

General Union Meeting
September 10, 2014
Minutes

The meeting began at 2:45 pm

The minutes of the June 25 GUM were presented for approval. A motion was made to approve, which was adopted unanimously.

Rich said that the structure of GUM was streamlined last year so that the meeting is over by 4 pm and if there are any other suggestions for meetings to let him or an officer know.

Rich described the AFT National Convention that took place in July, which he and Jennifer attended, as a political event. It was useful for networking and for learning how decisions are made and policies adopted. The highlight of the Convention, as far as the Local is concerned, was Krystal Woolston, who won the AFT Everyday Award. She also delivered a well-received acceptance speech.

The Local's e-newsletter won AFT National's Best Electronic Periodical and second place for Best Website. Rich congratulated Jennifer, the winner of the award.

Alex, Louise and Jennifer are working on organizing the Union's table on the Red Hawk Day. There will be swag handed out to students, and other information—including on Local's scholarships, would be made available.

Homecoming is on Oct 18, and the Union would be handing out water, Frisbees and other goodies.

Rich said that union meetings are scheduled in a way as to avoid conflict with other events. If meetings or events are scheduled at the same time as the union meeting, he would try to have them re-scheduled. Rich urged everyone to bring scheduling conflicts to the Union's attention.

Vanessa spoke for Maughn Gregory, faculty coordinator, who could not make the meeting. One of the initiatives Maughn is working on is a short video that explains the paystub. Vanessa said that many questions related to DPAC could be answered by reading the contract. It appears that many department chairs are not fully conversant with the content of LSPA.

Kathy clarified that timeliness is of essence when filing a grievance. There is a forty-five day window between the occurrence of the contract violation and filing of grievance. Many of the violations of the contract occur due to lack of awareness and not because of nefarious designs. A collateral issue is that administrators who are seeking tenure or promotion are not exempt from the DPAC process.

Ken said that we are witnessing a lot of changes in the university and to overcome the challenges brought on by this we would have to engage in an educational campaign, particularly about the contract.

Maughn will be sending out the dates for reappointment, tenure and promotion workshops.

In response to a question about the DPAC guidelines, Rich said that they are university-wide. The DPAC should function in accordance with the LSPA and departmental bylaws, although some departments and units, including the School of Media and Communication (it was pointed out) are running without bylaws. Bylaws for several departments and divisions have been pending for a long time with the administration. The state and local contracts are on the Union's website. The bylaws need to go to the deans, provost and the Union to ensure that they are consistent with the contract.

Rich said that there is a provision in the contract that the University would communicate by October 1st, our current range, step and leave balances.

Susan Hagen, Professional Staff Coordinator, reported that the reappointment workshop in August was successful. The next newsletter would have information about upcoming workshops. The professional staff holiday luncheon is scheduled for Dec 17. There would be a performance-based workshop on Oct 16. A reclassification workshop is scheduled for Spring 2015.

Ken said that the Local negotiating team has finalized a list of issues for negotiations. There has been some progress on the IS/CS issues. On the issue of furloughs-related Paid Leave Bank, the administration has not made available the information requested by the Union (a number of faculty members have an erroneous zero balance in their PLB). Ken noted that there was no minority faculty applicant for promotion in the last round of applications. Among other issues are: equity in release time, range change for faculty/librarians.

Jennifer said that the professional staff negotiating team would meet next Friday. Also, coming up are statewide negotiations for statewide agreement. Jennifer asked that anyone who had suggestions for negotiations should contact Ken or her.

Jennifer reminded professional staff that they should know their reappointment calendar. She noted that there is confusion on some issues related to overload, but the contract does not stipulate a limit on the amount of overload. Similarly, teaching can be done during the workday, as long as it doesn't conflict with one's primary work responsibility. Jennifer said that anyone experiencing difficulties with tuition reimbursement should contact her.

Meiling said that there is a meeting of librarians scheduled for next Wed about negotiations. There is a new hire in the library—a librarian, who has also joined the Union.

Kathy spoke about grievances, and how they are neither inevitable nor the first line of response when a personnel issue arises. Regarding the personnel issues over the summer, she said that there were several instances of problems with Clinical Specialists. Kathy worked with several members on reclassification. Also, she helped some members who had applied for Special Sick Leave.

Kathy reminded everyone that if the management wants to meet with someone, and there is a possibility of disciplinary action, they should ask for a Union rep to accompany them in the meeting. The employee can also ask for the meeting to be suspended, if it starts to head in a direction where there is a possibility of disciplinary action and there is no Union representative attending.

David reported on the issues discussed in the Executive Board of the Senate. The e-board deals with Title IV issues and governance matters. The Provost met with the e-board and came up with the three survey questions (for the purpose of student attendance verification) that were posted on Canvas.

The Senate is also about to come out with the smoke-free campus policy. The enforcement piece of the policy remains unclear.

Mike described the current state of the Local's finances. The last day of the fiscal year was Aug 31. For the last two years we had a surplus of about \$60,000/year after meeting our expenses. Last year, however, we did not have any savings. This was mainly on account of approximately \$85,000 incurred in legal expenses. There has also been a slight increase in the honoraria, which has increased the Union's payroll.

Bill said that the higher education legislation has effectively stalled, with the two prime movers, Celeste Riley and J. Klein, being engaged in other matters.

A workshop for stewards is being planned, and Bill is waiting for the notational AFT's response as AFT would be providing the trainer/s.

A climate rally is scheduled for next month in New York, which has been endorsed by the National AFT.

Rich spoke about the 8:30am meeting in Trenton that he and Bill would be attending concerning the negotiability of healthcare. The healthcare legislation included in the pension reform package passed by Christie sunsets in June, and it remains to be seen what the state's position would be on the issue of healthcare relative to premiums and co-pays. .

The BOT meeting is at 10am tomorrow. The agenda is light except for the amount of \$900,000 that the university paid in legal expenses last year. The President got a raise last year (her current annual remuneration is about \$500,000), and the administrators received an across-the-board raise of 3.5%.

Jack Samuels spoke about the danger posed by Human Propelled Vehicles (e.g. skateboarders).

The issue of donating sick time was discussed. There is a faculty member in CHSS, who is currently undergoing medical treatment, and has exhausted his medical leave. Several faculty members have donated sick time to help him out.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm.