

MARCH 2013

unity UPDATE

If you would like to receive email from your Local Union containing important Union information, please send us your personal email address to **communications@twu556.org**. Please do not send your SWA email as we cannot communicate Union business thru Southwest Company email.

costly but necessary process to put us in good stead with the Company before we begin Section 6 Contract Negotiations June 2013. The current Board launched a substantial education campaign to inform the Members about this agreement. Among the expenses: lounge educator training, lost time paid to educators, printed materials for mail and lounge distribution, and eblasts. Other costs included lost time paid to the Negotiating Team, legal fees and economist fees. The total cost (not including VoteNet) spent on the Side Letter 10 ratification process (both the proposed TA that failed in May and the TA that was ratified in September) was more than \$504,000.

Online Voting for Two Side Letter Ratification Votes and One NT Election

VoteNet is our online provider for election balloting and vote tabulating. The total cost for two Tentative Agreement votes and the Negotiating Team election exceeded \$90,000.

In Summary

The expense items outlined above were one-time expenses that were necessary to provide strong Membership services, to prepare for Section 6 Contract negotiations, to protect your quality of work life, and to move our Local forward in a positive direction.

When I ran for President, I made a commitment to serve you with integrity, accountability, and transparency. Today, I renew that commitment to you. I promise to be vigilant in keeping spending control measures in place and keeping you informed. To that end, we will revamp our communications program in short order to provide you with current information about every aspect of your Union, including finances and the upcoming Contract negotiations. Please visit the official TWU Local 556 Facebook Page for frequent updates.

First and foremost, I will continue to be on the front line every day for you, the Flight Attendants of Southwest Airlines.

I appeal to you today to turn away from those who use social media to create divisiveness within our Local for their own personal agendas. As we prepare for Contract negotiations, now, more than ever, we need to stand together in solidarity.

In Unity,

Stacy K. Martin
TWU Local 556 President



STACY MARTIN

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or 214-640-4301

President's Message Concerning Our Union's Finances

Dear Members:

I promised transparency and accountability when I ran for President, and I'm working hard to deliver on that promise. Rumors and miscommunications are flooding social media platforms about our finances. Here are the facts.

In 2012, we made significant one-time investments to keep our Union strong and to protect your rights in the workplace (see bulleted list of these costs below). Today's financial picture is very similar to that of the prior administration in 2009-2010. In fact, in comparing the two time periods, there is only a \$30,000 difference in the expenditure amounts. The first year of a new administration is typically the most expensive, and our first year is no exception.

The points below should help put these expenses in perspective:

Shop Steward Training

Our Bylaws require that Shop Stewards be elected during the first Membership meeting following the swearing-in of new Officers. Last year, we elected and trained 225 Shop Stewards, the largest number to date in our Local's history. Two current Board Members and one former Board Member created and implemented a training program reported by many participants to be the best SS training they had received. The session costs included additional lost time, materials, hotels, guest speakers, meeting rooms, equipment, and food. These expenses ran to more than \$200,000 -- a significant cost, but a worthwhile investment to ensure well-trained and dedicated Shop Stewards who work hard to protect your rights and your workplace.

Executive Board Training and Additional Board Meeting Days

Five National Officers and eleven Executive Board Members were trained in 2012. The Company required additional Board meeting days in the early months of this new administration, generating more expenses. The total cost: almost \$42,000.

New Scheduling Committee Recruiting and Training

Our Bylaws require every new administration to appoint Committee Chairs. Although many committees remained in place, the Scheduling Committee required new appointments. Replacing and training new Scheduling Committee Members cost more than \$150,000, but we have an excellent, well-trained, hard-working Scheduling Committee in place as a result. I support this team 100 percent.

Two Side Letter 10 Votes to Ratify Overwater Flying Tentative Agreement

In September 2012, our Membership ratified a Tentative Agreement to allow the Company to acquire international routes and train Flight Attendants for overwater safety procedures. This was a

SEQUESTRATION ... WHAT IS IT AND HOW COULD IT AFFECT ME?

The U.S. budget has been sequestered.

...confiscated, requisitioned, appropriated, impounded and/or seized. What is going to happen during the sequestration will be that government funding for certain programs will be confiscated, requisitioned and re-appropriated, impounded and seized for other budgets. Why? Because our government has been living beyond its budget for many years. Without all of the politics of who is at fault the following is to bring focus on who will be affected and maybe a little on how we got to this point.

This article is an attempt to answer all the pertinent questions of **Who...What...When...Where...How...and Why.**

Who is in control of it? Congress. Of course, all bills have to go to the President's desk for signing...so it is a joint effort. There is a school of thought that believes that following through with "the sequestration" allows a policy maker to have cover with the controversial issue of raising taxes. March 27th is the day that funding for our government expires. To prevent a government shutdown on March 28, lawmakers must pass another funding bill -- if not for the rest of the year, then at least for a few weeks or months.

It's not too late for our policy makers to come to the table and come to some agreement on budget savings. And, it's realized that the savings would probably span over 10 years or more instead of all in 2013.

WHAT IS SEQUESTRATION EXACTLY?

It's just a fancy word for automatic, across-the-board cuts in government funding to government agencies that total \$1.2 trillion over 10 years split 50/50 between defense and domestic discretionary spending.

The sequestration process has been anticipated for more than a year. In fact, Congress pushed the sequester deadline back to March 1, 2012 as part of fiscal cliff deal that they agreed upon during the last Congress.

It started with a standoff in 2011 over the U.S. debt ceiling when policy makers demanded spending cuts in order to pay the federal government's obligation to bondholders. At the end of this tug of war, Congress and the Administration agreed to more than 2 trillion in cuts. About \$1 trillion was handled in the debt-ceiling bill in 2012 and the rest was imposed through this thing that lawmakers have called sequestration.

It was never meant to get to this...or was it? With political games you never know...but at any rate...

You may remember the "SUPER COMMITTEE" which was comprised of past and present members of both political parties. In 2011 we were supposed to find the less painful ways to cut spending. Unfortunately, that committee failed at their goal in November 2011.

Simply put, sequestration is a kind of fiscal doomsday device that Congress would have to disarm by coming up with an equal amount of spending reductions elsewhere. BUT, Congress is at a stalemate and whether it is just politics, they have not come to any agreement on any equal amount of reductions in spending.

WHO WILL IT AFFECT?

It is going to basically affect everyone, though some more than others.

As a flight attendant we will be highly affected. We should expect delays at the gate and on the tarmacs due to ATC holds, long lines at security (it's not known yet whether KCM will be effected), delays in processing passports and visa's, and some smaller airport closures.

It will affect many federal programs and activities. The travel industry, parks, education, food inspections, border security, the criminal justice system, weather monitoring, medical research, disaster relief...and much more.

See some of the affected areas below: (Original list of 57 from Jeanne Sahadi CNN Money. *Signifies that additional area added after researched by the author.)

Criminal Justice

- All FBI workers furloughed for up to 14 days
- More than 36,000 Bureau of Prisons workers furloughed for average of 12 days
- 5,100 Marshals Service workers furloughed for up to 13 days
- Increased safety risk for prison inmates and staff
- Fewer firearms inspections
- Hundreds of lower threshold inmates released*

Defense

- Up to 46,000 temporary workers laid off
- Up to 800,000 full-time civilian workers furloughed for up to 22 days
- Training curtailed
- Ship, aircraft, weapons-systems and facilities maintenance curbed
- Reduced readiness for two-thirds of active Army brigade combat teams and most Air Force flying units

Education

- Up to 70,000 kids lose access to Head Start programs
- More than 14,000 teachers and staff laid off
- Cuts in support for up to 1.2 million disadvantaged students
- 33,000 fewer students on work-study
- 71,000 fewer recipients of supplemental grants

Energy And Nuclear Safety

- Reduced oversight and audits of Energy Department nuclear facilities
- Delayed cleanup of Cold War nuclear weapons sites
- Curtailed operation at basic science labs
- Slowdown in development of oil, gas and coal on federal land and water

Foreign Affairs

- Cuts to foreign and humanitarian aid
- Reduced ability to help Americans abroad
- Constraints on counter-terrorism efforts

Health And Safety

- Nationwide shutdown of meat and poultry plants for up to 15 days
- 2,100 fewer FDA safety inspections of food manufacturers
- Increased risk of wildfires
- 1,200 fewer inspections of dangerous workplaces
- Up to 91,000 lose access to substance abuse treatment
- 424,000 fewer HIV tests

Homeland Security

- Many frontline law enforcement personnel furloughed for up to 14 days
- Reduced border security
- Scaled back cyber security protection of infrastructure

Housing

- 100,000 removed from housing and emergency shelter programs
- 125,000 may lose benefits from Housing Choice Voucher program
- 75,000 fewer households get foreclosure prevention, rental, pre-purchase counseling
- Deferred maintenance and repairs in public housing

Job Training

- Training centers for low-income youth may be closed
- More than 1 million fewer people get help finding a job

Parks And The Outdoors

- Reduced hours and services at national parks, refuges and public lands
- 128 refuges to close or eliminate programs

Safety Net

- Unemployment benefits cut by up to 9.4%
- 4 million fewer meals to seniors
- \$160 million cut from state grants to help the disabled get work
- Cuts to Native American programs, including those aiding neediest
- 300,000 women and children lose food aid
- Up to 30,000 kids lose child care services

Social Security

- 1,500 temporary Social Security Administration workers let go
- Loss through attrition of over 5,000 workers
- Delays for visitors at field offices and 800-number callers
- 2-week delays for initial disability claims decisions

Taxes

- Delays in getting answers to tax questions
- Fewer tax return reviews
- Slower processed refunds*
- Reduced capacity to detect and prevent fraud
- Fewer counter-terrorism and anti-launders investigations

Travel

- Increased wait times at airports
- Delays in visa processing by State Department
- Reduced air traffic
- Delays and disruptions during summer travel

WHEN OR HOW QUICKLY WILL THE CUTS HIT?

In anticipation of the sequestration federal agencies have deferred in hiring, reduced travel and training expenses.

Since federal workers facing furloughs must be given at least 30 days' notice. Notices will probably go out around March 1st, at the earliest so furloughs won't take place until April.

HOW MUCH WILL BE CUT?

Sequestration would slash how much federal agencies are allowed to spend by \$85 billion over seven months.

WILL THE SEQUESTRATION HURT THE ECONOMY?

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that it could reduce economic growth by at least 0.6 percentage points and reduce job growth by 750,000 jobs.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT THE IMPENDING SEQUESTRATION?

House republicans have proposed replacing the defense cuts with more nondefense reductions. Senate Democrats want to replace all the cuts with a mix of targeted spending cuts and tax increases. The problem is that both sides are rejecting the other. Thus, no compromised solution.

If you want to make a difference write or call your Congressional Leaders in the U.S. Senate and House and urge them to come together and agree in a thoughtful way to find smarter, more gradual ways to reduce the deficit.

For more information contact your COPE Co Chair
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MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

TWU Local 556 is pleased to present a two-part Survey to poll the Membership for your opinions on important matters at hand. This survey is divided into 2 sections; *Section 1* is a Membership Survey, from which the results will be posted after the survey closes, and *Section 2* is an Initial Negotiations Survey that will not have published results. Like all other Negotiation Surveys, the results will remain confidential, as they are vital to our future negotiating strategies. And while this section of the Survey does address some key elements of our upcoming Section 6 Contract Negotiations, this brief Initial Negotiations Survey is merely a precursor to a full and complete Negotiations Survey that should be available in the very near future.

The Survey is available until March 22, thru the Union website by clicking *TWU556 Website Survey of Membership with Initial Negotiations Survey*, or you may choose the following link to take the survey on an external webpage: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Membership_and_Initial_Negotiations_Survey. The Survey may only be taken on once on any device, so you may find, in the case of Lounge computers that someone has already completed their Survey and you will have to take the Survey in another location. While this may seem inconvenient in terms of accessibility, it takes us quite a ways down the road of verifiable survey results. The Survey should take less than 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your time in contributing your voice to the future direction of our Union.

TWU Local 556 is pleased to announce that our annual Audit was completed February 12, 2013. The Independent Audit reports that all money is accounted for and "the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the assets, liabilities, and net assets of TWU Local 556."

"The audit was conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion."
Andy Plagens, CPA
Wagner, Codispoti & Plagens, L.L.C.

GRIEVANCE REPORT

SETTLED

In response to the commitment TWU Local 556 made to the membership in May 2012, we are pleased to announce that one of the oldest grievances has been resolved. Group grievance 19-0052 was filed back in June 9, 2009. On February 20, 2013, the Union was finally able to reach a resolution. We secured this grievance by slating and discussing it at the last quarter's Grievance Summits.

This grievance was filed due to the fact that Flight Attendants were required to report for a pairing when he/she was scheduled for less than the minimum 9 hour FAR break. Article 8.7 states:

"A Flight Attendant scheduled for the nine (9) hour minimum break or the '24 in 7' regulation who is late more than one (1) hour due to re-route, company convenience, weather, passenger delay, etc., will be pulled and paid due to the FAR regulation from enough flights to make them legal. If they are less than one hour late, the Flight Attendant will be pulled for the FAR regulation, without pay from enough flights to make them legal."

The Company was not adjusting a Flight Attendant back to the 9-hour break and was instead requiring that the Flight Attendant work with less than 9-hours but more than 8-hours in Domicile, between two separate pairings. This was not the intent of this language and the Union insisted that a Flight Attendant cannot be taken below 9-hours in Domicile. The Company argued that 8-hour reduced rest is FAR legal and the adjustments were being made according to the CBA. The Union's position is that a Flight Attendant cannot receive less than the FAR legal crew rest of 9-hours in Domicile.

The Union and the Company have now agreed that a Flight Attendant will not be required to work with less than 9-hours in Domicile. Scheduling will now give the Flight Attendant options as stated below. These choices are basically congruent with the available options in Article 8.2.A.g concerning a "24 in 7" break.

Log on to www.facebook.com/TWU556 and click "Liked" to receive daily updates in your newsfeed and/or twitter account.



If the Flight Attendant runs less than one hour late and because of that is not scheduled to receive the 9-hour minimum break, the Flight Attendant has three choices:

1. Be pulled without pay from enough flights to make him/her legal as outlined in Article 8.7.A

OR

2. Agree to adjust his/her report time no later than thirty minutes prior to scheduled departure to avoid loss of pay
3. Fly the pairing as is without additional compensation as long as the Flight Attendant has the required 10-hours compensatory rest the following day.

The Flight Attendant must call scheduling within 30 minutes of block-in (debriefing time) to exercise the options. Otherwise his/her schedule will remain as posted.

This is a great benefit to the Flight Attendant since if he/she had less than 9-hours but more than 8-hours, the language would have required Scheduling to pull the Flight Attendant resulting in a direct loss of pay. Now the Flight Attendant has all the options. This language usually only comes into play for pick-ups and or trades because 12-hours is the normal Domicile break unless a Flight Attendant chooses to pick up a trip that gives her/him the minimum 9-hour break.



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