

LOCAL 1796
At
William Paterson University of New Jersey
General and Executive/Local Council Meeting

Date: September 18, 2007
Location: Raubinger 1
Time: 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm

Present: S. Tardi, L. Gazzillo Diaz, J. Pinkston, M. Mwaura, E. Matthews, S. Selke, F. Pavese, I. DiMaio, R. Wolk, J. Wilkerson, G. Pope, R. Schwartz, K. Martus, G. Guerrieri, J. Hsu, J. Carter, J. Najarian, S. Wollock, P. Swanson, R. Soto, M. Innis-Jimenez, S. Betts, D. Fengya, K. Louie, J. Peterman, A. Montare, K. McNeal, K. Chen, J. Felson, A. Rotonda, A. Scala, J. Matthew, M. Giorgio, R. McCullum, V. Vicari, E. Goldstein, I. Nack, C. Simon, K.H. Kim, E. Phadia, A. Cheo, A. Grossman, S. Godar, R. Kovalski, J. Levitan, D. Van Boerum, J. Heavy, S. Rienstra

Items distributed to the Council and General Membership:

- 1) Minutes of the May 8, 2007 General and Executive/Local Council Meeting
- 2) Lists of State Delegates and Department Representatives

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:44 pm.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made by K. Martus, and seconded by E. Goldstein. Approved unanimously.

Modifying agenda items:

The following will be added to the agenda: voting on Department Representatives, State Delegates and the AFT Local 1796 student scholarship. A motion to modify the agenda was made by A. Montare and seconded by R. McCallum. Approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes of the May 8, 2007 General Membership and Executive/Local Council Meeting and Emergency Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes was made by A. Montare, seconded by G. Pope. Approved unanimously.

4. President's Report

Tardi reported that Grievance officer Chriss Williams is in the hospital. Tardi and Gazzillo Diaz will assume his duties with assistance from a representative from the Council as necessary. Tardi said she and Gazzillo Diaz both have experience with grievance work and feel confident handling retention issues and other grievances.

She urged any Professional Staff members who are working out of title to notify the Union immediately.

J. Levitan made a motion to send a “get well” gift to Williams. R. Martinez seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Tardi said ballots for the contract ratification were sent. Tardi said she was not in favor of the Council’s decision to permit new members to sign up and vote for contract ratification right up until the time ballots were due. Tardi said she feels Union membership should be increased throughout the year, not by “dragging in bodies” for votes. Tardi noted that we wanted individuals to sign up as members because they have faith in the Union, not so they can simply vote. A member stated she received two items over the summer, but did not receive a ballot. A note was made for the office administrative assistant to look into this matter.

5. Constitution

Tardi said this is a continuation of the first reading of the Constitution and it will go through a second reading with any revisions before a final vote is taken. Gazzillo Diaz said she will read each article beginning from where we last left off (Article 4 – Executive Board Local Council and Elections). She encouraged the membership to point out errors and suggest modifications. She said she is already aware of the formatting issues

Continuation of Article IV –

A member pointed out that on Section 3, number 4 that Professional Staff should be capitalized. The member said the wording on page 5 is not clear and seems to refer only to the Professional Staff. The member suggested that it should state “Union Membership.”

A member questioned number 2, “term of office.” Tardi explained that the Council changed their Constitution after our last revision, so some of the items suggested for modification are in response to their revisions. Tardi noted every other Local has a two year term of office while ours is one year. Tardi said we don’t have to change the term, but she feels that it generally takes two years for Executive Board members to understand the scope of their duties and make significant contributions as a group. In addition, she noted that the Constitution has a mechanism in place for removing people who are not appropriately fulfilling their roles.

A member stated that the Faculty Senate switched their councils so they are staggered, and he questioned if this proposed change would be staggered or if they would be in one sweep? Tardi said it would be “one sweep.” She said this Local tends to have long terms of leadership. Irwin Nack was president for 15 years, and Linda Dye for 12 years, so there has always been overlap. Tardi said we have never had a problem with all Executive Board members being new.

A motion to modify the length of the term of Executive Board members to two years was made by Scala and seconded by Martus. The motion passed unanimously.

A member questioned whether or not elections could be accomplished electronically. Tardi noted that we have not found a reliable and cost effective mechanism for getting ballots out to the membership by email. One problem is that the administration has consistently given us an incomplete list of members and agency fee payers. If elections are necessary, the pros and cons will be presented to the General and Executive Local Council who will determine if the election should be held electronically or by mail.

Another member suggested changing the wording in section 5 to state that “Officers of the Union shall be required to have been a member of the Union for a period of six months prior to nomination.”

A motion to accept Article IV with the revisions was made by J. Najarian and seconded by E. Martinez. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article V

Gazzillo Diaz stated that this article was rewritten to instate that the President is also ex-officio to the budget and audit committee. A member questioned whether ex-officio also means non-voting. Tardi stated that when the Union states ex-officio it means non-voting, but that will be added in order to make the article more clear.

A member asked if committees are always made up of three members. Tardi explained that before she took over leadership there were no committees. She said it is sometimes difficult to get members for each committee so occasionally the number is as small as 3.

A motion to pass Article V with the revisions was made by K. Martus and seconded by E. Martinez. The motion passed unanimously.

Article VI

A motion to pass Article VI was made by E. Goldstein and seconded by R. Wolk. The motion passed unanimously.

Article VII

A member asked for an explanation of the agency fee letter. Gazzillo Diaz said the agency fee letter is clarification of the difference between the agency fee payer and a member. Tardi said a number of agency fee letters may be produced. One includes the accounting from the chargeable to the non-chargeable items.

A member questioned the oversight of investments and suggested adding that the president and the treasurer will oversee the funds, and that they will be presented to the membership at least once per year. Tardi noted that this is aligned with the current practice. The member also stated that in addition to the budget and funds, the 4th paragraph of the President’s information should state “oversees budget and long-term investing of the Union.”

A member asked about the grievance committee. Tardi stated that arbitration matters go through the Executive Board and then to the membership for a decision.

A member questioned if there should be language indicating that the budget should be presented to the budget committee at the end of the year. The member said that last year the budget was not presented to the committee in a timely fashion. Tardi said this matter has been discussed and clarified with the treasurer who now understands the timetable for presenting the budget.

A motion to accept Article VII with the revisions was made by J. Najarian and seconded by E. Martinez. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article VIII

A motion to accept Article VIII was made by K. Martus and seconded by A. Scala. The motion was approved unanimously.

Tardi said that due to time, she would like to shift away from the Constitution for a few minutes in order to discuss the Irwin Nack Scholarship and AFT Local 1796 scholarship. She reminded the membership that last year it was agreed that the amount of the scholarships would be increased to \$1,000, and that they would be offered through Institutional Advancement in hopes of getting more applicants. Tardi said Institutional Advancement was no more successful in generating applicants and we ended up with two applicants and two scholarships. After a brief discussion, a motion to take back control of the two scholarships was made by A. Scala and seconded by A. Cheo. The motion was approved unanimously.

Tardi called attention to the lists of State Delegates and Department Representatives. A member requested that State Delegates be notified that full strength is needed one week in advance. Tardi recommended that the list of State Delegates be approved with the understanding that the Executive Board would determine how many delegates are needed to attend on a meeting by meeting basis. She noted that this is a cost effective measure since delegates are paid \$100 per meeting. (Note: Attendance at meetings is a role and responsibility for the Union President, VP for Grievances and VP of Negotiations, and they are not paid \$100 per meeting.)

The lists of State Delegates and Department Representatives were discussed. A motion to approve the State Delegates (with the Tardi clarification) and the Department Representatives with revisions was made by J. Najarian and seconded by K. Martus. The motion was approved unanimously.

Constitution, Article IX

A motion to accept Article IX was made by J. Wilkerson, seconded by K. Martus. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article X

Pavese suggested a change to section 1 to include “If the University is closed on the date the meeting is scheduled, it will be rescheduled by the President at least one week prior to the rescheduled date.” A motion to approve Article X with the revision was made by S. Selke, and seconded by J. Levitan. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article XI

A change was suggested to Article XI, stating that dues shall be fixed by a majority vote of members present at any General and Executive/Local Council meeting provided notice of contemplated dues increase has been announced at a previous meeting by the Executive Board. A motion to accept Article XI as revised was made by E. Goldstein and seconded by J. Wilkerson. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article XII

Regarding the circulating of the Constitution, a member suggested adding the word “electronically” regarding amendments to the Constitution, so the sentence states “A majority of those present shall be circulated not only in writing but also electronically.” A motion to accept Article XII with the revision was made by J. Najarian and seconded by A. Scala. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article XIII

A motion to accept Article XIII was made by F. Pavese and seconded by J. Najarian. Motion was approved unanimously.

Article XIV

A member suggested adding to section 1 that one copy of the Constitution be given to the CNJSCL, and that copies shall be made available to “any” affiliated organizations upon request instead of “other.” A motion to accept Article XIV with the revisions was made by J. Najarian and seconded by F. Pavese. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article XV

A member noted that there should be a period after the word meeting on the 4th line, and that the extra space should be deleted. A member questioned what constitutes a quorum, and that this should be mentioned after the line that 2/3rds of members present vote for recall at which a quorum is present. A discussion ensued regarding what percentage constitutes a quorum, and it was decided that it is 25% of those present on the attendance list.

A motion to approve Article XV with the revisions was made by K. Martus and seconded by E. Matthews. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article XVI

A motion to approve Article XVI was made by J. Najarian and seconded by S. Selke. The motion was approved unanimously.

Article XVII

A motion to approve Article XVII was made by A. Montare and seconded by F. Pavese. The motion was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn made by A. Montare, and seconded by F. Pavese. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Pinkston,
Recording Secretary
[Edited:]