

**IWW San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch Bylaws**

Updated April 8, 2010

**I. Scope and Membership Rights**

- (a) Membership in the San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch (SFBA GMB) is by voluntary association of dues paying members of the IWW working in unorganized shops and all dues paying IWW members working in organized IWW shops in the greater San Francisco Bay Area who are not part of any other IWW GMB.
- (b) These bylaws apply to all members of the SFBA GMB.
- (c) A copy of these bylaws shall be made available to any IWW member in good standing upon request.
- (d) SFBA GMB members are entitled to receive copies of all SFBA GMB meeting minutes and announcements of any official SFBA GMB business meeting with ample time to attend all such meetings.

**II. Meetings**

- (a) The SFBA GMB shall conduct a business meeting at least once per month, on the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM at 2022 Blake Street in Berkeley (or a mutually agreed upon alternate location in the case of an emergency that makes meeting at aforementioned location impossible).
- (b) If the first Thursday of January and/or May falls on the first day of that month, the monthly SFBA GMB business meeting shall be held on the second Thursday of that month.
- (c) The SFBA GMB may vote to hold additional meetings and events at 2022 Blake Street and/or other locations as it sees fit, as long as they do not preempt monthly business meetings. No meetings shall be held on January 1 or May 1.
- (d) Any official business may be conducted at any non-business meeting that makes quorum, but must be reviewed and approved at the next monthly SFBA GMB business meeting that makes quorum.
- (e) SFBA GMB business meetings shall be conducted in 120 minutes or less, unless a majority votes to extend the meeting in order to cover all agenda items.
- (f) Meeting times and locations shall be published (if feasible) in the *Industrial Worker*, all branch publications, on the IWW web site, and on union announcement boards in all organized IWW shops affiliated with the SFBA GMB.
- (g) All decisions, except elections of officers and changes to these bylaws shall be made by voice vote, with calls for affirmative votes, followed by negative votes, unless the author of the proposal requiring a decision requests a hand count.
- (h) In the event a voice vote appears inconclusive, any member may request a hand-count.
- (i) Meetings shall be conducted according to the following agenda:
  - (1) Opening and Calling Meeting to Order (includes election of recording secretary (“note taker”), chairperson (“facilitator”), and (if desired) timekeeper;
  - (2) Introductions
  - (3) Guest Presentations (to be approved by a vote);
  - (4) Reading of Minutes;
  - (5) Urgent Business;
  - (6) Review of Applications for Membership (if requested by membership);
  - (7) Reports of shops (official and unofficial), delegates, committees (standing and special) and members;
  - (8) Official Reports (Secretary-Treasurer; includes financial report, communication and bills);
  - (9) Unfinished Business
  - (10) New (non-urgent) Business
  - (11) Nominations, Elections, and Installations;
  - (12) Good and Welfare
  - (13) Meeting Evaluation and Miscellaneous Items;
  - (14) Adjournment
- (j) Members (including officers and delegates) are encouraged to submit their reports in writing, to circulate those reports to the membership, post copies online, and limit oral reports to highlights and items requiring discussion.
- (k) The Branch Secretary, in conjunction with the Branch Systems Administrator, shall be responsible for drafting and electronically distributing a tentative agenda for all SFBA GMB meetings. The tentative agenda (including the full text of all proposals and motions) for each Branch meeting shall be emailed to the general Branch listserv no less than 48 hours prior to the Branch meeting. All ‘New Non-Urgent Business’ agenda items, including the text of all motions and proposals, shall be forwarded to the Branch Secretary no less than 72 hours prior to the Branch meeting. The Branch Secretary shall include these agenda items in the tentative agenda emailed to the general Branch listserv. ‘New Non-Urgent Business’ agenda items which do not meet this time requirement may be added to the Branch meeting agenda, but cannot be voted upon until the next Branch meeting.

### III. Branch Officers

- (a). The SFBA GMB shall elect the following officers:
  1. Branch Secretary- Oversees administrative affairs of the branch
  2. Branch Treasurer- Oversees the financial affairs of the branch
  3. Branch Communications Officer- Receives and responds to incoming communications
  4. Branch Systems Administrator (Sys Admin)- Maintains the computers in the office and branch email lists and web page.
  5. Branch Outreach Coordinator - Maintain a database of supporters, Bay Area IWW social networking pages, and helps coordinate outreach for Bay Area IWW events, including public demonstrations.
- (b). The branch officers will maintain and use a Policies and Procedures Manual.
- (c). Each officer will be responsible for their own section of the manual, keeping it up to date with current policies and procedures.
- (d). Officers may change the manual whenever necessary, but must report all changes to the branch at the next monthly business meeting before they take effect. The branch may motion and vote to reject or change certain policies and/or procedures.
- (e). The Branch Secretary shall oversee the Policies and Procedures manual and will keep a copy of it in the SFBA GMB office where all members have access to it.
- (f). Officers are expected to attend all SFBA GMB business meetings if possible, and to provide a typewritten report for each business meeting on their activities for the previous month, including any and all expenditures, and for each report to be read and approved by the membership at the meeting.
- (g). Nominations for officers shall take place at the November business meeting.
- (h). The SFBA GMB will elect a ballot committee consisting of at least 3 members in good standing at the November business meeting.
- (i). The Ballot Committee shall be responsible for collecting and counting the ballots, verifying that all ballots come from members in good standing.
- (j). Ballots shall be issued by the Branch Secretary to all branch members in good standing no later than one week following the November business meeting.
- (l). Ballots shall be due by the December business meeting.
- (m). The Ballot Committee shall meet and report to the GMB email list and to the officers-elect the results of the elections no less than one week following the December business meeting.
- (n). All officers shall serve annual terms to begin at the January business meeting (or whenever elected by special election). All officers' terms shall end at the start of the January business meeting the year after they were elected to serve.
- (o). Any elected SFBA GMB officer may resign at any time. A verbal announcement made by the resigning official at an SFBA GMB meeting or a written statement signed by that officer and one other IWW member in good standing shall be required to constitute an official resignation.
- (p). If any SFBA GMB officer resigns or is recalled, nominations to replace that officer shall take place at the next business meeting. The election will take place immediately following nominations on a secret ballot and an election committee that meets the above criteria will convene following the meeting to count ballots and report to the branch.
- (q). In the case of a special election, the newly elected officer's term shall begin immediately following their election.
- (r). The Branch Secretary will be responsible for appointing a person or persons to complete essential tasks in the interim prior to the election of a new officer. If the Branch Secretary office is vacant, this responsibility will fall to the Branch Treasurer.

### IV. Delegates

- (a). All delegates and shop stewards from organized Bay Area IWW shops not part of existing Industrial Union Branches shall report to the SFBA GMB.
- (b). The SFBA GMB shall elect delegates for shops that decline to elect their own delegates, subject to approval by the workers in the represented shop.
- (c). Monthly delegate reports shall be due at the monthly SFBA GMB business meeting.
- (d). All delegates must be members of the SF-Bay GMB in good standing for no less than 6 months and they must remain in good standing.
- (e). All delegates shall notify the Communications Officer of the following:
  - 1) Name
  - 2) Phone/Email
  - 3) Industry currently involved in
  - 4) Any industries the Delegate has knowledge of.
- (f). The Communications Officer shall use the information gathered in Sec IV (e) as a guide for initial contact in shops or individuals who contact the branch, except where stipulated in Section V.(h).

#### **V. Representation**

- (a) Any officer or delegate of the SFBA GMB may list their title on any publication, letter, or correspondence; and any member of the SFBA GMB may list their membership in the IWW on any publication, letter, or correspondence but must indicate that listing is for identification purposes only, unless otherwise approved by the SFBA GMB.
- (b) Any SFBA GMB officer, delegate, or rank & file member approved in advance may represent the branch at business meetings for any other organization or coalition for any purpose and may make decisions on behalf of the branch, provided that they do not violate the IWW Constitution or these bylaws.
- (c) All decisions made by IWW members as outlined in section (a) shall be reviewed, and may be voided by majority vote at the next SFBA GMB business meeting.

#### **VI. Finances**

- (a) The Branch Treasurer will oversee and maintain all branch funds, unless specifically approved by the GMB.
- (b) The GMB shall have two check writers, the Branch Treasurer and Secretary. The two check writers shall have complete access to all bank accounts. If one person holds both positions the GMB shall elect a second member who may write checks in the event that the BST is not able to perform their duties. This second check writer is subject to normal recall procedures.
- (c) In **April** of each year the GMB will convene a Budget Committee.
- (d) The Budget Committee shall be open to all members in good standing. The Branch Secretary and Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee shall meet no less than once to develop and propose an annual budget to the GMB at the **May** business meeting.
- (e) The GMB will discuss and amend the proposed budget for the month at the **May** business meeting and will have a final vote at the **June** GMB meeting.
- (f) Each budget will be in effect starting **July** 1st through **June** 30th of the following year.
- (g) All expenses must be approved by the appropriate committee designated in the budget or by the GMB at a business meeting. Before funds can be disbursed, the Branch Treasurer must receive notice from either the committee chair or the meeting minutes authorizing the expense.
- (h) The GMB may approve one-time disbursements that fall within the approved budget. Any ongoing expenses or modifications to the budget must be proposed at one business meeting and voted on at the following.
- (i) In April, the GMB shall convene an Audit Committee which shall meet and conduct an audit of the past year's finances.
- (j) The Audit Committee shall be open to all members in good standing except the past year's officers.
- (k) The Audit Committee shall report their findings to the GMB at the May business meeting.

#### **VII. Committees**

- (a) The SFBA GMB may establish committees for various purposes as it sees fit, and these committees may establish their own bylaws and operating procedure provided that these do not contradict the SFBA GMB bylaws or the IWW Constitution.
- (b) If any committee of the SFBA GMB fails to meet or serve their intended purpose for no stated good cause within one month of creation, said committees shall cease to exist until such time as a new committee shall be created.

#### **VIII. Keys.**

- (a) All branch officers and delegates shall be entitled to keys to all SFBA GMB offices upon request.
- (b) The SFBA GMB Branch-Secretary Treasurer shall be responsible for issuing new keys.
- (c) The BST may issue keys to other members of the SFBA GMB if required for organizing purposes; the BST shall report on all keys issued between meetings at each monthly SFBA GMB business meeting.
- (d) Keys to all SFBA GMB offices shall otherwise be allocated by a democratic vote and/or as otherwise stated in these bylaws.
- (e) IWW members shall be responsible for their assigned keys.
- (f) All IWW Office keys shall be numbered and stamped "do not duplicate", except for the master keys.

**IX. Organizing Priorities.**

For the purpose of maintaining the spirit of the IWW Constitution and commitment to organizing for the purpose of Abolition of the Wage System, the SFBA GMB shall designate all campaigns that require its attention with the following designations, in order of priority:

- (1) SFBA GMB Organizing Drives and Shops;
- (2) Bay Area Branch Administration;
- (3) Tabling, Outreach, Fundraising, and Events;
- (4) Solidarity with other IWW regions' and branches' Campaigns;
- (5) Solidarity with other Labor Campaigns;
- (6) Solidarity with non-labor, "movement" Campaigns;
- (7) Miscellaneous activities.

**X. Paid and Stipend Organizers**

- (a) Any member who receives pay or a stipend for organizing shall make monthly reports at GMB meetings.
- (b) Such reports shall include any meeting minutes from formal meetings, or a synopsis of informal meetings. The reports should be as detailed as security permits and include approximate date, time, number of persons present, topics discussed.
- (c) Reports must be accepted by vote at the following SFBA GMB meeting.
- (d) Stipends are only given after the report is accepted by the SFBA GMB monthly meeting.
- (e) Only members in good standing can receive a Stipend or Pay for organizing.

**XI. Amendments to Bylaws**

- (a) Amendments to these bylaws may only be approved at monthly SFBA GMB business meetings.

**Statement of Nonviolence**

**Whereas**, the employing class has historically subjugated the working class for the sake of the vested interests of the former, especially with violence, and

**Whereas**, the working class has always most effectively resisted the terms of our exploitation by organizing as a class for our mutual benefit, and

**Whereas**, faced with the power of united workers, the employing class has generally resorted to the tool of organized violence and its subsequent terror for the means of repressing the working class into subjugation, against a more common interest, and further

**Whereas**, the employing class has always tried to lay the blame for their crimes of violence at the door of the workers thus exploited, and

**Whereas**, contrary to the norms of society of the employing class, the IWW has historically articulated its vision as an effective, protective alternative to violence and its social illnesses,

**Therefore be it resolved** that the East Bay General Membership Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World reaffirms that nonviolent nature of the alternatives we propose, and are building, to counter the pernicious and at root, violent evils on a society based on the exploitation of the many for the benefit of the few;

**Furthermore, be it resolved** that violence is to be defined as any act of an unprovoked, premeditated, or physical nature that is intended to cause physical harm to any other person or persons, and

**Furthermore, be it resolved** that this statement shall not be construed to deny or disparage, nor mistaken as the forfeiture of our inherent right to self-defense by whatever means necessary against a direct attack on our lives and/or limbs.