



Executive Board Meeting
Thursday, November 20, 2008, 2:15 p.m.
Room 3219 (Library Building), Cuesta College

Approved Minutes

Present: Kevin Bontenbal, Andrea Devitt, Victor Krulikowski, Steve Leone, Allison Merzon, Ron Ruppert, Jill Schubert, Mark Tomes, Peggy Wright

Absent: None

Guests: June Beck

The meeting was called to order at 2:23 p.m. by Allison Merzon.

1. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made (Tomes/Merzon) to approve changes to the draft minutes from the October 16, 2008 EB meeting; it passed unanimously. Also, Tomes noted that he would like to see posted on the CCFT website a notice that the November 6, 2008 Executive Board meeting did not have a quorum and, hence, no business was conducted, just in case anyone wondered if there were meeting minutes missing.

June Beck was introduced as the new Communications Committee Chair. It was noted that she must leave the meeting when confidential matters are being discussed since she is not an official member of the Executive Board (the position is not delineated in the CCFT Constitution).

2. Joint Union-Senate Report

Leone reported on a variety of issues, including a possible workshop on shared governance by the Community College League of California; a possible "Faculty Professional Development Day" on Thursday, January 15, 2009 (the day before Opening Day); and that the Distance Education Task Force now has members and will begin its work after Thanksgiving break.

It appears that the all-faculty myCuesta group might not be ready for use by the end of this semester, as had originally been planned by the district. There is a limit of only 1000 members allowed on the group list, and there are over 1200 members on the current faculty listserv(s). Tomes noted that there are only about 539 faculty members; he will forward to Leone the faculty members' names since Leone says he has been having difficulty procuring such a list from Human Resources.

The Enrollment Management Committee will probably include a Senate-appointed faculty member.

There have been mixed messages coming from the administration regarding cuts to the Spring 2009 schedule, ranging from an email to chairs from at least one Dean to start making cuts to statements by the Cuesta President that no cuts have been authorized. One concern is that cuts have been announced and implemented despite an agreement at the Planning and Budget Committee to discuss all cost-reduction strategies before deciding on any particular strategy (cuts to the Spring 2009 schedule being one such strategy).

Merzon requested that the Senate look at the Dean evaluation schedule; it might be overdue to start some evaluations.

The Senate Council will host a question and answer meeting for all faculty with the Deans and Vice Presidents regarding the decision-making processes that affect faculty members. It will be held on either December 5 or December 12.

The Faculty Manual Task Force is hoping to start its work at the beginning of the Spring 2009 semester.

3. Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Tomes reported that Julie Hoffsten has completed her audit and has told him that she hopes to write her report this week. He began a discussion of a GAAP audit by reminding the EB members that they had received a copy of John Pooley's proposal for a GAAP audit, which includes a bid of between \$5000 and \$6000. Tomes stated that a full, comprehensive audit of this sort is not required but is the type that an organization normally completes (accompanied by a forensic audit) when it wants to have a full accounting of the previous year's books (often with a change of leadership) and when it wants to hear suggestions for how to improve its record-keeping and other financial practices. CCFT has never before had an audit at this full level. In addition, a GAAP audit can be used to satisfy AFT's requirement for an annual financial review or audit. A motion was made (Ruppert/Wright) to approve Pooley's proposal. It passed unanimously.

Tomes reported that there was only one faculty member who met the "low salary" criteria set by the EB to waive fees or dues. This faculty member only worked for one month and did not have any fees deducted because she was a new faculty member and was getting the fair share notification. Tomes will monitor the payroll list and alert the Payroll Office staff to waive dues or fees for a particular faculty member (who meets the criteria), putting the responsibility of making the determination of who gets the waiver with CCFT (where it should be).

Merzon reported that she had sent an email to CCFT committee chairs asking them to seek prior approval of expenses incurred as part of their committee work. Tomes added that he needs (as Treasurer) one copy of whatever was copied or mailed, as well as the original or the carbon copy of a Reprographics order, so that the auditor can determine if it is a "chargeable or non-chargeable" item to the agency fee payers.

Tomes reported that CFT has denied the third legal defense grant for a particularly expensive case "due to excessive cost." Tomes has asked the CFT Secretary-Treasurer (via email) for specifics on the denial, but he has not received a response. This third grant application was for a large amount of legal bills. AFT has granted the second application, but there has not been word of whether it will grant the third application or not.

After discussion, a motion was made (Tomes/Ruppert) and passed unanimously to approve all reasonable expenses for the CCFT President to attend the CFT State Council and Community College Council meetings for the rest of the 2008-2009 academic year; it was noted that these expenses have already been budgeted for the year.

The CFT Leadership Conference will take place on February 5 - 6, 2009 in Burlingame, CA. Merzon will ask the Council of Representatives members if anyone is interested in attending (after Tomes looks at the budget to see how many members we can afford to send).

The CFT Annual Convention takes place from March 20 - 22, 2009 in Sacramento, CA. Although we are allocated 14 delegate spots, we probably cannot afford to reimburse that many to go. Tomes, again, will look at the budget implications and report back to the EB for the EB to determine how many delegates CCFT can send. Afterwards, Merzon will notify the CCFT membership that they can be nominated to be a delegate at the convention.

After discussion, a motion was made (Tomes/Devitt) and passed unanimously to approve up to \$100 for color copies of each union newsletter for the remainder of the academic year. The color copies are to be distributed to Council of Representative members for posting in the division staff rooms. A motion was made (Ruppert/Merzon) and passed unanimously to pay a stipend of \$100, including retroactively, for the newsletter designer for each newsletter published this academic year.

Devitt reported on the estimated costs of long- and short-sleeve CCFT-logo t-shirts for union members. There was consensus to buy only from unionized shops. It was decided that a design will be presented at the December 2, 2008 membership meeting and see how many members want to order a shirt.

Schubert began a discussion of the stipend budgeted for the Part-Time Faculty Committee Chair by distributing copies of an assessment of the duties of the chair (per the new job description) and the hours needed to perform the duties; the assessment shows a total of 82 hours per semester at \$29.00 per hour, for a grand total of \$2378 per semester.

Schubert noted that last year there was no active Part-Time Faculty Committee and that she was not expecting such an active group this year, nor was she expecting the change in job description that included attending EB and Council meetings (she said that she had not been invited to those meetings last year). In addition, she said that once she reached her budgeted limit of \$1000 this semester, she “had no incentive” to continue.

EB members responded by noting that Schubert’s expectation that there would not be any committee activity did not seem to be reasonable, that her financial situation appears to have been dictating her perspective, and that there certainly should be fair remuneration for duties performed. Many members commented that unions traditionally have relied on many volunteer hours to accomplish their goals; they recited the number of volunteer hours they put in over their allotted reassigned and/or release time, including those EB members that receive zero paid hours and no stipend to do union work. There was no support for an hour-for-hour payment for chairing a union committee.

It was suggested that Schubert bring to the next EB meeting an updated budget proposal for the position.

Tomes reported that we currently have \$35,154.92 in the CCFT treasury. We have legal bills totaling about \$29,000, which will take about 3 months to pay off. We incur about \$1000 in new legal bills each month due to various on-going and new issues that need attention from our attorney. Merzon noted that we save money by going through Shannon Willson and CFT attorneys (or Willson contacting Bezemek directly) when appropriate.

4. Faculty Issues

Merzon distributed copies of draft member surveys examining members’ opinions about the evaluation process and negotiations. She reported that the Mathematics division is distributing internally an evaluation packet that could be a model for the district; it includes copies of the evaluation forms, a timeline, and other items helpful for completing peer evaluations. One suggested idea was to have a mentor sign-up list that a faculty member could access for choosing a mentor, being observed, and getting advice on their teaching practices, all before an evaluation takes place. CCFT is exploring such a sign-up as part of a flex workshop.

5. Committee/Task Force Reports

COPE – Devitt reported that she has been having difficulty getting COPE committee members. CCFT has increased its monthly COPE payroll deductions from \$38 at the beginning of the semester to \$99; however, that is short of a goal that hopes to increase CCFT’s ability to adequately participate in the next Board of Trustees election.

Constitution/Bylaws Revision Committee – Tomes reported that the committee is using the AFT Small Local Model Constitution as a template for its re-write of the CCFT Constitution, blending aspects of both into one document. He received feedback from the EB on ideas for the composition of the Executive Board, noting that labor law states that only those members elected by the membership or a constituent group of the membership are allowed to make motions and vote on the EB and that all union members are allowed to be in officer and other governing positions (including part-time faculty members being officers).

Part-Time Faculty Committee – Beck and Schubert reported that the committee had a meeting and is planning a membership drive and looking into the possibility of a Part-Time Faculty Breakfast on Opening Day. Beck and Schubert met with Human Resources staff to

explore changes to the Banner pay stub web page to give more information to the faculty member. They received one anonymous “story” in their request for anecdotes of discrimination as a part-time faculty member.

Beck reported that in a survey of part-time faculty members exploring contract negotiation re-openers, all of the responses related to financial increases.

Finally, although the Part-Time Faculty Committee is not taking an official stand on joining a different union, Beck noted that it is not the right time to change.

Benefits – Merzon reported that this committee is looking at dental benefit premium increases. The CCFT representatives are M Basti, Greg Lewis, and Dana Gough.

Calendar – Tony Rector-Cavagnaro is the CCFT representative on this committee. The committee is looking at a variety of issues, including the possibility of a shortened (16-week) semester, a particularly pertinent issue in these tough budget times as other shortened-semester districts have found a shortened semester, with subsequent intersessions, has been helpful to gain FTES.

Peace and Justice – No report was submitted from this committee.

Communications – Beck and others have organized a letter-writing campaign to California legislators urging them to keep community college funding intact. Dr. Pelham, Cuesta College President, has offered to pay for stationary and stamps out of his own pocket. The letter-writing will occur on all three campuses/centers.

Merzon distributed copies of Cabrillo College Federation of Teachers’ “Survival Guide for Part-Time Faculty” handbook, a comprehensive information packet to help part-time faculty manage the maze of policies, procedures, and laws pertaining to their employment. It could be tailored to Cuesta College specific practices and policies.

6. Personnel Issues

Krulikowski reported that we are still waiting for an arbitration decision for a particular case, that another grievance is being discussed with the district, and that one faculty member has been negotiating with the district administration outside the collective bargaining agreement process and has intimated that s/he will also carry a grievance without the union (the latter being legal).

The issue of whether a faculty member who is taking a sabbatical should also be allowed to teach a course at the same time is being explored; one Dean is disallowing it for the Spring 2009 semester, despite past practice that has allowed it. Other issues being pursued by the Grievance Officers involve faculty members and their placement on the salary schedules.

Merzon reported a variety of instances where some administrators appear to be ignoring past practice when interpreting the contract or even ignoring the contract itself. Some administrators do not seem to understand that the contract is a legally-binding contract for both parties that protect the district as well as the faculty. Merzon said that she is focusing on being pro-active for faculty and helping administrators see the pragmatic side of issues.

One faculty member spoke to the Board of Trustees at one of their recent meetings about an issue and later received a request for a meeting with a Dean. When the faculty member asked for the purpose of the meeting, the Dean rescinded the request. However, at a Planning and Budget Committee meeting, the same Dean admonished the faculty member for “politicizing the process,” while another administrator characterized the faculty member’s action as “bad behavior.”

Merzon reported that she is initiating having lunch with the Board of Trustees President, Pat Mullen. She noted that meeting with Board of Trustee members is a common practice of union Presidents.

7. Negotiations

Merzon reported that negotiations are generally going well. CCFT has submitted a number of contract language proposals and is waiting to hear back from the district (a key member of the district negotiation team has been off-campus for the past two negotiation sessions and has been unable to discuss the CCFT proposals with their team).

8. Vice President Nomination

A faculty member will be nominated for the position of CCFT Vice President at the next Council of Representatives meeting. A discussion ensued regarding the Vice President's duties and possible re-assigned time for the position.

9. Planning Workshop

The CCFT EB Strategic Planning Workshop will be held at Allison Merzon's house in Templeton on Friday, December 5, 2008 from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Mark Tomes, Secretary-Treasurer.