

May 24, 2011 - Regular Board Meeting (video available)

Dennis Francish, SEC attorney was not present at last evening's SEC Board Meeting and oddly enough, he was missed. No attorney, even one dedicated to pushing the board's status quo at the expense of SEC member/owners, would have risked contempt of court by ignoring the rulings of Judge Mitchell as of the May 18, 2011, court hearing. The board not only ignored the ruling that "any action taken by the co-op's board of trustees at a meeting that didn't follow open meeting guidelines in the last 13 months is invalid" but claimed that no such ruling was made. They then proceeded to hold another invalid meeting.

The meeting began with two members speaking to the board. Mr. Paul Stroehl requested information on the refunds for the members' overcharge for the second time. Mgr. Herrera informed him that the refunds were to be mailed today. Mr. Alvin Hickox gave notice to the board that he and other members would continue in their efforts to reform the SEC. Mr. Bustamante broke into Mr. Hickox's two minutes to place the blame on the lawsuit on him because Mr. Hickox did not withdraw his counter suit when the board decided to drop their original suit against the members. Mr. Bustamante's actions and words displayed a lack of decorum, knowledge of parliamentary procedure and logic.

The meeting was rather short except for a lengthy Executive Session which dealt with a personnel matter. It was also ill tempered with many barbs aimed at Trustee Wagner.

The Manager's Report on Expenditures had several questions on entries. Trustee Wagner raised the question of why 6 judges, relatives and friends of SEC staff and trustees, were appointed and paid for the Annual Meeting when one of the 2010 bylaw changes mandated that election administration should be handled by a third party. These "judges" who were anything but neutral were noticed at the Annual Meeting. Their appointment was improper although management and trustees sought to justify the underhanded selection and payment.

Also during the "Manager's Reports" section, another accounting mistake was noted in the RUS Form 7, a monthly federal financial report. This month's Form 7 could not be approved as there was a 4 million dollars commercial account over billing for the month which would take another month to correct.

The 2011 Budget was taken up but Charlie was the only trustee who appeared interested in reviewing the budget and Bustamante refused to allow Charlie to question the manager.

Trustee Wolberg rambled on about his activities and accomplishment for about 30 minutes without interruption by Mr. Bustamante. The full house of attending members seemed to find this monologue odd but Mr. Bustamante allowed it to continue.

The meeting was well attended without an empty chair in the room; an action which served notice to the board that the members would claim their rights. Judge Mitchell would have been proud.