

SEIU -UHW
Leadership Administration Advisory Committee
Report to SEIU-UHW Executive Board
May, 2012

The Leadership Administration Advisory Committee (LAAC) exists to advise the Officers and Executive Board on administrative issues that affect the functioning of the Executive Board as leaders of a workers' organization.

We are committed to representing the membership as a whole and to promoting the greater good of the entire membership and to making carefully considered recommendations that are aligned with the Union's Guiding Principles: Commitment to Honesty and Accountability, Commitment to High Standards, Commitment to Justice, and Commitment to Unite More Workers in Our Union.

Here are the issues we've addressed over the last few months:

1. Convention Delegate Hardship Fund Process:

The Executive Board decided that no lost time would be paid for our SEIU Convention delegates except in cases of real hardship. We created the criteria for and oversaw the application process. Of the 57 applications received, 50 of these qualified as meeting the criteria we set, which included not having other options such as employer-paid time off or trading work days.

2. Executive Board Members Must Be Members in Good Standing:

To be a member in good standing, you have to pay your dues - you can't owe back dues. Our Bylaws require that E-Board members be in good standing in order to run for office and to participate in our E-Board. Membership in good standing is also required to be a delegate to the SEIU Convention.

We reviewed membership records and found a significant number of members owed back dues. How do members end up owing back dues? In Homecare, it sometimes happens when there's an interruption in service or a member is in-between clients, and our Bylaws specifically protect our Homecare Members' right to stay in good standing by paying their own dues for up to a year when this happens. But it happens across *all* our divisions for a variety of reasons: leaves of absence, employer errors or tricks, and more.

We felt it was extremely important to immediately begin enforcing our Bylaws. How can we, as the highest leadership body in the Union, be making big decisions on behalf of our members, if we aren't paying our own dues?

We recommended the following actions begin immediately:

- A. That UHW should create monthly reports of E-Board dues payments and notify members and staff right away of any problems.
- B. That membership in good standing and its privileges and benefits be suspended immediately when back dues are owed, as per Bylaws Article XV, Section 8.

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This means that E-Board Members who owe back dues can't register for or participate in E-Board meetings or votes until their issue is cleared up. But *as soon* as it is cleared up, they can immediately participate again and membership in good standing is reinstated.

In order to register a SEIU Convention Delegate, membership in good standing had to be verified, and many members owing back dues paid up at that point. But as of April 3, 2012, UHW sent letters to the 39 Executive Board members who still owed back dues according to membership records. We have heard from some of you who received these letters that they came as a shock, and we certainly didn't mean to cause anyone alarm. But when this serious issue was brought to our attention, we had to take immediate action, and we had to go by the book – the Bylaws book.

Our recommendations will help prevent this problem going forward. We now have a system in place to make sure that E-Board members are notified of dues issues on a monthly basis. We also encourage all E-Board Members to take responsibility for checking their paystubs to make sure dues came out, or if you're not working, to contact the Membership Department to take care of your obligation.

3. Observer Guidelines:

UHW members in good standing can attend UHW Executive Board Meetings as observers. This fits with our guiding principles - commitment to democracy, honesty, accountability, justice – and is spelled out in our Bylaws. But how does it work in practice? We recommended guidelines for Observers designed both to uphold and enforce both the rights of members *and* the ability of the Executive Board to carry out its responsibilities. You have received a copy of the Observer Guidelines with this report.

4. Executive Board Expenses:

We began our work on recommendations for E-Board expense policy and procedures with an in-depth study of the costs of running our Board. Our next step was to create guiding principles and criteria we could use to lead us in making accountable, fair recommendations. A copy of those Guiding Principles and Criteria and a copy of our recommendations to date are included with this report.

As we proceed with our recommendations, we commit to you to giving clear explanations about which expenses will be paid, which will not, and the reasons behind our decisions.

Respectfully submitted:

The SEIU-UHW Leadership Administration Advisory Committee

Members: Amy Thibault (Homecare) ; Beverley Thomas (Homecare); Bill Beckleheimer (Nursing Homes); Banji Oyewumi (Nursing Homes); Virginia Bolanos (Kaiser); Tinesha Thomas (Kaiser); Debbie Nickell (Hospitals); Karen Cain (Hospitals)

Adopted by LAAC 4/30/12