

A matter of cents (sense)

Resolution seeks three cent PPA funding adjustment

by Tony Carobine,
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For the first time in **14 years**, the APWU National Postal Press Association is asking national convention delegates to support an adjustment in its funding. Currently, Article 16, Section 2(e) of the APWU Constitution provides that "The APWU shall remit five (5¢) cents of the national per capita tax, per month, per member to the Postal Press Association." The resolution calls for adjusting this amount to eight cents per month per member. This measure has gained wide support and has been adopted in various forms by **23 state conventions and a number of locals throughout the APWU.**

Following are answers to questions concerning this resolution:

What is the reason for this request?

The main reason for the request from 5 cents to 8 cents per month per member is that since the last adjustment took place in 1996 APWU membership has decreased by over 100,000 members. As a result, the PPA's constitutional funding has decreased by \$62,245.20 per year.

How much revenue would the three cent adjustment generate?

Based on a 175,000 membership figure, \$5,250.00 per month, \$63,000.00 per year.

What is the PPA's current monthly and annual constitutional funding as compared to 14 years ago?

When the last adjustment took place in 1996 the PPA's monthly constitutional funding was \$13,978.90 or \$167,746.80 annually. Current constitutional funding is \$8,791.80 per month, \$105,501.60 annually.

The three cents per month per member would only restore the PPA's funding to the 1996 level but is an amount that will allow the PPA to continue programs and services to the membership.

What other factors have necessitated the need for this adjustment?

Coupled by the decrease of in-

What will these funds be used for?

The funds will be used to pay for existing operating costs. Operating costs for all organizations rise over time. Despite constant efforts by the PPA to be frugal and reduce expenses wherever possible, there comes a point where an adjustment in funding is needed to cover expenses, especially since income has continued



come due to the loss of members and naturally occurring increases in operating costs, the request for the 3 cent increase is also fueled by the fact there is no provision for the PPA to receive periodic incremental increases, as is the case per the national constitution for the national APWU and locals. Over the past 14 years there have been approximately 16 automatic dues adjustments to help locals and the national union with increased operating costs and the decrease in membership numbers.

to decline over the past 14 years. In fact, current APWU constitutional funding for the PPA is at the amount it was in 1986, 24 years ago. Please remember, the modest three cent request would only restore funding to the 1996 level which demonstrates the PPA's continuing commitment to fiscal responsibility. **The PPA has always operated at the lowest possible cost while maintaining the highest level of programs and services.** Turn to the reverse side for a listing of the specific programs and services provided by the PPA.

PPA: a proud tradition of service

The PPA was established as an educational organization dedicated to assisting postal union editors with their duties and responsibilities as labor communicators. Over the past 46 years the PPA has proudly fulfilled this mission by providing its members with a variety of programs and services to meet their needs. Following is an overview of programs and services:

- **A nationwide communications network.** The PPA has a well-established network consisting of nearly 300 local, state, national, retiree, auxiliary publications and websites. Via an exchange of newsletters, PPA members are kept up-to-date on news from around the country. This service has proven to be a valuable resource to editors and other union officers for dealing with a wide range of postal worker issues.

- **PPA Newsletter.** This publication provides assistance to PPA members with the performance of their duties as communicators and promotes the goals and objectives of the American Postal Workers Union. All aspects of newsletter publishing from writing and layout to legal issues and suggestions for content are addressed along with other forms of communication.

- **Reference material.** In-depth material especially prepared for APWU communicators that explains and offers guidance on the subjects of responsible journalism, editorial policies, editorial policy committees, internal union elections, libel, invasion of privacy, copyright reprints, writing and publication layout/design.

- **Federal Elections, Union Publications and Websites.** Updated and published each federal election cycle and available in booklet form and the Members Only section of the PPA website. Covered are federal regulations regarding the inclusion of material in a union publication or union website pertaining to elections for federal office, plus the proper procedure for publishing APWU COPA solicitations. Also included are suggestions for educating members and their families about the candidates and issues in the campaign and techniques for increasing member/family turnout at the polls on Election Day.

- **Advertising for the Union Publication.** Recognizing that some APWU affiliates need to consider advertising to help offset the cost of producing a paper, especially in this time of tight budgets; the PPA booklet *Advertising for the Union Publication* is a step-by-step guide; from techniques for selling ads, to rates, to ethics.

- **PPA Graphics and Resource Book.** Featuring 17 individual sections, this 223-page book (also available on CD-ROM) is designed to help editors enhance their efforts to deliver the message of unionism and promote the goals and objectives of the union through the use of graphic images and labor historical information.

- **Confidential review of articles.** When an editor receives material for the paper that he or she feels may be inappropriate or

could be libelous, the PPA president (upon request and before the material is published) will provide a confidential review and offer possible solutions. This service has successfully helped avoid a number of costly law suits.

- **Assistance with establishing a communications program.** Information and individual assistance is available to APWU affiliates that desire to establish a publication or other form of communications link with their members.

- **Publication critique.** Upon request, the PPA provides an editor with a critique of his or her publication. The findings are prepared in a detailed written report with constructive suggestions for possible improvement of the publication.

- **Individual assistance.** A widely used service that helps PPA members resolve problems or answer questions that arise regarding their responsibilities as communicators.

- **Workshops.** As part of a continuing educational program, workshops are conducted to help members improve the quality of their publications and keep current on the latest changes and trends in the world of communication, labor journalism and legal responsibilities involved with publishing.

- **Biennial PPA Conference.** This three-day event instituted in 1966 features a variety of labor journalism workshops to help APWU communicators improve communication with the membership.

- **Awards program.** Established in 1967, the awards program recognizes outstanding work in newsletter production, writing, editing and website content and design.

- **Building the Local Union.** Co-developed by the PPA and Ohio Postal Workers Union, this workshop program provides information needed to build a stronger and more vibrant local union through the use of various communication methods.

- **PPA website.** With general information about the PPA and the many services it provides, the site features a Members Only section that includes downloadable information for use in publications, resource material, links and a variety of other items of help to APWU communicators.

- **Periodic mailings/PPA email network.** Together with periodic mailings, PPA members are kept informed via email about PPA activities and information of relevance to their duties as communicators.

- **Huck/Konopacki Labor Cartoons.** Monthly cartoons dealing with worker and social issues for use in PPA member publications.