

MSUFT Local 1904
General Union Meeting held on November 10, 2010
Location: Student Center, Room 419

Meeting called to order by President Jennifer Higgins at 2:36pm.

Secretary Betsy Montanez read the minutes for the October 13, 2010 General Union Meeting. The minutes were approved as corrected.

Special Election Update

Jennifer Higgins asked Jack Samuels, Elections Committee Chair, to address the membership.

Jack Samuels addressed the membership as follows:

- The Council has been asked to run the election. Since they are running the election we are bound to their procedures.
- Election Announcements have been mailed, if you or someone you know did not receive one please advise either J. Samuels or any of the election committee members and they will get one out to you.
- The Petition form is available on the AFT website.
- Ballots will be mailed on approximately the 17th of November.
- A motion to send an email notification to the members informing them of the mailing date of the election ballots as well as providing information on how to obtain a ballot if failure to receive one was made by member Bill Sullivan and was seconded by member Gina Balestracci. After discussion the motion passed unanimously.
- Discussion as to whether or not candidates could be announced prior to the election ballots being mailed and candidates holding a forum for members to inquire about candidates was had. J. Samuels informed the membership that Ballots will be mailed on November 17th and are due back to the Council on December 6th. Also members are able to write-in candidates should they not want to vote for the candidates on the ballot.

J. Higgins resumed charge of the meeting.

President's Report

Jennifer Higgins addressed the membership as follows:

- Discussed the State College and University Presidents' Lobbying Efforts to break-up the College Council and the College Council's response. This information has been distributed via the Local's Newsletter. The Original documents for both have been copied and are available today or online.
- Some of the major points the State College and University President's, including Dr. Cole, are as follows:
 - i. State funding for mandated tuition-waiver programs
 - ii. The elimination of caps on tuition and fees in the annual state budget
 - iii. Control of health-care costs by negotiating contracts with insurance carriers directly, instead of by the State of New Jersey

- iv. At the end of the current Statewide Contract, if no successor agreement is reached, step increases will not be granted
- v. Elimination of our bargaining unit making the colleges and universities the employer of record
- vi. Changing the existing tenure procedures

The College Council provided a response to the College Presidents. Copies were made available.

The College and University President's released another letter on November 1 to the State Legislation. The College Council drafted a response to this letter and asked that it be signed by all the Local Presidents, which J. Higgins did. The major points of the letter were shared with the membership. At this time J. Higgins opened the floor for discussion.

Lastly, J. Higgins informed the membership about State Legislature A-3357 which is being sponsored by Assembly Higher Education Committee Chair Pamela Lampitt. This bill can be considered a compromise to Chrisite's Toolkit. The Toolkit recommends tenure be raised to 10 years as were A-3357 recommends 7 years. The college council is opposing this bill. J. Higgins discussed additional issues with the new proposed language regarding tenure.

Negotiations Coordinator:

William Vincenti discussed the following matters:

- Cali School of Music: Administration seems to have taken a position that they can get by on the good relationship between us and them and not actually on procedure. Interviews for the Director position start next week.
- Parking: Since much of the information about unauthorized persons parking in faculty/staff lots is anecdotal, the Local's interns have been charged to collect data.
- Career Development: there is a meeting scheduled next week to continue discussions regarding the 2010 application, hope to get final approval.

Secretary

Betsy Montanez announced that the use of member's names will be discontinued from being listed in the minutes unless the member requests it be noted.

B. Montanez reminded the membership of the importance of reaching out to Agency members and asking them to sign a full dues member card. Recruitment brochures and Membership cards were made available.

The Local is still running its Membership Drive in which a Barnes and Noble Nook will be raffled to a new member who has completed a full dues membership card between August 1 and December 15. A Nook will also be awarded to the Full Dues Member who refers the most new members.

External Vice President:

Ken Brook stated that J. Higgins covered the State College and President's attack on collective bargaining and various issues in depth earlier. K. Brook went on to discuss the following:

- Assemblywoman Linda Greenstein was elected. 100 plus AFT members participated in the election canvassing.
- After attending two State Federal Meetings and do not see any progress or structure from them. There has been no discussion on how they are going to respond to the position of the State College and University Precedent's, etc.
- Chris Aiken is no longer with AFT and is now working for the CWA.
- \$72 per year/ per unit member will be the State Fed dues after the three (3) years of support from AFT National runs out. Discussions on whether or not the locals are getting their monies worth are going to have to be had and whether or not to continue to pay into this fund.

Associate Vice President for Personnel:

Naomi Liebler provided the following updates:

- Two senior faculty members who had been subject to harassment by administrators sought and have received Union support. Both issues appear to have been resolved.
- One faculty member up for tenure who had experiencing lukewarm recommendations and was being harassed has received coaching by the Union on how to navigate the process and has now received assurance of support from their Dean.
- A Professional Staff member received assistance regarding the reclassification process and approval.

N. Liebler discussed Article XXX of the State-wide contract which requires members to notify management of facilities problems, i.e. excessive heat, excessive cold, leaky faucets, etc. It is important that member follow the proper procedures. Do not hesitate to file multiple work orders and keep records of them. Create a paper trail. This will assist the Local in pursuing things with the Administration and if necessary, the Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Program ("PEOSHA"). Also if your office is excessively hot or cold, members can request thermometers from Bill Vincenti. These thermometers record the temperature in your work space over a length of time. Lastly, members were reminded that if their work space is uncomfortable they may request to have their work space moved.

Treasurer's report

Rich Wolfson informed the membership that our dues are based on a percentage of member's base salary and since our salaries increased in June the Local's income has increased. A report was disturbed which compared September 1 –November 1, 2009 finances to that of September 1- November 1, 2010. R. Wolfson stated that the Local has spent less than has been collected.

Old Business

In regards to collective bargaining being it was noted that the membership dues will increase if the Unit is undone. The Local will also lose its legal representation. If the Local becomes decertified [no longer recognized by the State of New Jersey] the Local will need to decide as a group which organization to affiliate with.

New Business

There was discussion regarding the student growth of the University and the ability to fill the new residence halls.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm.

THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS CORRECTED ON DECEMBER 15, 2010