



**General Union Meeting
March 7, 2012, 2:30-4:00 P.M.
Student Center Room 419**

The meeting was called to order at 2:40 p.m.

The minutes for the February 8, 2012 General Union Meeting were reviewed by those present. Amy Krenzer moved to approve the minutes as written with a second from Susana Sotillo. The minutes were unanimously approved.

R. Wolfson announced Beverly Peterson was unable to attend the meeting and that Jennifer Higgins would be saying a few words about the petition in support of national legislation to protect U.S. workers from workplace bullying and violence.

J. Higgins informed the membership that the petition was in support of asking the Obama Administration to create labor laws that protect U.S. workers from workplace violence and bullying. A link to the petition is available on the Local's website and in the March 2012 newsletter. Members were encouraged to sign the petition to help the movement reach the goal of 7,500 signatures.

R. Wolfson then thanked officers for their hard work on newsletter.

2012-2014 Officer Elections—Call for Nominations Notice

David Trubatch, Chair of Elections and Nominating Committees announced to the membership that the petition for nominations for Local officers will be sent to membership via eBlast and up on website shortly. Nominations will close at the April 4th General Union Meeting. Elections will be held a week after the April General Union meeting. If uncontested, the election will be conducted via Elvis if not, it will be conducted by paper ballot. Paper balloting will be managed by the Council of New Jersey State College Locals.

A question was asked about why Elvis could only be used if there was an uncontested and R. Wolfson replied that labor laws require paper balloting in contested elections. There was also discussion about the elections at other locals in the bargaining unit and how they were conducted.

Statewide Negotiations Update

Bill Sullivan reported that Statewide negotiations were held on February 24th. B. Sullivan informed the membership that smaller working groups will be

organized on specific issues for informal talks about some of the proposals on the table. He explained the process and how this will work. He reported that Professional Staff will have their own working group and that there will be working groups on general issues and patent language as well.

B. Sullivan provided a brief overview of the states demands at the bargaining table and reviewed briefly a few of the items that have been agreed to.

A member asked about the SCOR payout and the pending legislation that has been reported on in the news. B. Sullivan reported that there is one proposal from Gov. Christie, which would eliminate the benefit. NJ State Senator Sweeney has proposed legislation to cap this benefit at \$7,500. There is a third piece of legislation to cap this benefit at \$15,000. J. Higgins noted that our current contract already caps this benefit at \$15,000 for Professional Staff. Librarians and Faculty are not eligible for SCOR payouts.

B. Sullivan and R. Wolfson reviewed the lack of budget increase for higher education in Gov. Christie's budget as reported in the press.

Statewide Negotiations Activities

Bill Sullivan reported that to move things forward and put pressure on Governor Christie and the college/university Presidents, on Saturday April 14th the Council will be holding a training on organizing and mobilizing the membership to move contract negotiations along. Please contact B. Sullivan via email if you wish to participate. The Local will arrange for transportation to the training. The trainers will be staff representatives from AFT National.

B. Sullivan also reported that on April 25th there will be demonstrations Statewide at each of the 9 colleges from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. More details to come.

R. Wolfson-We need to keep the pressure on campus by having members wear working with out a contract buttons, blue or AFT shirts on Wednesdays and come on the weekly Solidarity Walks.

A member asked why a letter to the membership about the value of increments was not sent. R. Wolfson stated that he decided not to send letter on loss of increments because we were expecting economic package that would change things. Unfortunately, that has not come to pass.

R. Wolfson informed the membership that on Tuesday, March 13th NJ Senate Budget Committee will hold a hearing on campus. The Local will be hosting a hospitality room. R. Wolfson will be giving testimony at the hearing. He encouraged the membership to attend and consider speaking.

K. Brook shared his opinion that Gov. Christie is only interested in the economic package for our bargaining unit. He reviewed the history of contract negotiations and importance of local action to move negotiations towards

settlement.

Local Negotiations Update

K. Brook reported that we have a tentative agreement on online course development for designated online programs. Programs selected by the Provost to be online the ones eligible under this agreement. He hopes that the contract that employees will sign for payment will be finalized soon. The range around the country for this type of work is \$3,000 - \$5,000, so \$5,000 for our agreement is the upper end of the range.

K. Brook also reported that the Local has dates from J. Hain to start negotiations on Professional Staff and Librarians for summer work schedules and the Librarian range changes.

Personnel Matters and Issues

K. Hughes encouraged members to contact the Local for assistance with any employment related matters. She shared that there have been some positive outcomes recently regarding non-reappointments which have been reversed via settlement agreements. She also stated that she has been assisting members with responding to negative reviews.

Continuing Conversation on Civility within our Community

J. Higgins asked the membership to bring issues to our attention so we can assist them and encourage people to go to the March 20th talk about Bullying – both in the workplace and among students. Details of this event are on the Local's website and in the March 2012 newsletter.

Treasurer's Report

R. Wolfson handed out the Treasurer's report on behalf of Bill Vincenti who couldn't be at the meeting. The Audit Committee has completed yearly financial reviews for the past 2 years and the report is being submitted to officers group. The final report will be available in the Union office for any unit member to see. It should be noted that these reports brings us into compliance for the AFT National's Convention this Summer in Detroit.

Old Business

J. Higgins: BKWUM Scholarship Committee has received 15 applications that meet the minimum criteria. We will be getting materials to the committee members by end of Thursday.

10. New Business

Announcement from Lori Petrozzello regarding her meditation classes on Tuesdays from 4 - 5 p.m. on campus in Library, Room 110 through April 3rd.

Bob Whitney spoke about the SDS Chapter on campus. They are planning occupation of campus the first week of April to coincide with BOT's meeting on tuition increases. He put forth a motion to invite SDS students to next meeting

to speak briefly to the membership and to pass the hat to raise funds to cover the cost the occupation. All those present voted in favor of the motion

A member asked a question about whether or not the Vision benefits could still be utilized during negotiations. Members who incur costs under this plan should hold onto their receipts and members will be retroactively reimbursed when the contract is settled.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m.

FINAL and APPROVED at the General Union Meeting April 4, 2012