

MSP Executive Board Meeting Notes

February 12, 2020

Members Present: Jeremy Smith, Christine Turner, Paulina Borrego, Sandy Litchfield, Tristram Seidler, Kevin Young, John Staudenmayer, Maciej Ciesielski, Asha Nadkarni, Jen Adams, Erica Scharrer, Marc Liberatore, Jeanne Brunner, Sigrid Schmalzer (chair)

Staff Present: Heather LaPenn, Lori Reardon

1) The minutes of 1/29/20 were unanimously approved.

2) Updates

- a. Bargaining. Asha updated. The session scheduled for last Friday was cancelled; we meet again this Friday. The team met last Monday to discuss and finalize language clean up proposals. One of our proposals has to do with the process for soliciting internal letters in major personnel reviews. Heather inquired with Board members about whether or not they felt internal letters were an important piece of the review. Most thought useful with regard to service but not necessarily research. There was question about whether or not having internal letters be part of the review should be at the discretion of the candidate.
- b. Bargaining Support Committees
 - Climate & Sustainability: Kevin updated that subcommittees have been formed to look at and do research on transportation, resources and facilities, and investments and contracts.
 - Gender Equity: Heather updated that possible proposals are being considered. Such proposals may include funding/support to help departments develop transparent workloads, requirement that new hires be told to contact MSP as a resource for negotiating job offers, better promotion/notice of bargained policies, more funding (for longer period) for child care and to include librarians and NTT, and bridge funds for cluster hiring.
 - Holistic Teaching: Lori updated that the committee is doing research about best practices on holistic methods for evaluating teaching. This should include peer and self-evaluations. There was discussion of reframing how SRTIs are used (not as a measure of teaching to be used in major personnel actions but rather as feedback for faculty to gauge the student experience in their classes) and also how the AFR might be modified with regard to teaching. This group is set to meet every Friday through February.
 - Dental/Vision: Erica updated on the work of her committee where a spreadsheet has been created that shows benefit comparisons between and among other unit and non-unit plans. The group has identified potential asks at the bargaining table including: changing the current FTE employer contribution to that of headcount, adding orthodontic coverage, and increasing the maximum benefit level and adjusting deductibles. MetLife is also being contacted by our former and current Health & Welfare trustees to request a cost analysis for a plan that would include these enhanced benefits.

- Online education: tabled as Kate (chair) was not in attendance at today's board meeting).

3) Vote on board appointment of Paulina Borrego – Sigrid moved and Christine seconded and then the board voted unanimously (and enthusiastically) to appoint Paulina. Her name will be placed on the election ballot for an official vote this spring.

4) Higher Education Advocacy Day

Each board member has a few department reps, like a phone/email tree. When there is a need to mobilize, board members should reach out to their assigned reps. We are hoping to get people to do the ask soon so we can get people onto the bus -- they need to ask actual people who might get on the bus and have them confirm to the MSP office. Some board members are committed; others have targeted recruits. Currently 12 confirmed. Jen suggests we target the MSP retiree list -- Lori plans to do so (one is already planning to attend).

5) All-In Campaign

Officers had a good brainstorming session. We will be meeting with department reps when next we meet; goal is to get people energized at that meeting. Two big ideas last week: First, talking with non-members. Second, one-year follow-up conversations. We might lose new people who never hear from us again after an initial one-on-one; we are needing to do follow-up in any case as more people leave NEOs without signing up.

Previous challenges are finding the people: either setting up meetings or canvassing a building. Other things raised: How to catch up with people off-campus. Christine points out during follow-ups, you can still make contact if they're not there; a handwritten note atop an MSP flyer or the like. Paulina asks about whether people must fully commit; Jen covers the abatement process (five so far during pilot). Paulina asks about whether there are benefits for higher membership percentages; Heather notes that high membership's reward is stronger negotiating position and contract enforcement. John asks that we circulate the recruitment talking points; google doc of the list of non-members can also be circulated electronically.

Erika notes there are many reasons people say no: we should do data gathering on the reasons beyond the anti-union stalwarts (as we do track how conversations go when canvassers report them).

Vet tech is in Mt. Ida; we are working hard on recruiting them. Paulina goes out there from time to time and may make those contacts.

Erika notes framing is important; all reps might not know about Janus, and it would be good to explain what will happen long term if membership rates go down. Christine points out that joining unions and doing recruitment is an important significant act. Sandy says it's hard to hire people who are single-term lecturers. Lori reminds us that anyone who is less than half-time should not be in the unit until their second consecutive appointment.

There is a brief discussion about partial dues (which we do have); progressive dues, and offsetting dues for members who cannot pay full membership. It may make more sense to

investigate offsets more once the abatement offset pilot ends.

6) Western Mass Area Federation Dues

Currently MTA pays for 1,000 MSP members; we want to raise it to 1,400, so we can have our full complement of delegates. WMAF is the merger of the three area labor councils (now known as assemblies). MSP is one of the biggest unions in the ALF. Kevin Smith is our rep on their interim board; they are about to have elections for a regular board. We have one reserved seat (currently Kevin) -- he is happy to do it but would be fine if someone else would like to take over. There are also monthly delegate meetings. ALF aims to bring labor unions in the area into communication and solidarity. Right now there is a debate about whether it's going to move forward as a traditional business union or a in a more progressive stance. More MSP representative will benefit the body overall. The additional 400 members would be an expense of \$1,440 for MSP to pay on top of MTA's contribution. Treasurer notes we are spending down our reserve (as planned) but perhaps faster than planned -- but this spending was OK. Kevin points out that ALF has a lot of power in various venues, for example, at the legislative breakfast coming up, MSP got to get on the agenda to present about higher ed funding. Heather notes this ask was to help democratize union representation in Western Mass. Christine moves to increase membership level. John seconds. Jen opposes. All others in favor.

7) Co-sponsorship of Know Your Rights panel

GEO/ALANA/International students caucus is planning to organize panel in light of recent events -- a way to do outreach and consolidate networks between students and works. Tentatively in the first week of March. Kevin met with organizers last week; they would like our endorsement and help turning out people. Not a money request. Jen moves to co-sponsor. Christine seconds. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marc Liberatore (assisted by Lori Reardon)