

General Union Meeting
October 10, 2012
Minutes

Rich introduced Yolanda Simmons from AFT-NJ, who is an adjunct, MSU graduate and is now working for AFTNJ as a political organizer. Yolanda spoke about labor walks organized by AFTNJ, which involve going door-to-door for electoral canvassing in households that have AFL-CIO members. There is a walk scheduled for Saturday, from 9-12. Other walks scheduled are: Oct 20, Newark; Oct 27, Paramus; Nov 7, South Jersey. There are also opportunities for participating in phone banks (Oct 18, Oct 25) at the Democratic headquarters on Montclair Avenue. There will be a phone bank next Tuesday, 8 am-4 pm, in Newark (Broad Street). AFTNJ and AFT-National are supporting President Obama. AFTNJ is also supporting Senator Menendez in his reelection bid. Yolanda said she has literature, including blurbs on both the candidates. Buttons, leaflets and t-shirts (for those participating in labor walks) are also available. Rich said that AFT-National is the first labor union to come out in support of President Obama. Our Local does not take a position in Presidential elections. We do not give money to state-wide campaigns, although we do support local politicians. Our thinking is that we are more effective at the local level. Accordingly, we have not taken a position on the Presidential election.

A group photo was taken—officers and Local members posed with a banner for President Obama.

AFTNJ has created the position of election coordinator at the Local level. The coordinator will do the political work, including coordinating the Labor Walks and meeting with Yolanda on a weekly basis. Anyone interested in this position should contact Jennifer.

Rich described his Board of Trustees address in which he expressed the Local's support on the bond issue. The bond issue is important as it will provide much-needed funding for the maintenance and construction of buildings. The university would get at least a ninth of the total amount (\$240 million), although its share may larger portion than that.

The minutes of the Sept 12 meeting were passed with unanimous approval.

Rich mentioned that the Local's website has a link to the advanced ballot for the election.

Contract ratification

The contract was ratified and the Local received a half-dozen or so queries related to it. The union did not put out the numbers to avoid giving off the impression that the vast majority of our members, among those who voted, were fine with the contract. Regarding increments and retroactive pay, there is no indication when

payroll would be able to implement them. Rich said that at-least a three-week delay should be expected. As for figuring out the exact amount of increment, please contact Human Resources. You can information about range, step and anniversary date from the payroll office.

Rich also announced that the Council election (for President) took place, but Bill Sullivan, who ran for the position, was not elected.

Jennifer Higgins said that the Homecoming would take place Saturday, Oct 13,. The Local will have a table and members can volunteer to hand out water. There are other items that will be handed out and even volunteering for an hour would be helpful. Rich added that it is an occasion for us to raise awareness about the Union. There is no ticketing on the Homecoming Day and it is a nice day for meeting alumni and for just having fun. Jennifer said that there would be tailgating between College Hall and Russ Hall.

Betsy Montanez announced that the open period for enrollment in Flex accounts has commenced. On November 28, there would be a workshop on what it means to be a no-limits employee. On Dec 19, there would be a Holiday Luncheon.

Jennifer said that the Council would be doing an investigation on per diem employees. People (10-month employees) doing unit work should get benefits. Jennifer asked those present to contact her by email to tell her about per diem employees in their unit. Betsy added that if there were a master list of per diem employees, it would not be possible to single out individuals.

Karen Hughes said that a Step-1 hearing was held about a faculty member who was not paid for a summer job. If you are doing summer work or work that is not part of your job description, please get in writing information about who is going to pay you.

Rich said that the last newsletter contained suggestions about collegial behavior. The idea was not to tell members that they couldn't have positive relationship with students. However, it was prompted by the fact that we have a number of pending cases where allegedly problematic behavior took place.

A question was asked about what the Local was doing about Winter Closing. Dana said that the Local is trying to have the administration agree to more flexibility regarding the Winter closing and Thanksgiving.

Ken Brook said that the Local has drawn up a list of issues for negotiations. The two topmost issues are: Sabbaticals and Instructional Specialists

The administration wanted the negotiations on the two issues to be linked. About the sabbaticals, the administration has indicated that they are open to having them in Spring 2013. Since it would be truncated, there would be fewer than usual units

given. In order to expedite the review process, the administration has asked for eliminating the peer-review part of the review process for Spring 2013. The whole process of sabbaticals will be moved to the spring semester to allow everyone a chance to apply. It's the faculty pressure on the administration that has made all the difference in this case.

Rich said that there is a good chance we will have sabbaticals in the Spring semester. It is possible that the deadline for submitting application would be November 1. Applicants would have to provide a strong justification as to why they want a sabbatical in the spring semester. You can use your application from last year, but please make appropriate changes.

Ken discussed the issue of Instructional Specialists. The Board of Trustees has created two new positions: Instructional Specialist and Clinical Specialist. Instructional Specialist positions will entail only teaching responsibilities and related activities, including attending meetings connected to the programs. The Clinical Specialists (CSS) would coordinate internships and practica. These would be fiscal year appointments, with the potential for renewal. Either position could include individuals with or without Doctorates and neither position have any research or service components.

A question was raised about whether the sabbaticals would predominantly go to younger faculty members. Rich said that that was not the case. There has been no change to the criteria for sabbaticals, which were taken out from the old contract.

New Business—Jennifer Higgins

On Oct 24, there would a FMLA workshop. FMLA is more than maternity leave; it also covers leave to take care of an ailing family member. The workshop would take place in Ferraro Lounge, University Hall, at 1 pm.

Meeting Adjourned