



The Frontier Reporter

Spring 2022

Living with the realities of corporate ownership at The Buffalo News

By Sandy Tan, Guild President

When Lee Enterprises purchased us two years ago, it was only a matter of time before the corporation began trying to wring cost savings out of The Buffalo News by consolidating and centralizing services.

We've seen that play out in recent weeks as the company has informed us of its intention to outsource our customer service phone representatives in Inside Circulation, and last month proposed outsourcing our Prepress Guild members on the second floor.

It's also played out in the corporate demand that all papers in the Lee chain downsize or layoff employees. Many other Lee newspapers have had some managers and staff laid off or bought out. Most recently, we have heard the St. Louis Post-Dispatch is offering buyouts for up to four reporters and/or newsroom artists who are at least 50 years old and have at least 15 years of service. The offer is contractual severance – in their case, one week for every year of service up to a maximum of 26 weeks.

In our own newsroom, management has decided to meet the demands of its parent company by offering newsroom photographers a buyout and permanently reducing the photography staff by two. The News would also eliminate a Features position, transferring that employee to an open reporting title, which will result in the demise of the Gusto calendar.

There is no substitute for losing customer service, Prepress staffers and newsroom photographers whose dedication, work ethic and decades of experience have made our paper the strong regional daily that it remains today. When they go, we'll all feel the loss.

But it's when times like these come upon us that it's easiest to see the difference being part of strong union

makes. Last year, we negotiated enhanced severance that will give our customer service representatives up to one year's worth of pay and health care benefits.

In addition, the News' buyout terms for our News photographers of 52 weeks of pay exists because of our strong contractual severance language, which makes it more difficult for the company to get rid of loyal and long-serving employees on the cheap.

That compares with employees in other places that are being shown the door with only a few weeks of severance pay after a long and loyal tenure.

The Guild also ensures that members who may leave us do so armed with information to plan their future. We are currently working with Level Financial Services to provide financial planning advance to any Guild member contemplating a buyout or who is facing the outsourcing of their jobs.

Finally, the company is aware that the Guild will aggressively and publicly denounce and fight any efforts to lay off our employees. We will not quietly allow the company to get rid of our members without ensuring that they are treated with respect and leave on terms that will safeguard their financial futures.

If we were a weaker union, or worse, no union at all, we wouldn't have these protections. A look around the industry would tell you that. The Guild ensures we remain a place that is still worth coming to build a career.

We protect our members and protect the integrity of The Buffalo News. That mission isn't changing no matter who owns us.

Remembering Miguel Rodriguez and Eric DuVall

The Guild lost two beloved colleagues earlier this year.

Miguel Rodriguez, a high school sports reporter who was on staff at the News since 2003, died Jan. 31 at age 47.

Eric DuVall, who started as an assistant city editor at the News last July, died Feb. 12 at age 39.

Both have left us far too soon.

Comings and Goings from The Buffalo News/Sun

Comings

Natalie Brophy - Editorial/Business
Melissa Burrowes - Inside Circulation
Linda Dockery - Inside Circulation
Janet Gramza - Editorial/Business
Clevis Murray - Editorial/Sports
William Perkins - Editorial/Digital Desk
Mike Petro - Editorial/Business
Celestine Robinson - District Managers
Bob Siuda - Editorial/Sports
Justine Swiatkowski - ABC
Seth Wallace - Editorial/News Desk

Goings

Sophia Canahai - Inside Circulation
Nicholas Cheng - District Managers
James Farrell - Editorial/Suns
Carol Fiend - Editorial
Andrew Kapturowski Jr. - District Managers
Shelby Lauer - Inside Circulation
Leanne Lewandowski - Typo/Composing
Erika Rodriguez - Inside Circulation
Bob Snyder - District Managers
Justine Swiatkowski - ABC
Jim Wojtanik - Editorial/Sports

Next meetings

The Executive Committee will meet on May 9. The next general membership meetings are scheduled for June 8.

Meeting Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes: November 2021

President Sandy Tan called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021, on Zoom.

New Business

Tan announced that Past President Phil Fairbanks is stepping down from the executive committee. She thanked him for his service to the Guild, particularly during the recent contract negotiations and mobilization effort. Tan said the past president's seat on the executive committee is likely to remain vacant at this point.

Tan also said Diana Gawron is leaving The News and, as a consequence, stepping down from her positions as treasurer and Inside Circulation steward. Tan also thanked Gawron for her Guild service, especially as a member of the bargaining team. Gawron said she'll miss her fellow members of the Guild. She said she'll stay through the end of the year and will get involved in the Guild alumni chapter. Typographical dayside steward Hilary Osborn will take over as treasurer and Sophia Canahai will take Gawron's place as Inside Circulation representative.

Tan said Lee Enterprises has informed the Guild that it plans to freeze the Guild pension at the end of the year. This means 401K contributions will begin soon after. This applies, Tan said, to the traditional Guild pension and not the pre-press pension. Tan said all pensions across The News will be frozen at the same time. Administrative Officer Kim Leiser said the Guild received notice on Nov. 1 of the freeze that will take effect on Dec. 31. The committee discussed how best to share the news with members and agreed to send out a flyer as soon as possible and to set up a in-person/Zoom meeting with Level Financial to provide more information on what this means for our members.

There was extended discussion of the ongoing issues with members getting their expense reports filled in a timely manner now that the processing work has shifted to a Lee hub in Virginia. Tan said it was supposed to be a smooth transition but members have having problems with checks getting mailed to the wrong address. Some members are left waiting for hundreds or thousands of dollars of expenses to be reimbursed. Leiser offered some recommendations, including making sure that any documents submitted electronically are in the form of a PDF and that direct deposit is the best option. ABC steward Alva Hill said she's trying to help members on an individual, ad hoc basis. Editorial delegate Mike Harrington said this shouldn't fall on Hill to do. Tan agreed and said the Guild would send a note to management to express our dismay with the situation.

Motion/Second/Carried Scanlon/Harrington to approve the minutes of the Oct. 12 executive committee meeting.

President's Report

The News informed the Guild it can't hold meetings in the building any more after the end of the year, Tan said. The News did not provide a reason why it was making this change, she said.

Newsroom management has said they plan to hire interns once again, beginning with summer 2022, at a rate of \$15 per hour, Tan said. She added The News continues to make an effort to hire new reporters and editors and she encouraged members to reach out to job candidates to urge them to apply.

Old Business

Leiser did not have an update on planning for a Guild holiday party. She said she's still trying to pin down a date and location given the logistical and safety challenges.

Tan said the Guild still is researching what Guild-branded items to offer its members. She said leadership has gotten pricing on Guild-branded face masks, for example, and she's looking to set up a small working group to study this further and make some recommendations. T-shirts and lanyards also are options.

Motion/Second/Carried Osborn/Lenzi to spend up to \$3,000 on Guild-branded lanyards and masks.

Leiser said the Guild is waiting on the final language, mainly related to the pension freeze and 401K contributions, before it can print copies of the recently negotiated contract.

Harrington brought up the newspaper price increases that are getting attention on social media. Leiser said they are tiered price increases for all subscription types.

Grievance Committee Report - None

Mobilization Committee Report - None

Tan adjourned the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

Attendance: President Sandy Tan, Vice President/Mobilization Rachel Lenzi, Treasurer and Inside Circulation steward Diana Gawron, Secretary Steve Watson, Administrative Officer Kim Leiser, District Manager steward Joan Portman, Typographical dayside steward Hilary Osborn, Editorial delegate Scott Scanlon, Editorial delegate Mike Harrington, ABC steward Alva Hill, Editorial delegate Dave Robinson, Editorial delegate Mark Sommer.

Excused: Vice President/Grievances Aaron Besecker, Sun co-steward Francesca Bond, Sun Newspapers co-steward James Farrell.

Absent: Typographical nightside steward Mark Hanover, Editorial nightside steward Mike Pesarchick, District Manager alternate delegate Bob Snyder.

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes: December 2021

President Sandy Tan called the executive committee meeting to order at 6:46 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2021, with some participating in person in the former News cafeteria and others joining in by Zoom.

New Business

Motion/Second/Carried Portman/Tan to approve the Nov. 10 executive committee meeting minutes. The committee still is waiting for the minutes from the July meeting.

Guild President Sandy Tan said Rachel Lenzi is stepping back from her role as Vice President of Mobilization. Tan said Vice

President of Grievances/Contract Compliance Aaron Besecker will take Lenzi's place. Tan said Besecker is very interested in taking on this new position and already has been working on mobilizing among other Lee Enterprises unions in the wake of Alden Global Capital's takeover offer.

This leaves an opening for Besecker's former position, which will be filled by Editorial delegate Scott Scanlon. Besecker and Scanlon are filling the remainder of those terms, which expire at the end of 2022 along with those of all other Guild officer positions, Tan said.

Tan again referred to the efforts to stave off Alden's unwelcome takeover offer. She said all Guild chapters at Lee papers are mounting an aggressive campaign against Alden, coordinating through weekly virtual meetings and regular correspondence. The Buffalo Guild is taking a leadership role because of its experience in mobilizing, Tan said.

The executive committee set Jan. 11 as the date of its next meeting.

President's Report - Nothing else

Old Business

Tan said, given the cancellation of the holiday party, the Guild plans to send out \$25 Tops gift cards to members, along with branded face masks. The letters most likely will go out in early January, she said.

Tan initiated a discussion of the design of the face mask.

Tan also said the Guild is looking for someone to serve as editor of the Frontier Reporter.

Grievance Committee Report – None

Mobilization Committee Report – None

Tan adjourned the meeting shortly after 7 p.m.

Attendance: President Sandy Tan, Secretary Steve Watson, Editorial delegate Mike Harrington, Editorial delegate Mark Sommer, Administrative Officer Kim Leiser, District Manager steward Joan Portman, ABC steward Alva Hill, Editorial nightside steward Mike Pesarchick.

Excused: Vice President/Contract Administration Aaron Besecker, Vice President/Mobilization Rachel Lenzi, Sun Newspapers co-steward James Farrell, Editorial delegate Scott Scanlon, District Manager alternate delegate Bob Snyder, Typographical dayside steward Hilary Osborn.

Absent: Typographical nightside steward Mark Hanover, Sun co-steward Francesca Bond, Treasurer and Inside Circulation steward Diana Gawron, Editorial delegate Dave Robinson.

Local Meeting Minutes: December 2021

President Sandy Tan called the meeting to order shortly after 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2021, in the former cafeteria of the News building with additional participants joining in by Zoom.

Tan provided an update on the Alden Global Capital bid for Lee Enterprises, offering a detailed timeline of events and the response by the Buffalo Newspaper Guild and Guild units at other Lee papers.

Tan emphasized that leaders of Guild chapters at 12 Lee papers have been coordinating their responses, both on social media and in messages to Lee executives.

It's a troubling situation, given Alden's track record at its other papers, Tan said, but there are reasons to be hopeful given how Lee executives, its board of directors and some of its largest shareholders have reacted to the Alden offer.

Tan then called for a brief break so that people attending the meeting in person could grab some pizza before it got cold.

Tan then introduced Win Jacob, a senior financial advisor with Level Financial Advisors, who gave an extensive overview and addressed numerous questions from members related to the pension freeze and other changes to the pension and 401K plans.

Tan and Jacob then took some general, non-pension questions from the membership, including on hiring of reporters and editors and the ongoing price increases.

Tan then announced the Guild holiday party was canceled this year because of Covid-19 concerns. In lieu of a party, the Guild will send to members holiday cards with new face masks.

Tan also sought assistance from Guild members interested in participating in the Lee unions' anti-Alden campaign. And she wished everyone a good holiday season and asked Guild members to keep in their thoughts some of their colleagues who have experienced difficulties in recent days.

Tan adjourned the meeting, which was well attended in person and online, shortly after 6:30 p.m.

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes: January 2022

President Sandra Tan called the executive committee meeting to order by Zoom at 5:01 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022.

Motion/Second/Carried Besecker/Sommer to approve the Dec. 8 general membership and executive committee meeting minutes.

Tan noted this is Scott Scanlon's first meeting as vice president of grievances and contract compliance.

Grievance Committee Report

The Guild is looking for a nightside editorial steward as well as an inside circulation steward, Scanlon said.

One issue, according to Scanlon, is the publication of non-editorial, or advertorial content, posted on The News' website without being labeled as such. Much of it is content from Buffalo magazine that appears to be regular editorial content, Scanlon said, and the Guild will send a letter to News management asking that it be labeled as advertorial content.

Another problem, Scanlon said, is The News sharing, through Twitter and on our home page, sports stories or lists of sports stories that include advertorial pieces promoting sports betting. A number of sports reporters have flagged this as an issue. The Guild will file a formal grievance arguing this is a violation of the contract, Scanlon said, and it needs to be properly labeled. Beyond that, Editorial delegate Mike Harrington said, this is bad journalism.

Finally, there's a longstanding grievance within inside circulation involving a manager who is a former Guild member who continues to perform Guild work. Scanlon and Administrative Officer Kim Leiser will meet with people in that department, including management, to discuss the next steps.

Mobilization Committee Report

Vice President Mobilization Aaron Besecker noted the latest Frontier Reporter was published. It's available on the Guild website in PDF format, members should have received an email with a link to the publication and it's posted on Guild bulletin boards at The News and distributed to district manager offices. The next one will come out in about three months in the spring, Besecker said.

Besecker said he's setting up the ability to get news out to members via text message. The Guild needs to be choosy in

when it uses this option, he said, and it will give members the chance to opt out. A test of the system will come soon.

Besecker also said, as he takes over as mobilization VP, that he's getting things cleaned up with the Guild website, the mailing list and in other areas.

He said mobilizing efforts opposing the Alden Global Capital purchase offer for Lee Enterprises are on hiatus. Not much has happened since late December, when the Lee board rejected the Alden purchase offer and Alden said it would sue as a result. However, Tan said, the union chapters at various Lee papers have a good plan in place if and when Alden's takeover effort is revived.

President's Report

Tan gave an update on the health challenges that two Guild members are facing. This includes Editorial member and sports reporter Miguel Rodriguez, whose family asked for prayers on his behalf.

Pre-press needs to come up with a meeting date for contract negotiations, which resume this year, Tan said.

Old Business

Leiser said the Guild's recently approved contract with Lee began printing the afternoon of Jan. 11. She doesn't know when printing will be finished.

Tan praised Leiser and Diana Gawron for carefully checking the full text of the contract, line by line, prior to production.

Tan said Guild holiday cards will be mailed out soon. The Guild has received Happy New Year cards featuring the Guild logo. Each card will contain a Tops Markets gift card and a Guild-branded face mask, which also are finally finished. Leiser will stuff the envelopes to get them ready for mailing out soon.

New Business

Tan led a discussion of the meeting dates for the rest of 2022 for the general membership and executive committee. The next executive committee meeting is Feb. 7. The committee also is scheduled to meet March 7, April 18, May 9, June 6, July 11, Aug. 8, Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 7 and Dec. 12. General membership meetings are set for March 9, June 8 and Sept. 14.

M/S/C Besecker/Scanlon to approve the meeting schedule for the year.

Tan then reiterated that Guild members were required to submit proof of their vaccination status to The News and Lee. Failure to submit proof will be treated by the company as the employee being unvaccinated. Whenever the vaccination requirement goes into effect, Tan said, unvaccinated employees will be required to be tested weekly for Covid-19, with the cost of the testing borne by the company. Tan noted Guild employees will not be punished for being unvaccinated and the vaccine information provided by employees will be stored on a secure server. The testing must be observed by a company employee and can't be done off site, she said.

Treasurer/Typographical nightside steward Hilary Osborn asked whether Guild employees who are required to come into the building who have a question about exposure to Covid-19 could avail themselves of the free testing The News is offering. Leiser will check with News management on this question.

Tan said a Guild local in Chicago has approached Leiser and the Buffalo Newspaper Guild to see if Leiser can perform some bookkeeping work for that local, which recently eliminated its office manager position. Leiser said the work should require five to 10 hours per week initially and then maybe two to five hours per week after that once she gets things organized.

Leiser would complete her Buffalo Guild responsibilities first and then perform Chicago Guild work, with Chicago reimbursing Buffalo for Leiser's time.

If Leiser can't complete Chicago work during her regularly scheduled hours, Chicago would pay her overtime. Leiser said there only have been preliminary discussions so far. Tan said

her main concern, for everyone's sake, is to see a written agreement drafted and approved.

M/S/C Tan/Watson to tentatively allow this shared-services arrangement to move forward.

Tan proposed sending a care package of food to Rodriguez's family. M/S/C Besecker/Sommer to approve spending up to \$200 on this delivery.

Leiser went through the list of vacancies on the executive committee. Leiser said there's room for one more typographical member, another district manager member, another inside circulation member, another ABC member and another nightside editorial steward, although Mike Pesarchick who retired Dec. 31, will come back part-time later in January until his replacement is hired and agreed to fill that position in the meantime.

Some will be hard to fill, though Scanlon's editorial delegate vacancy on the committee will be filled by former Mobilization Vice President Rachel Lenzi.

"We need to start getting some depth to our bench," Leiser said.

Tan said she is looking for active participation from more members. Tan said she feels the clock ticking because she is in her last year as Guild president and all officer positions are up for election this year, so recruiting is a priority for her.

The committee engaged in discussion of potential or actual retirements among Guild members. Pesarchick raised a question about how The News calculated his pension, saying they relied on base salary instead of gross pay, leaving his anticipated pension payment lower than it should be because it didn't take into account years when he regularly earned overtime. Tan and Leiser shared his concern about it. Pesarchick said he wondered how many other people are affected and said he would be following up on it.

Tan adjourned the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Attendance: President Sandy Tan, Secretary Steve Watson, Vice President Mobilization Aaron Besecker, Vice President Contract Administration Scott Scanlon, Sun Newspapers co-steward James Farrell, Editorial delegate Mike Harrington, Editorial delegate Mark Sommer, Administrative Officer Kim Leiser, Editorial nightside steward Mike Pesarchick, Editorial delegate David Robinson, Treasurer/Typographical nightside steward Hilary Osborn.

Excused: Circulation steward Sophia Canahai, District Manager alternate delegate Bob Snyder.

Absent: Typographical nightside steward Mark Hanover, Sun co-steward Francesca Bond, ABC steward Alva Hill, Editorial delegate Rachel Lenzi, District Manager steward Joan Portman.

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes: February 2022

President Sandra Tan called the executive committee meeting to order by Zoom at 5:07 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7, 2022.

Tan began the meeting by asking committee members to observe a moment of silence for Editorial member Miguel Rodriguez, a News high school sports reporter who died Jan. 31 from complications of Covid-19.

Motion/Second/Carried Besecker/Harrington to approve the Jan. 11 executive committee meeting minutes.

President's Report

Tan began her report by addressing personnel matters within the building. First, she noted The News is making staffing changes that will lead to fewer security guards working at the building. She added the guards are contractors hired by an outside firm, which will deploy fewer of them to The News.

Tan said Accounting still is down one employee but the newsroom is growing through a number of reporting hires.

Administrative Officer Kim Leiser said News executives have come to believe there are too many people working security in

the building at the same time. She said the cuts probably will leave just one guard working on a shift at a time.

Tan said The News is reconvening the Labor Management Committee after a considerable period where it was dormant. She said the Guild still has questions about how it will work and how forthcoming News executives, under Lee Enterprises ownership, will be at future meetings. She said Guild members have little opportunity to get updates directly from News executives, noting Editor Mike Connelly's state of the newsroom meetings ended in May.

District Manager steward Joan Portman pointed out the previous weekend brought more problems delivering the newspaper, saying Sunday Feb. 6 had 20 "down" routes out of the Central distribution office. She said The News is in desperate need of more carriers.

Editorial delegate Mike Harrington then asked why Publisher Tom Wiley isn't part of the newly reconfigured Labor Management Committee. Tan said she had requested that Wiley take part in the committee meetings, and News Vice President Tammy Turnbull said she would pass along the request. Tan said no date has been set for the first meeting.

Mobilization Report

Vice President Mobilization Aaron Besecker said he sent a flyer out in late January to Inside Circulation members about two new positions, a retention manager and a retention specialist. He also sent out a couple of tweets through the Guild account about our concerns over News/Lee sports betting posts.

Tan said the Guild Happy New Year cards finally went out. She also said there are extra face masks available at her desk for anyone who wants them.

Editorial delegate Mark Sommer asked a question about Alden Global Capital's efforts to take over Lee Enterprises. He asked if anyone knew how often Alden comes back with another offer, after the first bid is rejected, and how long that process can take?

Besecker said he didn't know. Sommer also asked whether Alden ever loses a takeover campaign, and it was pointed out that Alden did not succeed in acquiring Gannett.

Tan then started a discussion about whether a Guild representative should attend the upcoming Lee annual shareholders meeting.

The Guild, she noted, is a Lee shareholder. Editorial delegate David Robinson, The News' deputy business editor, said annual meetings have shifted toward "corporate theater" and business reporters find less value in attending them these days. The discussion continued but no decision was made.

Grievance Report

Vice President Contract Administration Scott Scanlon said the Guild filed a grievance about two weeks ago over news stories on our website and tweets on The News' Twitter feed that promote sports betting. Tan, Leiser and Scanlon met with Turnbull and Deputy Managing Editor Margaret Kenny to discuss the matter. Tan said the Guild representatives made several requests of management, including insisting that all advertorial content be clearly labeled. Scanlon said Turnbull and Kenny told the Guild they need to go back to Lee corporate about the issue.

Unfinished Business

Tan said the pre-press bargaining unit has started meeting and working on its proposals for bargaining with The News. March 4 is the first official bargaining date.

New Business

There was a lengthy discussion of the question of how The News should handle 401K contributions to part-time members once the pension is frozen. The News had argued part-timers should get half the payments of full-time employees, Tan recounted. The executive committee ended up reaching a consensus that part-time employees should receive the same

payments as full-timers because the contract's language doesn't explicitly say otherwise.

Tan said the Guild paid for two meals for Miguel Rodriguez's family and Leiser ordered flowers to send to the funeral home on behalf of the Guild.

M/S/C Besecker/Sommer to cover the cost of the flowers and any additional costs for meals for Rodriguez's family. Tan adjourned the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

The next executive committee meeting is set for March 7, followed by a general membership meeting on March 9.

Attendance: President Sandy Tan, Secretary Steve Watson, Vice President Mobilization Aaron Besecker, Vice President Contract Administration Scott Scanlon, Editorial delegate Mike Harrington, Editorial delegate Mark Sommer, Administrative Officer Kim Leiser, Editorial nightside steward Mike Pesarchick, Editorial delegate David Robinson, Treasurer/Typographical nightside steward Hilary Osborn, District Manager steward Joan Portman, Editorial delegate Rachel Lenzi.

Excused: District Manager alternate delegate Bob Snyder.

Absent: Typographical nightside steward Mark Hanover, Sun co-steward Francesca Bond, ABC steward Alva Hill, Sun Newspapers co-steward James Farrell, Circulation steward Sophia Canahai.

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes: March 2022

President Sandra Tan called the executive committee meeting to order by Zoom at 5:05 p.m. Monday, March 7, 2022.

Motion/Second/Carried Harrington/Lenzi to approve the Feb. 7 executive committee meeting minutes.

Grievance Report

Vice President Contract Administration Scott Scanlon said in recent weeks, following prodding from Guild representatives via the grievance process, The Buffalo News website has done a better job labeling promotional or sponsored content. Scanlon said The News pledged to stop putting unlabeled content on its Facebook and Twitter feeds as well. Scanlon said it became obvious The News seemed unprepared for the volume of ads for mobile sports gambling that appeared following legalization of this practice in New York. Scanlon said it now appears The News and Lee have met the provisions in the contract regarding sponsored content.

He said the Guild remains concerned about the labeling of sports stories, especially high school sports stories, as "sponsored by Draft Kings," but this language doesn't appear to violate state gambling laws. Scanlon said the Guild is waiting for a letter outlining in writing what The News has verbally agreed to before it will close out this grievance.

Mobilization Report – None

President's Report

President Sandy Tan said she hopes the Labor Management Committee will meet in March for the first time in years. The Guild has requested that all department heads attend the meeting. Tan is seeking questions from Guild members to ask at the meeting and wants to know if anyone from the Guild is interested in taking part. Secretary Steve Watson expressed interest.

Tan said all funds from the Prepress account finally have been transferred into the Guild's coffers. Level Financial Advisors now is wondering how the Guild wants to invest the funds and wants to see more diversity in the investments for Prepress funds. Tan said a committee will guide the investments.

The Prepress bargaining committee has met a second time and generated proposals around wages and other issues. The Guild had not yet met with the company.

Unfinished Business

The Guild deferred its general membership meeting from March to April to have more to discuss with its members. The

Executive Committee decided to move up its April meeting to precede the general membership meeting.

M/S/C Scanlon/Pesarchick to move the Executive Committee meeting from April 18 to April 4 and schedule the general membership meeting for April 6.

The Executive Committee discussed a draft contract between Guild Administrative Officer Kim Leiser and the Chicago Guild. Kim will do bookkeeping work and record organizing for the Chicago Guild, mainly during regular work hours. Her Buffalo Guild work will remain her primary responsibility and the Chicago Guild will reimburse the Buffalo Guild for any lost time. If she must perform any Chicago work outside of normal business hours, the Chicago Guild will pay her overtime, Leiser said.

She said she doesn't expect this will create a lot of extra work for her, not more than an hour or two a week once she gets settled into the role. Leiser won't do any contract negotiating or budget writing for Chicago.

M/S/C Tan/Scanlon to approve the draft agreement between Leiser and the Chicago Guild.

New Business

Leiser said the Guild's lease on its office expires March 31. The Guild has operated from this space since 2010. The current lease dates to 2018 and is now \$397 per month. Leiser said our landlord is offering a \$425 monthly rate for a three-year lease, which would amount to a 7% increase. He would agree to a lower monthly rate, she said, but only for a one-year period. Leiser said she recommends signing the three-year lease to lock in the \$425 monthly rate because this still is well below market rate for the 550-square-foot office. Leiser said the office is filled with files and she priced out the cost to rent storage space for the files, while giving up the office, and there wouldn't be much of a savings for the Guild.

M/S/C Sommer/Pesarchick to sign a new, three-year lease at the rate discussed.

The Guild made a \$150 contribution to the Canisius College journalism department in memory of Editorial member Eric DuVall, an assistant city editor for The News who died unexpectedly on Feb. 12. DuVall was a Canisius graduate and his mother had recommended the college as a recipient of any donation made in his honor.

M/S/C Pesarchick/Watson to formally approve the contribution.

Lee shareholders were set to vote on candidates for the company's board of directors at its 2022 annual meeting on March 10. The Guild, which bought \$10,000 worth of shares, opted not to travel to speak at the meeting but produced a statement urging the election of the Lee-endorsed director candidates. Tan said the Guild would encourage members to share the statement on social media.

M/S/C Sommer/Scanlon to vote the Guild's shares in favor of the Lee-endorsed directors, share the statement on the Guild's social media accounts and send the statement to the Securities and Exchange Commission if possible.

Tan noted that ABC steward Alva Hill, an accounting clerk, was directed to stop assisting News employees with unpaid expenses. Tan said she's concerned about the effect of this new policy given the role Hill played in helping members. Hill said she was told no other Lee paper has a "middleman" to help employees navigate the expense-reimbursement process. She said

Lee has an employee at its hub who is dedicated to handling Buffalo expense reports. Hill was upset about this change. Tan asked Guild members to keep an eye on how the changes play out.

Tan adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Attendance: President Sandy Tan, Secretary Steve Watson, Vice President Contract Administration Scott Scanlon, Editorial delegate Mike Harrington, Editorial delegate Mark Sommer, Administrative Officer Kim Leiser, Editorial nightside steward Mike Pesarchick, Editorial delegate David Robinson, Editorial delegate Rachel Lenzi, ABC steward Alva Hill.

Excused: Vice President Mobilization Aaron Besecker, Treasurer/Typographical nightside steward Hilary Osborn.

Absent: Typographical nightside steward Mark Hanover, Sun Newspapers co-steward Francesca Bond, Sun co-steward James Farrell, District Manager steward Joan Portman, DM alternate delegate Bob Snyder.