

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

Date: May 13, 2008
Location: UC 171
Time: 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm

Present: S. Tardi, C. Williams, J. Pinkston, E. Matthews, S. Selke, F. Pavese, C. Goldstein, G. Guerrieri, M. Peek, J. Carter, J. Najarian, R. Soto, S. Betts, D. Fengya, K. Louie, J. Peterman, A. Montare, G. Furst, A. Holpp Scala, J. Matthew, M. Giorgio, C. Simon, V. Vicari, A. Cheo, I. Nack, L. Rivela, D. VanBoerum, J. Heavey, S. Rienstra, M. Arteaga, M. Williams, R. Cauthen, D. Potacco, K.H. Kim

Items distributed to the Council and General Membership:

- 1) April 15, 2008 General and Executive/Local Council Meeting Minutes

- 1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 12:36 pm.

- 2. Adoption of the Agenda**

Tardi requested to amend the agenda by adding “Announcements” as #4. **A motion to approve the agenda with the modifications was made by A. Montare and seconded by S. Rienstra. Approved unanimously.**

- 3. Approval of Minutes of the April 15, 2008 General Membership and Executive/Local Council Meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made by A. Montare and seconded by S. Rienstra. Approved unanimously.**

- 4. Announcements**

Tardi explained that the sheet cake is a tribute to Linda Gazzillo Diaz and Muroki Mwaura who are stepping down from their Union Leadership positions, as well as to Lou Rivela who is retiring from the University. Tardi noted that although Rivela did not serve in a leadership position, he has served for many years as a “mover and shaker” in the Union and the Faculty Senate (applause from the membership).

Tardi noted that the Irwin Nack Scholarship was not awarded this year but will be doubled next year. In addition, the State Council will be giving a \$1,000 scholarship to each of the State Universities, so next year instead of two scholarships, we will be awarding 5, totaling \$5,000. The scholarships will be announced early in the academic year in order to give the students plenty of time to apply.

5. Action Items

a. Communications Director

Tardi explained that the Executive Board has been discussing ways to improve our Local's website and interface. Vince Vicari has agreed to work with a web designer to create an interactive interface that will encourage member participation. In addition, Vicari will act as a liaison between the website designer and the Executive Board. Currently, Bob Wolk serves on the Executive Board as the Librarian Representative and Communication Officer, and the Executive Board is proposing to disconnect the two positions. If appointed as Communications Director, Vicari would take over one of Wolk's credits, as well as the one credit currently earned by the webmaster. The Board also seeks permission to compensate Vicari for the initial set-up on the new website which is estimated to involve about 10 hours.

A motion was made by A. Montare to hire V. Vicari at a rate of \$65 per hour for 10 hours to setup the new website and also to appoint Vicari to the Communications Director position on the Executive Board. The motion was seconded by K. Louie and approved unanimously.

b. Safety Resolution

Tardi gave examples of a number of safety related incidents that took place on the campus this year that she did not feel were taken seriously enough by the administration, and she suggested that the University should offer a mandatory classroom management orientation for new faculty members. She said new faculty members attend orientation anyway, and a classroom management workshop could help them identify warning signs they should look for and exactly what to tolerate and not tolerate in the classroom. A member agreed, stating that this would be helpful for all faculty members as she is seeing more and more inappropriate behavior in the classroom, and there is a possibility that even some very seasoned faculty members do not know the best way to deescalate certain situations. Tardi said she already spoke to the President and Provost about this matter and has the attention of one of members of the Board of Trustees. She noted that while we cannot mandate that full professors go through any type of orientation or special training, we can mandate the training as a requirement of employment. A member questioned if this is related to the student's code of conduct. Tardi responded that it is absolutely related and that the student handbook needs updated to include a "no tolerance" policy. Tardi described a recent situation with a student who made gun threats and noted that if the students in the classroom would not have reported it, no one would know. Tardi said she plans to discuss this matter with the chief of police because even though this student made a threat, he is only being removed for one semester and will be allowed to work at home. In September he will be allowed back on campus and she questions whether this is an appropriate resolution to the problem. A member questioned the policy for disruptive students. Tardi stated that if it's the first time, the faculty member should speak to the student after class, but if at anytime the

faculty member senses danger, they should call security because it is better to be safe than sorry. Tardi described two recent incidents involving guns. In one case a campus police officer's gun was discharged and in another incident, a student brought a toy gun to campus for a theatre production. Tardi stated that many faculty members are not accustomed to some of the behaviors that take place in the classrooms and on campus, so clear guidelines should be presented up front.

A motion to develop a safety resolution that will include a statement of no tolerance was made by A. Holpp Scala and seconded by R. Soto.

Discussion: Williams said the language in the resolution should include creative wording that is fair and allows for a judicial body that questions matters. He also recommended implementing a new hire safety information program and an additional program for current faculty and professional staff. A member agreed, stating that students should also be informed in a much more thorough manner so the policy is taken seriously. Tardi stated that when something happens on campus, the incident and resolution should be printed in the student newspapers so it is clearly known that inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. She said one problem is that everything is kept quiet, and if students and/or faculty members don't come forward, the administration does not share the information. Tardi noted that the Board of Trustees has a safety committee, and one of the trustees, Michael Jackson, said he was not aware of the recent incidents and was very concerned about them and concerned that he was not made aware of them. A member commented that he wrote a proposal regarding an information-sharing committee because he feels there should be information sharing and accountability from the campus police, but the proposal did not go anywhere. Tardi said that on July 5, 2007, she requested that a security task force be formed. The president agreed and stated that it would be convened by February of 2008 but no action has been taken. Tardi noted that when she questions him about the matter, he says that it will get done. She said this is a borderline Senate issue and she urged all senators to join with the Union to make sure these issues are addressed.

Pavese noted that the adjunct faculty are "left out in the cold" on these issues. A member stated that zero tolerance is very common in public schools, but there are a lot of pros and cons with it because a threat assessment needs to be completed. Tardi responded that the more complicated we make this, the more difficult it will be to implement. Tardi said she will make an attempt to attend the Board of Trustees' Safety Commission meeting and let the board know that faculty and staff are very concerned about safety issues on campus. The motion to develop a safety resolution passed unanimously.

6. President's Report

a. Faculty Layoff Update

Tardi reported that all the nursing faculty members were rehired, as well as one person in the History Department. The Union did advocate with the Council to go

to Jane Oaks who has the ear of the governor to discuss the fact that we were the only institution with this solution to the fiscal crisis. Tardi said she is not sure if that helped or not, but she hopes it is being considered because there are other ways to cut back instead of taking members out of the bargaining unit. A member asked if the budget cuts are over. Tardi responded that there was originally a \$10.4 million deficit and we are now about \$2 million short. The Board of Trustees did not pass a tuition and fee hike yet, but last year it was passed at the July meeting. Tardi said people can still be rehired into June, and that she does not anticipate that more money will be taken away. A member inquired about the summer policy, stating that it seemed to be much more developed and specific than in the past, and he wondered if this is leading up to a five day work week in the summer. Tardi said she asked the administration about a five day work week in the summer and was told that the four day work week benefits the institution by saving on energy and there are no plans to change the schedule.

b. Administrative Evaluations

Tardi reminded the Membership to complete the administrative evaluations. Tardi stated that the Union was right to stop the first evaluation process because due to the way it was being administered, there was a chance that individuals could have completed multiple surveys and that would have impacted the study. In addition, there was a possibility that it would not have been anonymous. Tardi stated that while she doesn't believe there were hackers, there was the potential for this to occur. A member questioned if the surveys are more secure than last time. Tardi responded that if you follow the directions given by the Union they are secure, but if you follow the directions that were given by the Senate they are not secure because those directions made use of the University server. A member stated that many people are upset because they completed the survey a month ago, and must now complete it again. Tardi stated that the revised process assures anonymity and prevents completion of multiple surveys by one individual. She said she understands that it is frustrating, but it is still very important to complete the surveys because the Board of Trustees will take the results very seriously if the Union's instructions are followed.

c. Advisement

Tardi stated that she recently received a message alerting her that she has new advisees, and she questioned if anyone was informed about this new process. Tardi said this is a violation of the terms and conditions of employment because it is the end of the semester and it is not fair to increase the advisement load the week before exams, when faculty members have papers to correct, exams to put together, and reports to write. The supervisor of advisement made this decision and it is an undue burden on faculty members. Tardi noted that when the administration is changing the obligations of the advisors, they need to inform people.

7. NL Professional Staff Update

Selke explained that an emergency meeting of the Professional Staff was called recently due to a failure to reach a campus wide agreement regarding comp time. Since no agreement was reached with the administration, the contract will now be implemented which states that campuses who do not have a Local agreement (William Paterson is one of only two in the State University system), must implement a year-long study of the number of hours that Professional Staff members work per week. Selke explained that full participation in the study is needed in order to be effective and to demonstrate that Professional Staff routinely put in above and beyond the normal 35 hour work week. Selke assured the Membership that this will not be very taxing and will simply require a few extra keystrokes on their usual bi-weekly time sheet. Selke noted that unless everyone participates, the administration will have no reason to work on a Local agreement and the subject will be dropped. Tardi said it is imperative that all Professional Staff members participate because if not, the State will claim that by choosing not to participate, members acknowledge that there is no problem and the State will not be willing to negotiate the matter again. Selke said a letter will go out to the home addresses of all Professional Staff members and she urged everyone to speak to their colleagues about this issue. A member stated that Professional Staff members should not feel trepidation because a supervisor might be upset, but rather that the matter can be approached in a conciliatory rather than antagonistic way. The member noted that you may get along very well with your supervisor right now, but if a change occurs, the new person may not be as understanding. Tardi noted that this is a great way of documenting how much work and dedication there really is from the Professional Staff. A member commented that once the process is established, it would be better for the Union to notify the supervisor rather than relying on the administration to inform the supervisors. Tardi said she wanted Office of Employee Relations (OER) to implement the study right away in hopes that it could begin in November, but the OER does not work over the summer. Tardi said in order to participate, the Professional Staff member would put in about five minutes at the end of the day which isn't much since this is our last chance to put some reigns on what takes place on this campus in regard to Professional Staff. In a related matter, a member pointed out that according to article 23G of the contract, Professional Staff members who work three hours over their normal work time on a project approved by their supervisor can request \$7.50 for a meal cost. The member stated that this is something few people know about, but that more people should start considering.

Tardi noted that the Librarian Range Adjustment goes into effect in September, and the amount awarded for this year will be retro to July. The Union Leadership will also negotiate 2008-2009 awards in September (applause from membership).

9. Grievance Report

Williams reported that there was nothing new to report.

10. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by A. Montare and seconded by F. Pavese. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Pinkston,
Recording Secretary
[Edited:]