

General Union Meeting
Dec 11, 2013
Minutes

The meeting started at 2:42 pm.

Rich spoke about the pros and cons of publicizing the minutes of the union meetings. The issue would be taken up at the next meeting of the Local's Executive Board. It's a complicated issue because we want the minutes to be detailed, but it could be problematic when certain types of information are detailed and made public. In response to a question, Jennifer said that the union meetings are not "open meetings."

The minutes of the Nov 13 General Union Meeting were presented and unanimously approved.

Outreach Committee

There will be a pizza party organized for students staying in the dorms over the winter break. Care packages, consisting of essentials as well as some fun items, would be distributed at the party. The party would be on Jan 7, at 1 pm, at Machuga Heights. The students would receive a ticket and, upon turning it in, will get a shoebox/care package.

The hat for donations was passed around in the room.

Rich said that the Local is a member of the Essex West-Hudson Labor Council that awards scholarships. High school students headed to college, and who have immediate family members in any union, can apply.

Professional Staff Orientation

There would be an orientation on Jan 15, from 1-2 pm, for incoming and existing professional staff. The orientation would address questions related to rights and responsibilities of professional staff at the university. If you have newly hired people in your unit, you can inform them about the event. The orientation will take place in the Student Center (Ballroom A).

In response to a question about sick time, Jennifer said that professional staff could roll over 22 days of unused sick time. Faculty members get 15 days of sick time annually, and they can be rolled over without limits. Faculty can also donate sick time.

Rich said that we are obligated to be accurate in our recording of sick time. Perhaps $\frac{3}{4}$ of the faculty do not know that someone is filling out and signing time sheets for them.

Jennifer said that pregnancy is covered under FMLA.

Library issues

There is an ongoing search in the library. The position of the Head of the Reference Section remains open (in addition to several other positions).

David reported that the Senate has decided to create a Digital Repository Committee. Mike said that the Repository could be made available for storing media types. The proposal was made by the Academic Technology Committee (earlier known as "Academic Computing Committee").

Personnel Issues

Kathy reported that there were some successes in the last month. In a "fitness for duty" case that was going on for over a year, the faculty member was found fit for duty. She is coming back to teach in the Spring. She is also going to get back her vacation/sick time.

Three faculty members were able to get their respective deans to reverse their recommendations for non-reappointment. Some got the negative decision because of their failure to include contractually required information with their reappointment application. Rich said that it is the faculty member's responsibility to figure out what is required. Vanessa said that in the faculty promotions workshop organized recently, the requirements for promotion were discussed. The tips provided at the workshop by the union were included by a dean in her handout to the faculty.

Negotiations

Negotiations are going on about a whole host of issues. The union has been meeting with the administration twice a week. Rich said that the administration wants the union to sign off on a number of issues that we have not reached satisfactory agreements on. The local will not finalize those agreements until the terms are satisfactory. The union has been able to strengthen the Instructional/Clinical Specialists' agreement.

Mike said that he is reviewing what needs to happen for the internal financial review to be completed by Feb 15. We will have the required materials ready so that the review could be completed in time and we can be seated at the National convention.

Rich said that he was contacted by faculty and staff from Dickson Hall that their building was sick. The University has an environmental quality officer whose job it is to make sure that the buildings are safe (mold-free, etc). If you think you have a problem in your office or building, you should first go to your Dean's office. Kathy suggested that one should file a work order and then, if nothing happened, contact the union.

Rich thanked Jennifer for putting together the union newsletter. He said he knows that it is read, because of the numerous queries he receives from members.

Rich spoke about the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting. At the meeting twenty two faculty members will receive tenure, and approximately seventy staff will receive multi-year contracts. There is also the case of detenuring of a professor that will be referred to an administrative law judge. The Local has been defending this faculty member. Rich asked that everyone make an effort to attend the meeting, which starts at 4:30 pm and lasts for approximately thirty minutes.

Rich said that the university is also interviewing several candidates to replace Judith Hain as Vice President of Human Resources. The next candidate interview is scheduled for Friday at 1 pm.

Old Business

Jennifer announced that the Veterans' Students Association produced music CD, and, for anyone interested, she has their latest CD with her.

Community Outreach: Jennifer said that several outreach have been planned for Spring. There would be a visit to the food bank on March 15. Visits to an animal shelter and Habitat for Humanity are scheduled for April.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:32 pm.