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**Bargaining Update 12-17-10**  
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**This week's headlines**

- **AEEF Expands Online Presence**
- **Federal Mediation begins**
- **Guest St. Sessions Celtic Leafleting**
- **Dues petition rebuffed by Abbott**
- **Open letter to Jon Abbott**
- **Wage proposals explained**

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**AEEF launches Web update and Facebook page**

- [www.AEEF.org](http://www.AEEF.org) now contains a comprehensive account of contract bargaining. Please direct co-workers, supervisors, friends, family and any interested parties to our site for detailed information.
- [www.facebook.com/aeefcwa1300](http://www.facebook.com/aeefcwa1300) is now AEEF's official Facebook page. Please "friend" us and send to **your** Facebook friends as well! Here's how...
  1. Visit [www.facebook.com/aeefcwa1300](http://www.facebook.com/aeefcwa1300)
  2. Become a Fan of the Page
  3. Click on "Suggest to Friends"
  4. Select your friends, and add a personal message. An example: "Ever enjoyed a WGBH Boston-produced PBS program like NOVA, Antiques Roadshow, Masterpiece, or American Experience? Please select "like" to support AEEF/CWA, WGBH's largest labor union, as we negotiate a new contract for fair working conditions and benefits. Feel the love, and thank you! "
  5. Send away!

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**Federal Mediation begins**

- Monday, Dec. 13, 2010, was our first bargaining session facilitated by federal mediator Joshua Flax at the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services offices in downtown Boston.
- Both sides met privately with Mr. Flax Monday morning followed by a joint session where Ben Godley presented management's lengthy Powerpoint lecture, largely identical to the one he presented to AEEF members in Yawkee Theater.

This presentation, along with questions from Mr. Flax and the union, took up the entirety of day one.

- On day two, Wed. Dec. 15, in joint session, Marian Needham, our CWA national representative and lead negotiator, presented AEEF/CWA's side of the story.
- Following a lunch break, we expected both sides to ask questions and debate the merits of our respective proposals, but management chose, instead, to derail the process by presenting us with their 6<sup>th</sup> contract proposal containing a few concessions (posted on InnerTube). They also presented us with a proposal to resume dues check-off contingent on adopting an artificial Jan. 31 deadline for ending contract talks. The federal mediator is only available for a few sessions in January, so a pre-set deadline may be unrealistic. These proposals were presented to the union at the very end of the federal mediator's day, so there was no time left to discuss the proposals.
- We are currently debating the merits of management's proposals (found on InnerTube) and will report out our decisions in a subsequent bargaining update.

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#### **Nearly two dozen AEEF members weather cold to welcome WGBH Celtic patrons**

- About 22 union members, along with Jobs with Justice friends, weathered temperatures in the teens Tuesday night Dec. 14 to hand out union flyers to attendees of WGBH's Guest Street Sessions concert of Celtic music. A good time was had by all as WGBH celtic music lovers learned of our contract struggle and union members enjoyed the camaraderie of a successful collective action.
- AEEF members were also on hand with leaflets at the Celtic performances in Worcester, Providence and Portsmouth, NH. Jobs with Justice members helped us leaflet the performance in Northampton, MA.
- AEEF is still looking for volunteers to leaflet the remaining WGBH Christmas Celtic Sojourn concerts:

**EVENT:** A Christmas Celtic Sojourn  
**DATE:** Friday, Dec. 17  
**TIME:** 7:30 – 8:15pm  
**PLACE:** Cutler Majestic Theater, 219 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02116

**EVENT:** A Christmas Celtic Sojourn  
**DATE:** Saturday, Dec. 18 (two events)  
**TIME:** 2:30 – 3:15pm & 7:30 – 8:15pm  
**PLACE:** Cutler Majestic Theater, 219 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02116

**EVENT:** A Christmas Celtic Sojourn  
**DATE:** Sunday, Dec. 19 (two events)  
**TIME:** 12:30 – 1:15pm & 4:30 – 5:15pm  
**PLACE:** Cutler Majestic Theater, 219 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02116

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**WGBH president rejects call to reinstate dues check-off as a sign of good faith.**

In an open letter signed by 210 union members, AEEF called on WGBH President and CEO Jon Abbott to reinstate automatic payroll deduction of union dues. The petition (see below) respectfully asks Mr. Abbott to restore dues check-off from bi-weekly paychecks in the spirit of trust, respect and good faith. The petition drive followed WGBH's announcement on November 10, 2010, that it would no longer collect union dues from member wages. WGBH portrays the move as one designed to speed contract negotiations. But many union members cite the move as an attempt to intimidate and bankrupt the Union and a demonstration of bad faith by the Foundation.

On Friday, Dec. 3, AEEF officers met briefly with President Abbott to present the signed petition. Though cordial in his acceptance of the open letter (see below), Abbott declined to restart dues check-off and, instead, restated management's desire for more negotiating meetings and his support of the Foundation's draconian proposals he characterizes as necessary.

The officers asked Mr. Abbott to consider the union's comprehensive contract proposals addressing management's desire for cost savings, benefit parity, and jurisdictional and outsourcing flexibility, and expressed their continued interest in reaching a mutually agreeable settlement.

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**Open letter to Jon Abbott requesting resumption of dues check-off.  
Signed by 210 AEEF members, nearly 75% of membership.**

Jon Abbott, President and CEO  
WGBH Educational Foundation  
One Guest Street  
Boston, MA 02135

November, 2010

Dear Jon,

For nearly 40 years, the members of AEEF have been a collaborative and creative union, working in partnership with WGBH. We've weathered challenges, suffered setbacks, and shared successes along with the Foundation.

As our leaders work toward a mutually agreeable contract, we, the AEEF members, ask that you maintain automatic dues deduction.

Your choice to cancel dues deduction creates a needless distraction at a time when our mutual focus should be on forging a new collective bargaining agreement. Please cultivate an environment of trust and respect and enable the parties to continue negotiations without

impediment.

Respectfully,  
The Members of the Association of the Employees of the Educational Foundation

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**Ours & Theirs:  
The Wage Proposals Explained**

WGBH has made it clear that they no longer want to agree to contractually guaranteed wage increases. Instead, they only want to “reward” employees they consider “high performers” with real wage increases. They have proposed a system that provides them broad latitude to do just that.

AEEF has made a wage proposal that includes a component based on performance, but also provides employees a negotiated percentage wage increase that is not keyed to budget fluctuations.

We also proposed a process that would allow the employer to be excused from having to pay those increases in any year they could not afford it, provided their claim could be verified by an outside, neutral party after a review of the relevant financial information. Management rejected that proposal.

**WGBH’s proposed wage formula**

There are two aspects to WGBH’s wage proposal: a formula that relies on revenue and individual performance ratings to determine potential wage increases, and a discretionary incentive pool administered at management’s discretion.

The wage adjustment formula uses two major variables: one variable is keyed to changes in the Foundation’s revenue, the other is keyed to the employee’s performance evaluation. The performance component is added to the budget component to determine a potential wage increase. However, if a negative value is produced by adding the two, there would be no change in the base wage.

Performance component:

- a performance evaluation of 5 would yield a 1% increase
- a performance evaluation of 4 would yield a 0.75% increase
- a performance evaluation of 3 would yield a 0.5% increase
- a performance evaluation of 2 would yield a 0.25% increase
- a performance evaluation of 1 would yield a .0.0% increase

Revenue component:

- if total operating revenue increases by 10% AND discretionary revenue increases by 5%, this component would be 1%

- if total operating revenue increases by 5% AND discretionary revenue increases by 2.5% this component would be 0.50%
- if total operating revenue remains flat, this component would be 0%
- if total operating revenue declines by 5% OR discretionary revenue declines by 2.5% this component would be negative 0.50%
- if total operating revenue declines by 10% OR discretionary revenue declines by 5% this component would be negative 1.0%

AEEF requested that WGBH supply us with information regarding the fluctuations in operating and discretionary revenue over the past several years so that we can better understand the effect of this proposal, but the employer has refused to give us this information unless we sign a confidentiality agreement that prohibits us from sharing this information with the membership.

Finally, WGBH's proposed discretionary incentive pool would allow management to mete out lump sum bonuses based, in large part, on employees' performance ratings. Employees whose earnings are above the top of the current wage ranges would be eligible only for lump sum bonuses from this pool and would be ineligible for any increase under management's proposed wage formula.

### **AEEF's proposed wage formula**

AEEF's proposal includes a component based on performance, but also provides employees a negotiated percentage wage increase that is not keyed to budget fluctuations.

We also proposed a process that would allow the employer to be excused from having to pay those increases in any year they could not afford it, provided their claim could be verified by an outside, neutral party after a review of the relevant financial information. Management rejected that proposal.

Employees working within their wage range for their job classification, AEEF's wage adjustment formula adds together two variables: a general component and a performance component.

#### General Component

- 2010: 3%
- 2011: 3%
- 2012: 3%

#### Performance Component based on each employee's performance rating

- performance rating of 5 equals a 1.00% performance component
- performance rating of 4 equals a 0.75% performance component
- performance rating of 3 equals a 0.50% performance component
- performance rating of 2 equals a 0.25% performance component
- performance rating of 1 equals a 0.00% performance component

Employees working above the top of the wage range for their job classification would receive an annual increase to their base wage during the first full payroll period that includes November 1. The annual increase for these employees would equal the performance component as described above. Additionally, employees paid above the top of the wage range for their job classification would receive an annual lump-sum bonus equal to the dollar value produced by applying the general component to the top of their respective wage range.