



Council of Representatives

Approved Meeting Minutes

September 25, 2008, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Room # 5401 (Candidates Forum)
Room # 5402 (Council Meeting)
Cuesta College

Attendance according to the sign-in page:

Academic Skills/DSPS

(None)

Biological Sciences

(none)

Business Education

Jack Sullivan

Counseling/Health Center

Dana Gough
Julie Smith

Engineering and Technology

(None)

English

Dennis Baeyen
June Beck

Fine Arts

Michael Burns

Human Development

Margie Perez-Sesser

Languages and Communication

John Arno
Beth-Ann Dumas
Tony Rector-Cavagnaro

Library Services

Kevin Bontenbal

Mathematics

Denise Chellsen
Julie Hoffman
Barbara McGee

Nursing / Allied Health

(none)

Performing Arts

(None)

Physical Education

(none)

Physical Sciences

Debra Stakes

Social Sciences

Peter Dill
Kathryn Logan
Mark Weber

Student Life and Leadership & Health Center

(None)

CCFT Executive Board

Allison Merzon – President
Mark Tomes – Sec.-Treas.
Victor Krulikowski –
Co-Grievance Officer
Peggy Wright –
Co-Grievance Officer
Jill Schubert – PT Faculty
Committee Chair

Visitors

(none)

The meeting was called to order by Allison Merzon at 3:07 p.m.

1. **Candidates Forum**

Merzon began the meeting by introducing the District 5 San Luis Obispo County Community College (Cuesta College) District Board of Trustees candidates, Dan Chacon and Gaye Galvan, and Andrea Devitt, COPE Chair. Devitt facilitated the forum. Each candidate gave an opening statement and then answered seven questions asked by Devitt, alternating which candidate answered each question first. Closing statements were then given by the candidates.

Approximately 40 people were in the audience, primarily faculty members. Copies of the candidates' campaign materials and other materials were provided to the

audience members. The forum ended at 4:00, and the Council re-convened at 4:08 p.m. in Room 5402.

Merzon commended Devitt for organizing a successful forum, particularly since Devitt has only been COPE chair for one week. Merzon noted that the forum was what the union is about: letting faculty hear the candidates and making informed decisions.

Merzon distributed blank advisory ballots for the Council members to complete, giving their advice as to which candidate the EB should endorse. The Council members completed and returned them to Merzon.

A motion was made (McGee/Dill) to approve the September 11, 2008 Council meeting minutes, as modified via emails. It passed unanimously.

2. **Code of Conduct**

Weber began a discussion of the CCFT Code of Conduct, which was developed approximately two years ago. He noted that there were multiple abuses of it, including charges against five faculty members that had no specific actions accompanying the charges. A motion was made (Weber/Bontenbal) to abolish the Code of Conduct and drop all outstanding charges against the faculty members. A discussion ensued, with the following questions asked and points made:

- Should we abolish the entire Code?
- Much of the Code and charges are about what was said, affecting freedom of speech.
- The Code has a punitive tone and does not serve its purpose.
- Faculty members should behave in an appropriate and professional manner, not in an insulting manner.
- The faculty manual has a section on expected and respectful behaviors; that is sufficient.
- We might engage in trainings on how to converse respectfully.
- The Code has been used as a tool of censorship – one faculty member had a charge against him for signing onto an email requesting information from CFT.
- Recent meetings of the Council of Representatives have been examples of good discussions with respect towards each other.
- Some of the people who abused the Code are no longer getting attention.
- Some people at past meetings were not appropriate and were being obstructionists; we need the Code to force people to behave properly.
- Merzon noted that her role is to enforce good conduct and to mitigate between members, if necessary, and that she has “no problem doing that.”
- Some parts of the Code do not work, such as the section that says that a member cannot speak unless s/he has researched the information thoroughly.
- The current Code can be abolished, and we can develop a new one that works better.
- Robert’s Rules of Order will take care of these problems if actually used; the past union leadership did not use them, and hence, there were problems.
- Robert’s Rules of Order do not cover emails, where most of the charges were levied.

The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made (McGee/Rector-Cavagnaro) to use the procedures outlined in the handout, “Ten Points for a Union Meeting” (an easy-to-follow Robert’s Rules of Order guide) for Council meetings. A discussion ensued. It was noted that the chair is a neutral party and that having the chair (the President of CCFT) not able to make motions and vote and having the Secretary-Treasurer taking notes and writing the motions help the meeting to run smoothly. A member noted that everybody should have a voice in the meetings, including the Executive Board, and that the Council should not make rules based on possible abuses.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Cuesta and Part-Timers**

With Beck's consent, this item was tabled due to time constraints.

4. **Budget Report**

Tomes reported that there is a lot of work to do regarding the treasury. The Executive Board at its last meeting adjusted the figure for release time for Grievance Officers to half its initial amount; a copy of the revised budget will be distributed and posted soon. The rebate from AFT per capita dues for agency fee payers has not been retrieved in the past few years, so Tomes is working on re-establishing that. Also, he is working with the CCFT attorney's office to investigate possible (inadvertent) double billing and not posting CCFT payments, as well as working on a variety of other issues.

5. **Personnel/ Negotiations Update**

Krulikowski reported on a number of confidential and other issues: the Executive Board voted to pursue arbitration on a particular case, the "mileage" issue has been resolved, there are a number of distance education issues that are not addressed in the contract that are coming up, and a variety of other minor issues that are getting resolved in favor of faculty members. Merzon was interested in seeing what the past joint CCFT/Senate Distance Education Committee had done in that arena.

Merzon noted that the system of having two Grievance Officers (as opposed to one Grievance Officer) is working well. She and the two officers make a good team, there are more opinions and perspectives with which to work, there is a quick turnaround time in resolving issues, and there is a lot of outreach to faculty members that is occurring. Wright commended Merzon's ability to change the administration's initial stances into solutions that are reasonable and fair to the faculty.

Merzon distributed a handout announcing training workshops on hiring procedure compliance and preventing harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. It is hoped to have a cadre of faculty members trained in Equal Employment Opportunity compliance to serve on hiring committees, which will have the end result of empowering faculty. The workshop will be sufficient for EEO compliant training. She also noted that there is much misunderstanding of the term "harassment" and that all faculty members could use training in this area.

Merzon reported that she has received much input regarding contract reopeners, including the valuable Council discussion two weeks ago. After much work sorting through the various issues and assigning them to the appropriate sections of the contract, she was told by the district just recently that the district has opted to re-open the entire contract. The first negotiation session is set tentatively for the first week in November 2008.

One Council member noted that it appears that contract language gets changed, sometimes in subtle ways, and he was wondering if someone is surreptitiously changing the document. Tomes noted that contract negotiations do result in subtle changes to the contract language, and that all changes are supposed to be marked with strikeouts (for deletions) and italics (for additions). Merzon reported that someone has volunteered to inspect proposals and the final contract to ensure that the language is exactly what was negotiated.

In response to a question regarding when sample contract language and other reopener issues should be submitted, Merzon reported that she will notify the Council of the order in which the various contract articles will be addressed in negotiations; however, the sooner members submit their proposals, the better.

6. **Division Concerns**

Merzon reported that Human Resources and Payroll are having very difficult times in getting the new Banner software to work properly with their procedures. There were over 100 part-time faculty pay errors in the August 31 paychecks. The largest errors will be remedied first. The district will be giving to faculty members procedures for how

to calculate their paychecks properly; although this might entail more work for faculty members, the end result will be a better understanding of our paychecks and the ability to double check them against HR and Payroll calculations.

Merzon distributed a handout that explains the abbreviations on the paystubs. She is working on having the myCuesta employee web page include more information, including a faculty member's step and column placement.

7. **Other**

Merzon reported that the Elections and the Constitution/Bylaws task forces will be "populated" soon.

A Council member asked why Merzon has 20% release time when the past CCFT President took that 20% release time to be Chief Negotiator and Merzon is not Chief Negotiator now. Merzon responded by saying that there is nothing that says the 20% is tied to negotiations, that the past CCFT President took the 20% even when very little contract negotiations were occurring, and that there is a lot of work to be done as CCFT President to justify the 20%. In fact, it has been noted by Shannon Willson, CFT Field Representative, and others that CCFT is large enough to justify hiring a full-time Executive Director, most of whose duties are performed now by the CCFT President.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Tomes, Secretary-Treasurer.