

General Union Meeting  
July 25, 2012  
Minutes

Rich Wolfson began the meeting by talking about the recently concluded contract negotiations. He, first, provided an overview of the contract, and, secondly, took questions related to it.

Financial aspects of the contract

It is a four-year contract that started July 1, 2011. We are now thirteen months into the contract. For the first two years, there would be no raises. A 1% raise would take place in the third year and a 1.75% raise in the fourth year.

The increment that was supposed to take effect in 2011 will not take place. We have, therefore, lost one increment.

Beginning July 1, the pay stub will show a higher health deduction.

Regarding multi-year contracts, those working prior to contract ratification will be on a five-year contract.

On sabbaticals, there were tough negotiations with the state. The university was not obligated to distribute the sabbatical units. The state's proposal was to offer units equal to 1% of full-time faculty, which would have drastically reduced the allocation. Ultimately an agreement on sabbaticals was reached and there would be a sabbatical program in each of the colleges, but there is no number specified (of the sabbatical units). We are in a relatively better position, vis-à-vis other colleges, with respect to sabbaticals because of the detailed and robust local selected procedures agreement (LSPA) pertaining to sabbaticals. As for the sabbaticals this year, the local is trying to get the university to agree to an expedited process for the spring term. The administration has not responded so far, although they have not turned us down.

Academic Year

The state's proposal to extend the academic year to June 30 was withdrawn. There is no change in the status quo, and the academic year will end at Commencement. However it may change, subject to the outcome at Kean University where it is being contested.

Vacation Time for Professional Staff and Librarians

There is no change in the situation with respect to vacation time.

Teaching Credits for Lab and Studios

The Council made a proposal for compensation for lab and studio courses. The state proposal of a 50% reduction in credit hours was withdrawn.

### Salary Guide

The salary guide will stay. The state backed down from its initial proposal to do away with the salary guide.

### Summer Session Rate

The rate of payment for summer courses would be increased by \$200 (\$100 increment each for 2013 and 2014). The overload rate would also be increased by \$200 (\$50 increment for each semester in 2013 and 2014).

### Career Development Fund

The new agreement requires the colleges/universities to provide funds at the rate of \$60 per full-time unit member, for each fiscal year of the new contract. At MSU, the total amount available for the Career Development Fund would be approximately \$60,000. The application procedures would be negotiated locally. The unused funds would be transferred to the Tuition Reimbursement Fund.

The state wanted to put in a clause that the money related stipulations in the contract would be subject to successful appropriations for state higher education budget. The proposal was withdrawn.

### Tuition Reimbursement

The new agreement requires that the state provide funds for tuition reimbursement at the rate of \$25 per full-time unit member, for each fiscal year of the new contract. The procedures will be negotiated locally. The unused funds will be transferred to the Career Development Fund. The total amount of funding available remains the same.

### Compensation for Out of Title Work

Under the existing arrangement there was no guarantee that out of title work would be compensated. The new agreement requires that the Local and the administration work out the compensation for such work within sixty days.

Rich underscored the difficult nature of the negotiations that culminated in the new contract. The Council had to fight against the collective might of the state and the colleges/universities presidents, all of whom were trying to advance their agenda at the expense of union members. He thanked Ken, Jennifer, Bill and Dana for representing the Local at the negotiations.

## Discussion

The first couple of questions about the new contract pertained to the increased health care contributions. Would they be pegged to the cost of the premium or to salaries? What would be the impact of the Affordable Care Act (ACA)? Rich replied that the goal of the legislature is to increase our health care contributions, eventually, to one-third of the premium, which is the norm in the private sector. Our contribution will stay pegged to the premium. Regarding the impact of ACA, the establishment of exchanges would lead to greater competition and, possibly, to lowering of prices.

Another question pertained to the impact on retirees of the increased health care contributions. Rich said that the existing language about retirees' health care benefits has been retained in the new contract. Therefore, there would be no changes in retiree health benefits.

Several members asked questions about steps/increments. Members who were due for an increment last year would get it this year. If someone were hired last year, s/he would get the increment this year. The administration saved a sizable sum of money from the cancelation of the step increase last year.

Members can go to the Council website or the Human Resources website for information related to member benefits. Members should call Payroll to find out the step they are at, if they don't have that information.

A workshop will be organized, with information about reappointment, for the staff.

## Contract Ratification

There will be a notification at the end of Aug (or beginning of September). The ballots, with self-addressed envelopes, will be mailed out to members on Sept 7. The ballots should be returned to the Council on Sept 28, and will be counted on Oct 7. Only full-dues paying members can vote in the ratification.

## Passing of Nicholas Yovnello - Rich Wolfson

Our State AFT President, Nick Yovnello, was involved in a fatal car accident and passed away on July 7. Please go the College Council web site (CNJSCL.org) for information about Nick.

This is a great loss for us. Our tentative contract agreement was reached on Friday July 6. The adjunct group does not have a completed contract agreement, and Nick was going to be involved in those negotiations.

Our State Executive V.P. Bill Sullivan will become Acting President of the CNJSCL until an election for President can take place. The Council staff is intact.

Board of Trustees Meeting, July 26, 2012 - Rich Wolfson

The MSU Board of Trustees will be meeting tomorrow, July 26 in University Hall Room 1020 at 4:20 P.M. Ken Brook will be giving our statement as Rich Wolfson will be attending the AFT National Convention in Detroit.

Members are urged to attend. Some items that will be on the agenda are:

- Faculty hires - Non-tenure track without limits (previously there was a 3 year limit).
- Emeritus Faculty.
- MSU Student Tuition increase (the percentage amount is not yet known).

New Committee - Jennifer Higgins

The Outreach Committee will focus on union relationships, both internal and external, people, towns, etc.

If you would like to participate, please call Jennifer. The first meeting of the committee will take place in August.

Professional Staff - Betsy Montanez

There will be a Professional Staff Reappointment Workshop held Friday August 24, 2012 in SC 419 (time to be announced). We will have additional workshops on other topics.

If you have a workshop idea, please call or e-mail Betsy Montanez.

Meeting Adjourned.