

General Union Meeting
April 10, 2013
Minutes

The meeting began at 2:30 pm

The minutes of the March 6 GUM were presented for review. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Final Reading and Vote on the Constitution and Bylaws

Between the first and the second readings a number of typos and other problems were pointed out by members. There were two substantive questions:

The first one pertained to our finances. There is a line in our Constitution that none of our funds would be put in anything uninsured or with any potential risk. Presently, we have \$406,000 in Money Market Savings and \$100,000 in a checking account. We get almost no interest on our money. In the past we put together a finance committee and entered into a discussion about how to invest our surplus. We decided to, when appropriate, move some money to City National. At this time we are leaving the requirement of no risk in the Bylaws. If need be, we will revisit the issue in the future.

The second issue relates to the two-year term of our officers and how it corresponds to the contract cycle. We can make changes in the future. The question was if the officer terms should correspond to the contract cycle. The problem is that there is no contract cycle per se. Contracts have in the past been negotiated for two, three and four years. Also, it takes almost two years to gear up for the contract negotiations. We are right now in the middle of preparations for the next contract. There is, therefore, no real advantage to synchronizing officer terms with the contract cycle.

Rich asked for someone to move that the second reading of the Constitution and Bylaws be approved. A motion was made to approve the second reading. Rich discussed the two substantive changes that have been made to the Constitution. The first one pertains to the creation of two new positions: a faculty representative ("Faculty Coordinator") and a Local representative to the Senate, analogous to the NAL rep.

Rich said we have also codified what the E-board of the Local would do. We have had an E-board in the past, but it did not function in a substantive way. It used to meet before the General Union Meetings, with the result that there was a lot of redundancy in what was discussed. Under the revised rules, the E-board would meet twice a year.

A question was asked about the Local representative to the Senate, and if the new position is being created because the person currently in the position does not report back to the Local. Rich clarified that there is no mechanism for the person to coordinate with the Local. David Benfield who is likely to be the Local's representative to the Senate would attend all the officers' meetings. Moreover, Mike added, the creation of the new position would reduce the potential for a conflict of interest, as the person, who is representing the Local currently, is also an elected representative. Simply put, there is no venue for this person (currently, David Benfield) to report back. Kathy cited her past dual experience as a NAL

representative to the Senate, and as an elected member to underscore the need to reduce the potential conflict of interest.

Bill Sullivan pointed out that there was a lot of haphazard material in the Constitution and Bylaws, which has been taken out.

The vote on the Constitution and Bylaws took place. The tally was: 22 for, 2 against and 2 abstentions.

The revised Constitution and Bylaws were adopted.

Essential Services Employees

In response to a letter that was sent earlier, the administration said we could not have a hearing with the Board of Trustees on the issue. Our attorney sent a letter to the Board explaining why it is not correct. Please contact us if you have been deemed *Essential* and if you can provide us with information about how your job description may not warrant the designation. However, at this stage, we cannot make a promise about how long this would take to resolve.

Rich added that this would involve dueling lawyers, and, consequently, real expenses. However, this is something we must pursue to its final conclusion.

Jennifer provided background information to the Essential Services issue. It started with hurricane Sandy when a message was sent out on Halloween, asking people to report to work. Anyone who reported to work was deemed Essential. In two divisions, SDCL and IT, everyone (approximately 120 employees) was declared essential. The email that informed people of their new essential status also threatened them with action, in the event of non-compliance (failure to report during an emergency).

There are related issues about what Essential Employees should do, requirement for IDs (to drive during a state of emergency). Basically, it appears that the designation is aimed at affording the managers discretion and as much flexibility as possible.

BKMUW Scholarships

The scholarship committee met and selected ten students. The officers have approved the additional funds to fund the additional 7 scholarships not covered by the endowment. Linda would send out the award letters next week. In this round of competition, more colleges were represented and a wider range of students applied. The number of students meeting the requirements increased from 15-16 last year to 19 this year. The awardees will be invited to the May GUM for a chance to thank the membership and take a group photo.

Rich said that several of the student stories are really compelling. The scholarship committee worked hard to review the applications and make decisions.

Outreach Committee

Members are volunteering, from 8:00-Noon, for work at the Mount Pleasant Animal Shelter. There still are some open slots. Also, there is an opportunity to support the effort online. In June the members would volunteer at an area food bank. Krystal Woolston suggested we wait until June because of the long waiting times currently (due to a glut of volunteers).

Library

Mei Ling presented the library report. The librarians met last week with the Dean about the summer schedules. Working from home was discussed. The revised DPAC guidelines have been submitted, but not yet ratified.

Grievance Report

Kathy reported a "win" involving a personnel action issue. A faculty member had applied for promotion, but was turned down by the Dean. Following a meeting with the Dean, the decision was reversed.

There is a "fitness of duty" case that has been ongoing since last May. The MOA is under review by the member.

There is an ongoing grievance, initiated by a professional staff member, who was improperly supervised. Kathy reiterated that an AFT member can only be supervised by a non-AFT member.

The issue involving release time for the Local president will go to the Council Grievance Committee and then, if approved, arbitration with the full support of the Council.

Assistance was provided a staff member who received a letter about tardiness.

Kathy reminded everyone to register a response if they have a letter going into their file.

There is an ongoing issue about Comp Time involving a professional staff member.

A faculty member who applied for range change was turned down. In several cases people who were recommended for a year-long sabbatical by their Deans, had their sabbatical term reduced to a semester without consultation.

Ken spoke about the ongoing discussions with the administration about the summer schedule. On Fri 19, we have scheduled negotiations on the issue. In case of range change the bar appears to have been raised by a huge amount. We would probably have to go back to the table on this issue.

Judith Hain requested a meeting with Ken. She wants to establish the agenda for next year's negotiations. One of the goals is to clean up the LSPA. Another issue we are working on is the patents issue, where we are trying to negotiate a structure. Rich and Ken are working with a couple of faculty members who have experience in the area of patents and are patent holders themselves.

Dana reported that Judith Hain sent out an email asking for nominations to the Career Development Committee. April 15 is the deadline for the nominations. On April 19, we would have the opportunity to discuss the summer schedule. On the issue of tuition waivers, the dialogue is heating up. Dana also asked those interested in serving on the Professional Staff Negotiations Committee to contact her.

In response to a question about the focus of the talks regarding the summer schedule, Dana said the goal is to ensure flexibility. The Local is asking for going back to 5:15 schedule.

Regarding the Career Development Committee, Jennifer pointed out that someone applying for funding cannot serve on the committee. Rich reiterated the purpose of Career Development Funds, which is to provide support for activities that are not covered by other funding avenues available. It is real money and, equally importantly, involves real peer-review.

Betsy announced the date for a Professional Staff, new hire orientation. This is the first time the Local is doing this. It would take place May 17 in University Hall. She is sending out emails for RSVP.

Professional staff members who applied for performance-based promotions should have heard back by now.

Bill Sullivan spoke about the upcoming gubernatorial elections and the elections to the state senate and assembly. The Council has endorsed Senator Buono for governor, because she has consistently stood with us, especially on the issue of health care. Typically, we have not endorsed candidates for governor's election, but in view of the high stakes, we have changed our position. The only way Buono can win is if the unions do their job in ensuring a high turnout.

Rich said that Buono has a real chance at success for two main reasons: she presents a clear contrast to Christie, and, as such, provides a real choice to the voters, and, second, there are 700,000 more registered Democrats in the state.

Rich said that the membership drive is under way. There is a slight difference in dues for full members, but they also get professional liability coverage. This is only available to full-dues paying members.

Jennifer announced that the Local is now on Twitter.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 pm.