matters not otherwise expressly delegated. The Chapter Chairperson shall be one of the persons authorized to sign all checks and countersign all orders on funds, contracts and agreements; shall appoint chairpersons or co-chairpersons for all standing committees and may appoint the members of such committees after consultation with the chairpersons or co-chairpersons with approval of the Chapter Council by simple majority. The Chapter Chairperson may create or disband special committees, define their tasks and appoint the members in the same fashion as for standing committees. The Chapter Chairperson shall give a full report of his/her activities at each regular Chapter Council meeting and General Membership meeting and shall be a member of the Negotiating Committee.

Section 2 - Duties of the Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chapter Chairperson in his/her absence and shall assist the Chapter Chairperson in the operation of all the affairs of the Chapter; shall succeed the Chapter Chairperson if the Chapter Chairperson is unable to complete term; shall be empowered to countersign checks in the absence of the Chapter Chairperson or Treasurer.

Section 3 - Duties of the Recording Secretary (Office merged with Treasurer at next Officer election. Section is deleted at the time of seating new Secretary-Treasurer)

The Recording Secretary shall keep a correct and accurate record of proceedings of all regular and special Chapter Council and General Membership meetings. The Recording Secretary shall, in coordination with union staff, attend to all correspondence in connection with the Chapter affairs and make necessary arrangements for meetings.

Section 4 - Duties of the Treasurer (Office merged with Recording Secretary at next Officer election. Section is deleted at the time of seating new Secretary-Treasurer)

The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements of the monies of the Chapter. Said monies shall be deposited in a local bank and may be drawn only when a check upon the account is signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the Chapter Chairperson, or in his/her absence the Vice Chairperson. A written financial report shall be submitted at each regular Chapter Council meeting and/or upon request of the Chapter Council.

Section 5 - Duties of the Secretary-Treasurer (Office becomes in existence at next Officer election.)

The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep a correct and accurate record of proceedings of all regular, special Chapter Council and General Membership meetings of the Chapter. The Secretary-Treasurer shall present a written summary of the meeting record to the members prior to the next meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer, in coordination with the Chapter Chairperson, shall attend to all correspondence in connection with the Chapter affairs. The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible to make necessary arrangements for Chapter meetings. The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements of the monies of the Chapter, if such monies exist. Said monies shall be deposited in a local bank and may be drawn only when a check upon the account is signed by the Secretary-Treasurer and counter-signed by the Chairperson or, in his/her absence, the Vice Chairperson.

ARTICLE 8 – ELECTIONS

Section 1 - Term of Office

Officers, Local Union Executive Board Delegate(s) and Stewards shall be elected in the two months proceeding the date which marks six months before the expiration of the collective bargaining agreement, and shall take office six months before the expiration of that agreement. Their term shall continue until six months before the expiration of the subsequent collective bargaining agreement.

Section 2 - Election Committee

Prior to the nomination of Chapter Officers, an Election Committee of at least three members shall be elected by the General Membership. This committee shall rule on the qualifications of nominees, and certify them for the upcoming election. The duties of the Election Committee shall be to:

- a. Conduct the affairs of the elections
- b. Validate the qualifications of the nominees
- c. Act an initial judge in all matters arising from the election procedures
- d. Be responsible for the tabulation of the results of the election
- e. Certify the results of the election.

No member of the Election Committee may be a candidate for office, or a member of the Chapter Council.

Section 3 - Nomination

Nominations for Officers shall be made at a regular or special meeting of the General Membership held at least two months before the expiration of their terms. At least fifteen days notice shall be given to the membership prior to the nomination meeting. Nominations shall be made at the nomination meeting from the floor, or by petition signed by at least five members in good standing. All nominations shall be presented to the Election Committee no later than sixty days before the expiration of terms. To have his/her name placed on the ballot, a nominee must submit to the Elections Committee, no later than sixty days before the expiration of terms, a completed applicant's form which shall include his/her qualifications.

Section 4 - Eligibility

No member shall be a candidate for more than one Officer position at a time. A member may, however, run for and simultaneously hold positions of Delegate or Alternate and one Officer position. In the absence of candidates for Alternate Delegate, the candidate for Delegate who is not elected but has the next highest vote total shall be Alternate. A person shall be eligible for nomination and serve as an elected Officer who has been a member in continuous good standing in the Chapter for at least six months immediately preceding the nomination. In accordance with the International Union Constitution, a person shall be eligible for nomination and serve as in the position of Delegate or Alternate Delegate to the Local Union Executive Board who has been a member in continuous good standing for at least two years immediately preceding the nomination.

Section 5 - Election

Voting shall take place at a regular or special General Membership meeting. All members in good standing shall receive a ballot package. The ballot package shall include a ballot with a ballot submission envelope, and a copy of all ballot measures and candidates' statements, as available. Absentee, proxy and write-in votes shall not be valid for any purpose. After filling out the ballot, the member shall place the completed ballot into the envelope and then into the ballot box in manner to insure confidentiality of the vote.

Section 6 - Declaration of Election

The candidate receiving a plurality of the votes cast for that office shall be declared elected.

Section 7 - Fair Election

Adequate safeguards to ensure a fair election shall be provided, including the right of any candidate to have an observer at the counting of ballots. No Chapter or Local Union funds, resources, or mailing lists will be used to assist any member's candidacy.

Section 8 - Vacated Offices

Vacant offices other than the office of Chapter Chairperson, which is governed by Article 7, Section 2 of these Bylaws, or Steward, which is governed by Article 11, Section 5 of these Bylaws, shall be filled by appointment of the Chapter Council. At the meeting at which the vacancy is declared, nominations will be open. Appointment will be made at the next regular meeting of the Chapter Council.

ARTICLE 9 - RECALL

Section 1 - Notification

An Officer or Delegate or Alternate Delegate, may be removed from office at a Recall Meeting to be called upon a written petition of 20% of the General Membership presented to the Chapter Chairperson or the Chapter Council. In coordination with the union staff, and with at least ten (10) days' notification prior to the meeting date, a notice of a Recall Meeting shall be distributed to each member by the Recording Secretary stating the time and place of the Recall Meeting and which position(s) are affected.

Section 2 - Exclusive Business

No business other than the recall shall be conducted at this meeting. No action can be taken at the Recall Meeting if a quorum is not present. The recall vote shall be by secret ballot and shall require a two-thirds majority of those voting to remove the elected official from office.

Section 3 - Recall Petition

The petition must be headed "Recall Petition" and must specify the person to be recalled and the charge on each page.

ARTICLE 10 - GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1 - Frequency

A General Membership meeting shall take place at least annually at such time and place as the Chapter Council may designate; and the membership shall be notified of such meeting time and place seven (7) days prior to such meeting. The Regular Order of Business at General Membership meetings shall be set by the Chapter Chairperson, in accordance with these Bylaws.

Section 2 - Official Directives

Any action taken by the membership at a General Membership meeting held pursuant to this Article shall prevail as the official policy and directives of this Chapter.

Section 3 - Quorum

A quorum for a General Membership meeting shall be twenty-five (25) members in good standing. In the event there is no quorum for a General Membership meeting, the regular business for that meeting shall be conducted at that time by the attending Chapter Council members, and its actions shall represent the official policies and directives of the Chapter.

Section 4 - Special Meetings

The Chapter Council is authorized to call a special General Membership meeting at any time it deems it necessary with at least five days' advance written notice and with the purpose, time, date and place noted.

Section 5 - Member Request for Special Meeting

Whenever ten percent of the membership in good standing request, in writing, a General Membership meeting, the Chapter Chairperson must call a General Membership meeting within thirty days after receipt of such a request. The membership must be notified in writing five days prior to the meeting of the time, date, place and purpose of the meeting.

Section 6 - The Order of Business

Any member shall have the right to submit motions in proper order of business. The Regular Order of Business for General Membership meetings, subject to waiver upon proper motion, shall be:

- a. Roll Call of Officers
- b. Presentation and Approval of Minutes
- c. Reports
- d. Unfinished Business
- e. New Business
- f. Good and Welfare of Chapter
- g. Adjournment

Section 7 - Sergeant-at-Arms

The Chapter Chairperson may appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms to maintain order.

Section 8 - Voting

There shall be no absentee, write-in or proxy votes at any meeting. All votes shall be cast in person.

Section 9-Parliamentarian

The Chapter Chair may appoint a Parliamentarian to advise the Chapter Chair in matters to maintain parliamentary order in General Membership meetings, if s/he deems it necessary.

ARTICLE 11 – STEWARDS

Section 1 - Representation Areas

Representation areas shall be determined by the Chief Steward, in cooperation with the Stewards, and with the approval from the Chapter Council. Representation areas can generally be defined by physical boundaries such as a floor, branch, section, building, interest, division or common work area. Unit members are not restricted to utilize their area Stewards for representation. Steward Representation Areas shall be reviewed periodically and may be modified by the Stewards, with the process described in this section, to ensure the broadest possible representation.

Section 2 - Nomination and Election

Stewards shall be nominated and elected by the members in each Steward representation area. Prior to the conducting of an election or selection of a Steward to a representation area, the Chief Steward must approve the definition of the representation area, as defined in Section 1 of this Article. Steward elections in the representation area defined in Section 1, by a majority vote by members in the representation area, who are in good standing, either by ballot or by petition. Questions of procedures in Steward elections shall be referred to the Chief Steward. The Chief Steward shall be elected by the Stewards, from among the Stewards. The Chief Steward's term of office shall coincide with the term of the Chapter Officers.

Section 3 - Duties of the Chief Steward

In cooperation with the Local Union Staff, the Chief Steward shall be a resource to all Stewards; coordinate the work of the Stewards, including making decisions in situations where a worker wishes to have a Steward who is not in their representational area; ensure that representation areas are designated and periodically reviewed in order to maintain the broadest possible representation; shall call for elections to fill vacant Steward positions and shall conduct such elections; shall be a member of the Chapter Council and shall report on his/her activity at all Steward and Chapter Council meetings and General Membership Meetings; shall participate in formal grievance steps as described in the contract; shall be a member of the Negotiating Committee, and shall attend City Council meetings in coordination with the Chapter Chairperson. The Chief Steward may call special meetings of all Stewards with adequate notice.

Section 4 - Ability to Hold Other Offices

Stewards may also hold elected offices in the Chapter.

Section 5 - Stewards' Rights and Responsibilities

- a. The Steward has no greater rights than any of the members of his/her unit. The responsibilities of Stewardship, however, do outweigh those of ordinary membership.
- b. The Steward, upon election as a Unit Steward, should sign a "Steward Commitment Form" and provide this to the Chief Steward to acknowledge an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the Steward position. New stewards should pursue timely certification as a "trained Steward" through union Local training resources.
- c. Subject to these Bylaws, the first line of contact with management and the members is the Steward.
- d. The Steward is responsible for the enforcement of all applicable collective bargaining agreements in his/her unit.
- e. In the absence of the members, the Steward represents his/her unit in all meetings of the Union. The Steward must attend all meetings, as required in these Bylaws, and participate in a manner that effectively represents his/her unit members.
- f. Stewardship requires complete subordination of all interests to those interests that represent the highest good to the members of his/her unit.

Section 6 - Replacing a Steward

Any Steward may be replaced at any time by the simple majority vote or petition of members, in good standing, in the Steward's Representation Area. The Chapter Council has no jurisdiction to replace a Steward, but shall notify the members in the appropriate Representation Area if the Steward has missed three consecutive Chapter Council meetings without a bonafide reason for such absence reported to the Chapter Chair. The Chief Steward may be replaced by a two-thirds vote of all Stewards attending a Chapter Council meeting called for that express purpose provided seven (7) days advance notice has been given to all Stewards for this issue to be on the agenda.

Section 7 - Resources

All Stewards shall have copies of the Chapter, Local, and International Bylaws and all necessary working agreements and rules pertinent to their representation units available at all times.

Section 8 - Alternate Stewards

The Alternate Steward shall fill all functions of the Steward in the Steward's absence, including attending meetings of the Chapter Council and voting on all issues before the Council.

Section 9-Steward Council

The Chief Steward or Chapter Chair may establish a council of Stewards to meet, share, train and strategize about the handling of disciplinary actions and other functions of a unit Steward. This Council is comprised of all elected and alternate stewards. This Council shall meet at least every quarter.

ARTICLE 12 - COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Section 1 - Negotiating Committee

There shall be an elected Negotiating Committee for all negotiations with the employer. There shall be no more than twelve (12) members of the Negotiating Committee, including the Chapter Chairperson and the Chief Steward. The other ten (10) members of the Committee shall be elected by the members in the designated Bargaining Area.

Section 2 - Bargaining Areas

The Chapter Council, with approval from the General Membership, shall determine up to ten (10) Bargaining Areas from which Negotiating Committee members shall be elected. Every effort will be made to afford the broadest possible representation for all workers.

Section 3 - Eligibility and Election

To be eligible to run for and hold a position on the Negotiating Committee, a person must have been a Chapter member in good standing for six (6) months preceding the nominating period. The Negotiating Committee shall be elected within the thirty (30) day period after the completion of Officer and Steward elections so that the Chapter Chairperson and Chief Steward are known to the General Membership prior to electing the other members of the Negotiating Committee.

Section 4 - Authority

The Negotiating Committee shall have full authority, subject to final ratification or rejection by the General Membership, to negotiate agreements with the employer.

Section 5 - Proposals

The Negotiating Committee shall survey the members before entering into negotiations; shall prepare a proposed collective bargaining agreement; and shall present the proposed agreement to the members at a General Membership meeting. The proposed agreement must be approved by a majority vote of the members present at the meeting.

Section 6 - Ratification and Rejection/Strike Votes

Votes to ratify a tentative agreement and votes to authorize extension of work under an expired agreement must be by majority vote by secret ballot of the membership present at a meeting expressly called for that purpose. If a tentative agreement is rejected and the vote is to authorize the Negotiating Committee to call a strike, there must be at least 40% of the members in good standing present at the meeting. No vote to call a strike may be referred to the Chapter Council for lack of a quorum.

ARTICLE 13 - INVALIDATION AND REVISIONS

If any section of these Bylaws is judged invalid for any reason, including conflicts with the International Constitution and Bylaws and the Bylaws of Local 715, such section shall be inoperative but all other sections shall continue in full force and effect. In the event of invalidation of any section of these Bylaws, the Bylaws Committee shall meet to revise that section to bring it into conformance with the Local and International Bylaws. The General Membership shall vote on such revisions at its next scheduled meeting, or a special meeting may be called with at least ten (10) days' notice. All votes to revise these Bylaws shall be by two-thirds (2/3) of those attending the meeting.

ARTICLE 14 - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Where not in conflict with these Bylaws, the parliamentary authority for all meetings of this Chapter shall be Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

ARTICLE 15 - STANDING COMMITTEES

Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall be appointed by the Chapter Chairperson with confirmation of the Chapter Council. Committee members may be nominated, appointed or may be volunteers.

Section 1 - Bylaws Committee

In accordance with Article 11 of these Bylaws, the Bylaws Committee shall be convened as necessary to review the Bylaws and shall draw up and report proposed amendments to the Chapter Council and the General Membership.

Section 2 - Organizing/Negotiations Support Committee

The Organizing Committee shall be responsible for keeping communication lines open between the members and for recruitment of new members. The Committee shall participate in and, and where possible, assist the Local Union Member Organizing Committee in the planning and implementation of organizing campaigns. During contract negotiations, the Organizing Committee takes on the role of Negotiations Support Committee to aid and support the Negotiating Committee in communication with the membership.

Section 3 - Civil & Human Rights Committee

The Civil & Human Rights Committee shall work with the Chapter Council and the Local Union to further the issues of civil and human rights for the Chapter membership, and anywhere in which such rights are at issue. The Civil & Human Rights Committee shall participate in, and where possible, assist the Local Union Civil & Human Rights Committee in the planning of Local-wide educational programs and coordination of events surrounding such issues.

Section 4 - Training Committee

The Training Committee shall work with the Chapter Council to determine the need for training for members, stewards and Officers. The Training Committee shall participate in, and where possible, assist the Local Union Training & Education Committee in the planning of Local-wide training programs, including the Leadership Convention and regional steward and leadership workshops.

Section 5 - Safety Committee

The Safety Committee shall be responsible for enforcement of applicable laws, rules, regulations and agreements affecting members' on-the-job health and safety. The Safety Committee shall recommend to the Negotiating Committee contract changes to protect members' on-the-job health and safety. Members of the Safety Committee shall participate in, and where possible, assist the Chapter's Training Committee and the Local Union's Training & Education Committee in the planning of safety meetings and workshops.

Section 6 - Retirement Committee

Investigates and recommends possible changes in the retirement plan. Defends the interests of currently retired members.

Section 7 - Committee On Political Education (COPE)

COPE shall be responsible to work in coordination with the Executive Board and the Local-wide COPE to further the Local's political program within the Chapter. The Chapter COPE shall also be responsible for recruitment of and the interviewing and endorsement of candidates for local elected offices.

Section 8 - Special Committees

Special Committees are appointed by the Chapter Chairperson to work on specific issues or tasks. Such appointments shall be approved pursuant to Article 5 of these Bylaws.

APPENDIX A

LOCAL 715 VISION STATEMENT

WHAT WE BELIEVE

A. The Situation We Face

Members of Local 715, SEIU, believe we are faced with a crisis threatening the livelihood and the pursuit of happiness of all U.S. workers, organized and unorganized.

The crisis takes the forms of declining real wages, assaults on health care and pension benefits, increased racism, sexism and homophobia, and erosion of social programs. Jobs that pay a living wage are heading overseas. Families face increased stress and strain as the "American dream" turns into a nightmare.

One of the primary causes (among others) of the crisis is the decline in strength of organized labor. That decline takes three forms:

Numbers: We are down to 14% of workers in the United States.

Strategy: The "servicing model" of unionism is less and less effective as a way of protecting what we have won in the past and of winning more.

Leadership: We have not always had the accountable, effective leaders we need at all levels of organized labor -- leaders who reflect the diversity of our membership.

Local 715 members face assaults on their livelihood in the form of subcontracting union jobs, layoffs, "restructuring" and "re-engineering." More and more we fight at the bargaining table to keep what we have rather than to win more.

An important effect of the crisis is that no union, no matter how democratic or strong, can do more than hold the line on wages, hours and working conditions for its members.

B. Tools for Fighting Back

Organizing the unorganized has become critical to our ability to represent our members. Unorganized workers feel the crisis as well, because their conditions also depend on the strength of organized labor.

Union members will win more and protect our gains more effectively if we rely on our collective strength to win victories in our workplaces, in our communities and at the polls.

Our union must continue to be democratic, vital, honest, aggressive and effective in its efforts to improve the lives of the members. Our union must ally whenever possible with community groups around common issues and causes.

Politics is union business. Activism in the political arena must be accelerated in order to defeat the new offensive from anti-union and anti-worker forces at all levels of government.

OUR PURPOSE

It is the purpose of Local 715, Service Employees International Union, to improve the hours, wages, working conditions and general lives of its members. In order to do that, we must contribute in every way possible to the rejuvenation of the labor movement in the United States. To that purpose, we will:

- 1. Actively and vigorously organize unorganized workers;*
- 2. Empower our members to improve their quality of working life;*
- 3. Work to bring vigorous, accountable leadership to all levels of organized labor; leaders who support and encourage both external and internal organizing and who reflect the diversity of our membership; and*
- 4. Fight for social justice through community alliances, electoral politics and by promoting solidarity among all working people.*

APPENDIX B

A SHORT COURSE IN PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Using Robert's Rules of Order

The Agenda

After the meeting is called to order, the first thing to do is to adopt an Agenda or Order of Business. This will limit the meeting to taking up only the points on the Agenda. "Beefs" are often taken up under Good and Welfare or Welfare of the Union. If you've forgotten anything, take it up there, too.

Motions

Business is conducted at a meeting by using Motions. A Motion is made from the floor, seconded and then debated. In debating, or speaking on a motion, no member should be allowed to speak twice before everyone who wants to talk has spoken once. Speaking on a motion is called taking the floor.

Recognition

In order to make a motion, a member should rise, face the Chairperson, and signal or call for attention by saying "Brother/Sister Chair." When you make a motion, be very clear on what you are saying. If there is confusion, ask the Chairperson to help you straighten it out. That's part of his/her job.

Seconding

Motions must be seconded before they can be acted on. Once a motion has been made and seconded, it must be disposed of, either by being defeated, passed, tabled, or placed in committee.

Amendments

After a motion has been made and seconded, it is on the floor. Only then can an amendment be made. The object of an amendment is to change the original motion without destroying the sense of it. For example, if there was a motion on the floor to hold a picnic, it could be amended to add a specific date or place, but it could not be amended to change the event from a picnic to a bowling tournament. Amendments generally take the form of inserting or adding words to the motion, striking out words or substituting words or sentences. The Chairperson is obliged to rule out of order any proposed amendment which would do more than the above, and change the sense of the motion entirely. Amendments to motions can be debated. After debate, the amendment is first voted upon, and then the motion itself is voted upon.

Renew A Motion

A rejected motion cannot be renewed at the same session. It can be renewed by the same maker at a future session.

Voting

The Chairperson cannot vote unless there is a tie vote and the Chairperson wishes to break the tie. Voting is normally by voice. If the result is not clear, the Chairperson

should ask for a hand or standing vote, called a division of the house. If the Chairperson doesn't make such a call, a voting member has the right to demand it.

Deferring Action

Sometimes it is best to wait until another meeting to act on a motion. There are several ways to do this, but the easiest way is to table the motion. To do this, make a motion to table the question. After someone seconds the motion, the vote is taken. There is no debate on a motion to table. A simple majority carries the motion. Motions that have been tabled are taken up by a motion to remove from the table. A second is required, no debate permitted, and a simple majority carries the motion.

Place in Committee

If you want to let a few members handle a certain matter instead of tying up the whole meeting, then this is done by placing the question in a committee by a motion to refer to committee. If there is no committee, then the Chairperson can set one up after the motion to refer is passed.

Appeals to Overrule the Chairperson

The Chairperson of the meeting has certain rights. They do not include "railroading" things through. A decision of the Chairperson can always be changed by appealing the decision of the Chair. When a member rises to appeal a decision of the Chair, he/she says, "I appeal the decision of the Chair." After the appeal is seconded, the Chairperson steps down. Without further debate, the acting Chairperson puts the issue up for vote by saying, "Shall the Chair be sustained?" The Chairperson is supposed to be the "servant of the assembly" and his/her job is to help get the work done. The Chairperson should not dominate the meeting by doing all the talking. The Chairperson cannot authorize anyone to act in his/her place if absent from the meeting. That is in the Bylaws. In the absence of applicable Bylaws, the members present elect a Chairperson for that meeting.

The Question of Privilege

In questions of privilege, the only privilege involved is that of getting the attention of the Chairperson at once on a point of inquiry, point of procedure, point of order or point of personal privilege. When raising a question of privilege, you do not wait for recognition from the Chairperson; you interrupt by stating, "Brother/Sister Chairperson, point of order (or inquiry, procedure or personal privilege)."

- Raise a point of inquiry to ask a question vital to your understanding of the question being discussed.
- Raise a point of procedure if you feel the Chairperson is acting contrary to regular procedure.
- Raise a point of order if you feel some member is acting contrary to regular procedure; you ask the Chairperson to take some action.
- Raise a point of personal privilege if a member impugns your intelligence or character, or makes an untrue or unfair remark about you. The Chairperson states, "The point is well taken," and takes action on it, if he/she agrees with you. If the Chairperson disagrees, he/she must give a reason and you may then appeal. However, the membership, unlike the Chairperson, is not obliged to recognize an appeal on a question of privilege. Thus, a chronic interrupter, abusing the privilege, can be silenced.

Committee of the Whole

In extreme cases, when the Chairperson is ruling with an iron hand, and has effectively straight-jacketed the members, despite all the other remedies available through use of Robert's Rules, it is possible for two-thirds of the members to call a committee of the whole. When you call for a committee of the whole, the union meeting is interrupted, and all members present become members of a committee. As such, they must elect a new Chairperson, as the regular Chairperson is obliged to step down. They are then free to discuss, as you would converse at the dinner table, without Robert's Rules of Order. This may allow the members to get things back on track. Motions must be made and passed, but finally, a motion must be passed to reconvene the union meeting, and the regular Chairperson resumes his/her post. All motions passed in committee of the whole must at that point be voted on by the members now assembled again as the union meeting.

The Minutes

The minutes of a meeting are a record of what happened at a meeting. Minutes are approved at the next meeting. This way, if there are mistakes, they can be corrected. That's how the rank and file keeps the record straight. Minutes must record all motions.

Officers' Reports

Rank and file union members should be alert during the Officers' Reports. These reports are an accounting to the membership of how their elected officials have conducted union affairs since the last meeting. Following the report, a motion must be offered from the floor to accept or reject the report. If you disagree with one or more points, you can make a motion to have each point considered separately. This is known as considering the points seriatim (in series). If the membership adopts your motion, you will be able to argue for rejection of the points with which you disagree.

APPENDIX C

RUNNING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Meetings, meetings, meetings! We seem to do a lot of "meeting" around here, but that's the way Local 715 conducts business. That's our way of ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to be involved in our planning and decision-making process. There are many different kinds of meetings, but generally they all have several key points in common. Here are some guidelines and tips to help you run an effective meeting:

1. **Be Prepared!** *Have a written agenda.* All materials needed should be ready and distributed to the members before the start of the meeting. Know your topics and materials, know both sides of the issue, and know what you want to have accomplished by the end of the meeting: action, feedback, getting out information.
2. **Start the meeting on time.** Members are more likely to come to your meetings—and *come on time*—if they know you are going to start at the announced time.
3. **Vote to accept the agenda.** Give people a chance at the beginning of the meeting to add topics to the agenda—then set it.
4. **Stick to the agenda!** Keep people focused—don't allow them to "get off track."
5. **Have written reports whenever possible/practical.** Ask people to look them over at the beginning of the meeting. All written reports should contain either a "recommended action" or be designated as "information only" so members know what is being asked of them. *Don't read written reports aloud!* The person presenting a written report should simply summarize important points and leave time for questions. Oral reports should be organized and concise.
6. **Use parliamentary procedure.** Motions should be stated and seconded *before* debate begins.
7. **Set a time limit for speakers.** Before debate starts, set a one or two minute time limit on statements.
 - Speakers must state whether they are "for" or "against" the motion, or identify that they have a "question on the motion."
 - Once around the table for debate. No one should be allowed to speak a second time until everyone has had the opportunity to speak.
 - Stay on the subject and don't drag out debate when the outcome is obvious. A member may "call the question" and the debate will end, or the Chair can say, "Unless there's dissent, let's call the question."
8. **Follow up on actions and commitments made during the meeting.** Follow up on issues or actions you have agreed to follow up on. Be prepared to report back at the next meeting. If other members have agreed to work on an issue or committee, remind them before the next meeting so they will have time to accomplish the task. Make it clear that they will need to report back to the membership at the next meeting.

APPENDIX D

MINUTES: A GUIDE FOR RECORDING SECRETARIES PURPOSE

Minutes are a record of the actions taken at a meeting. They should be sufficiently complete so you can look back and see what you did and when you did it.

SOME RULES TO REMEMBER

Robert's Rules of Order discusses the content of minutes in some detail. However, to summarize some specific points, the following may be helpful:

- A. Minutes must contain all motions and any action taken on them.
- B. The Secretary should insist that all motions be made in an intelligible way. However, to clarify a motion in the written minutes, if necessary, a brief summary of the discussion may be included.
- C. Reports of committees should be incorporated into the minutes. However, the report should be brief and concise. The minutes should then reflect any motions to accept/reject the report and the action taken.
- D. For issues or questions in which a lengthy discussion has been held, a general summary is appropriate.
- E. A summary of a discussion should not attribute any parts of the discussion to any specific person(s) unless the contributor has specifically asked to be "on the record."
- F. When recording the action taken on a motion, it is only necessary to record whether the motion passed or failed. You can do this by indicating M/S/C (moved, seconded, carried) or M/S/F (moved, seconded, failed). However, a member may request that the dissenting or abstaining votes be recorded; therefore, the action may read: M/S/C with one abstention.
- G. If there are corrections to the minutes during the process of accepting them, then any prior drafts should be destroyed.

IN GENERAL

It is the responsibility of the Recording Secretary to ensure proper form and content for the minutes. However, it is the responsibility of the members to review the minutes and make a motion to have them corrected if they disagree with what is presented to them.

APPENDIX E

CHECK LIST FOR PLANNING A MEETING

✓ 12 COMMON SENSE TIPS ✓

1. Set a topic/agenda
2. Make a list of the people you need to invite
3. Pick a convenient date and time:
Date: _____
Time: _____
4. Pick an accessible location:
Place: _____
5. Reserve your location in advance
6. Pass out notices in advance of the meeting (✓ your Bylaws!)
7. Post a notice of the meeting on the bulletin board
8. If people need to review any information about the meeting topic, show it to them in advance.
9. Remind people in person on the day of the meeting
10. Get to the meeting on time (or early) to welcome people as they arrive
11. Be sure to use a sign-in sheet
12. Ask co-workers to help