

Regional Communications Committee Comité régional des Communications

Minutes

June 9, 2009, 7 pm



In attendance:

Marie-Françoise Bertrand
Louise Patrice
Daniel Charron
Jean-Pierre Ouellet
Larry Rousseau

Pierre Lebel, PSAC

1- Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2- Chair of the committee

A collegial decision was made to have Jean-Pierre Ouellet chair the Committee

3- Meeting schedule

It was agreed that the Committee meetings will be held 10 times a year, the first Wednesday each month, with the exception of July and August. The meetings will be held at 7:30 am to reconcile the professional obligations of each of the members.

4- Committee budget

Following a discussion on the Committee's needs, it was agreed that the Committee would apply to the area council for an annual allocation of \$6,000. The Committee budget will include funding to cover the cost of

holding meetings, transportation expenses, releases from union-related duties to work on Committee projects and related expenses. The Committee's budget is outlined in Appendix A of these minutes.

Louise Patrice moved that the Communications Committee budget be presented to the Area Council. Seconded by Larry Rousseau. Carried.

5- Mandate and role of Committee

The Committee's mandate will be discussed at the next meeting. The discussions, however, did target the Committee's main role, which is to support member mobilization to demystify PSAC in the eyes of members in the regions.

The Committee will also lend its support to the region's communication projects, work toward ensuring proactive communication and write a regional communication plan.

6- Regional Website

The project to revamp the regional website was presented to the Committee. The latter was asked to create greater awareness of and enhance the project, the purpose of which is to redo the website before fall. The Committee believes it is important that the site become an interactive communication tool to support the objective of mobilizing members more effectively.

The website project is described in further detail in Appendix B herein.

7 – Next meeting

Wednesday, July 8, 2009, 7:30 am, at the Barbe Restaurant, 122 Eddy Street, Gatineau.

8 – Meeting adjourned

As the agenda item were exhausted, the meeting was adjourned.

Revamping of the NCR Website – 2009

Project Planning

Mandate

To redo the design of the PSAC National Capital Region website so that it is on line in September-October 2009. The site must include an updating feature to make it easier to maintain and to ensure that it is updated regularly and easier to consult. The major objective of the regional website is to make it a regional mobilization tool.

The Group

Pierre Lebel, the regional representative, will spearhead the project and will be assisted by Bill Leonard, graphic artist, and David Davis, a web developer. The Regional Communications Committee will be kept abreast of developments throughout the course of the project and will be asked to comment and enhance the project.

Pierre Lebel prepared the draft of this work plan.

Timeline

The site will be on line in the fall of 2009.

Work procedure

1. Meetings with users

Plans have been made to meet with employees, members and other people in the union movement who have some interest and a few suggestions to make to improve the website.

Within PSAC itself, the coordinator, the regional representatives and the administrative staff will be interviewed. This work, which has already started, will provide an opportunity to discuss the current web site and what must be done to improve it. They will be asked to indicate which union or other sites they like so that we can visit them and incorporate those design features we find suitable. Using the

employees' experience as a starting point, we will be able to better define what we want to offer members, who are the prime target audience of our site and the users we want to attract.

The members, of course, will be consulted. The preferred channel of communication will be the Communications Committee; however, members from locals in the region will be invited to share their comments with us.

We will be able to use as reference material a survey done by Victor Research in January 2001 on PSAC members' use of the web. We will be able to use the answers to gain a better understanding of members' expectations.

Finally, we have begun discussions with those in charge of union websites to find out the issues involved in revamping a union website. Some of the unions we intend to sit down with – and the list is not comprehensive – include the Machinists Union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec. When the national site was revamped in 2003, the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and the Canadian Automobile Workers provided comments that can be still of use here.

2. Approach

Prior to the meetings, people will be asked to visit the PSAC-NCR website along with four or five other sites. This will enable us to launch a discussion into the strengths and weaknesses of our site and the things they liked and did not like about other sites. The objective of these talks is to come up with a clear idea of what our members and staff want to see on our site, how to improve it so that they are interested in visiting it and how to attract those who never go to our site.

3. Use of comments and observations

After the meetings, we will be able to target more effectively what the site must contain and how it will be able to meet users' expectations more effectively.

4. Design work

Given the short time frame we have to deal with, site development will begin even prior to discussion groups being held. If possible, we could even provide those participating in the discussion groups with templates as grist for their mill. This is not a must but a nice to have.

Bill Leonard will look after the design work and David Davis will provide a site model that can be modified but has items that allows ready access to everyone who is designated to add, change or create web pages.

5. Procedures

In addition to the site page design and its physical organization, some guidelines will have to be developed to establish parameters for the work who will post information on the site from various departments. Fortunately, the model used by the PSAC nationally does have some boundaries that establish visual consistency of the site (font and characters to be used, logos, graphics, etc.), while allowing the various sections to express their creativity and own identity.

Budget considerations

Since the exercise is in the early stages, it is difficult to evaluate all of the costs involved in redoing and subsequently maintaining the site. Some costs can be anticipated, and others will depend on the choices that are made.

Nonetheless, we have provided a few scenarios with some of the attendant costs. The estimated costs for each step appear in the following table.

A. The planning exercise

Meetings with regional office employees. Costs are virtually nil, since most are in Ottawa. A coffee budget would be in order...

As far as members are concerned, meetings of various regional committees provide an opportunity to get their input. If separate sessions were to be necessary, we could have to get time off for union business.

Meeting with web managers of other unions. Costs are minimal, because once again, most of these people are in Ottawa. Coffee and phone calls. I took advantage of the annual conference of the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) to discuss the matter with some attendees.

B. Preparation of a page template

While these discussions are going on, we will prepare templates of the pages we would like to use for the website. Again, costs will be minimal, because PSAC staff will be doing the work. Some software packages such as Photoshop and video montage software may have to be purchased.

C. Design and production of a new website

We have already begun cleaning up the site by eliminating out-of-date or useless pages. Chantal St-Denis and Amélie Séguin did a great job.

David Davis of Informatics Services will be the lead person for the design. He already has in hand a template for regional sites that meets most of our needs. This template includes an activity schedule, software to put photos taken at events on line and a site model that makes it possible to amend the menus quickly.

In addition, if the PSAC model is used, the regional website could return to the national web server, which would save the region monthly web host fees.

In the past year or two, any video or audio files that have been added to the website have not posed any bandwidth problems.

We could use resources such as YouTube and other hosts to store these huge files. This is what we are proposing.

Cost table

	Planning	Template design	Web design and implementation
Meetings with staff	\$0		
Meetings with members ¹	\$1,000		
Software ²			\$1,000
Site design			\$0
Host ³			-\$600
Totals	\$1,000	\$0	\$400
Grand total			\$1,400

Conclusion

This project is a draft and will be reviewed and supplemented with the comments and suggestions that emerge from discussions with staff, members and our partners in the union world.

The action plan is subject to approval by the regional coordinator and the regional vice-president.

Pierre Lebel
June 10, 2009

¹ Leave for union business

² Photoshop, Adobe Reader (update)

³ Approximate cost