

GUILD LEADER

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A.H. Belo to Slash 500 Jobs ProJo Cuts Undetermined 401k Match Suspended

Blaming the crippled economy A.H. Belo, the corporate parent of the Providence Journal today announced that it plans to cut 500 jobs, including an undetermined number at the Journal.

By mid-February, details of a severance package will be rolled out. Until then the number of cuts will not be known. However company officials told the Guild that all departments – Guild and non-Guild – will likely be affected.

In addition to cutting staff, A.H. Belo is eliminating all matching contributions to the 401k plan as of April 1. At the start of the year the company eliminated the 2 percent base contribution, which was paid regardless of the amount of employee contributions. The new change means the company will no longer pay any retirement contributions.

Other changes being implemented at non-union papers in Dallas, Texas and Riverside, California include imposing parking fees and cutting cell phone allowances from \$50 to \$35. Both these benefits are protected in Providence by the Guild contract and cannot be changed without negotiations.

The Guild's Executive Committee met in joint session with the Providence Unit Council this morning to review the situation.

The two groups voted unanimously to call on A.H. Belo CEO Robert Decherd to give back a 140% raise granted in December. Such a move would save the company \$350,000. If he did this Decherd would still be paid a quarter million dollars a year.

Joint Resolution of the Providence Newspaper Guild Executive Committee and Providence Unit Council Adopted unanimously Jan. 30, 2009

In recognition of the trying times facing the newspaper industry and the sacrifices A.H. Belo employees have been called upon to make, including in some cases their very jobs, we call on A.H. Belo CEO and president Robert W. Decherd to forgo his recent 140% raise and return his base salary to its 2008 level of a quarter million dollars a year.