



Executive Board Meeting
Thursday, December 18, 2008, 2:15 – 4:15
Room 3402, Cuesta College

Approved Minutes

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

Absent: none

Guests: June Beck (as Chairperson of the Communication Committee, for non-confidential items)

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Allison Merzon.

1. Issues

Merzon reported that she met with Jill Schubert but did not yet formally release her from her positions of Part-Time Faculty Committee Chairperson and CCFT webmaster. Merzon said she felt the timing was not right and wanted to give Schubert the opportunity to resign. Schubert told Merzon at the meeting that would not resign until she received her semesterly stipend as committee chairperson and payment for her webmaster work. Schubert also told Merzon that she “owns” the CCFT website; Tomes said that her credit card info is on the site, but that is all – CCFT has already reimbursed Schubert for payment of the website hosting charges, and hence, she does not own any part of the website. He also said he has received invoices from Schubert, has written a check for her, and has left a phone message with her regarding whether she wanted the check mailed to her or brought to today’s meeting.

A motion was made (Bontenbal/Ruppert) to remove Schubert from her positions of Part-Time Faculty Committee Chairperson and CCFT webmaster, effective immediately, and to pay Schubert for all services rendered. It passed unanimously. Tomes was given the charge to notify Schubert of the Board’s action, including leaving a phone message, if need be.

After discussion of a confidential matter, it was decided that Merzon will send a letter to Janice House, Director of Computer Services, notifying her of which CCFT members should have administrative access to the CCFT listservs.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made (Ruppert/Krulikowski) to approve the draft December 5, 2008 EB meeting minutes. Changes to the minutes were discussed and accepted. The motion, including the changes to the minutes, was approved unanimously. Cocke abstained due to lack of information regarding the topic; he had not attended the meeting since this is his first EB meeting.

A motion was made (Krulikowski/Devitt) to approve the draft December 2, 2008 CCFT membership meeting minutes; it was approved unanimously. Cocke abstained for the same reason.

A motion was made (Devitt/Ruppert) to approve the draft November 20, 2008 EB meeting minutes. After discussion, it was approved unanimously. Cocke abstained for the same reason.

3. Joint Senate/Union Issues

Leone reported that Dr. Pelham, President of Cuesta College, will publish the minutes from his Cabinet meetings. Pelham and Leone are discussing the communication structure at Cuesta College, including a system that will notify the Senate President before any decision that affects the faculty takes place. In addition, Pelham has assured Leone that he will ensure that communication channels between faculty organizations and members remain intact, a reference to the abandonment of the listservs by the district.

The Community College League of California will provide a two-hour workshop in March 2009 on shared governance at Cuesta College; it will be open to all faculty members. The President of the Statewide Senate and the President of the Community College League of California will present the workshop. After the workshop, smaller groups may convene for further discussion.

The chairperson of the Faculty Professional Development committee has resigned; the position is still open.

Registration for the Fall 2009 semester will begin on May 18, 2009, although Leone was not sure for which priority level this date was scheduled.

Leone expressed concern that Dr. Pelham has not been attending nor sending a proxy to some key committee meetings, including Planning and Budget and Shared Governance. Cathleen Greiner, VP of Student Learning, has said that she will attend every Curriculum Committee meeting.

4. Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Tomes reported bank balances of \$28,215.22, \$59.38, and 1072.19 in the CCFT treasury, SESLOC club account, and the COPE account, respectively. He reported that Rabobank claimed that there were insufficient funds to pay a particular CCFT check, but the bank paid the check anyway. A deposit the next day covered the check in the bank's records, and there was no overdraft charge. Tomes said he is in the process of determining what caused the alleged overdraft, as the CCFT treasury Quicken file and register showed more than enough funds to cover the check.

Tomes reminded the EB that they will be completing a comprehensive mid-year budget review in January or February 2009. Also, Tomes has announced to the membership that the AFT audit is completed and Julie Hoffsten's report has been forwarded to anyone who has requested it. The EB has already received a copy of it. John Pooley was here last week completing a GAAP audit; his report should be received sometime after the new year begins.

After discussion, a motion was made to approve a budget change to expend funds on an on-going basis for 20% release time for Cocke as VP of CCFT. It passed unanimously. Cocke abstained from the vote due to a financial conflict of interest.

Tomes began a discussion of budgeting a portion of CCFT dues income to the COPE account, per Ken Burt's (Political Director of CFT) advice. Tomes said that a certain dollar amount per member must be designated. A member can elect to not have their dues be used for such a purpose, in which case all of their dues goes into the CCFT treasury (the member does not receive any reimbursement or rebate). An transfer of \$3.00 per member per month will result in about \$1000 per month going to COPE. Any portion of those funds can be designated for the Board of Trustees election sub-account. After discussion, there was consensus to revisit this idea in the Spring 2009 semester.

Tomes asked for guidance regarding changing the dues and fees assessment structures, since the CCFT Constitution and Bylaws are being re-written at this time. Various scenarios include an overall percentage decrease or increase, removing the minimum dues/fees paid, assessing overloads and the summer session, and combinations of these. Tomes said that John Pooley, CCFT's auditor, has said that our current 1.2% assessment is on the lower end

of the normal range for California community college faculty unions; the highest he has seen is 1.4%. Given CCFT's large legal expenses, Pooley has recommended a dues/fees increase.

The great majority of the Council of Representatives members at its last meeting showed support for CCFT assessing faculty members' overloads and summer session work. EB members were supportive of assessing dues and fees for overloads and summer session work and eliminating the minimum dues/fees payment. There was discussion about a commensurate decrease in the percentage assessment, as well. Tomes noted that summer session work must accompany any dues decrease, or else there will be a net loss of funds to the union.

Tomes began a discussion about using AFT web ads on the CCFT web site to advertise AFT+ member benefits. He said that AFT will pay \$40 per month to do so, and they provide a line of code that inserts the ad on the web site; the ad changes monthly. A motion was made (Merzon/Krulikowski) to support the new webmaster using the AFT web ad on a trial basis. There were concerns that the ad might be intrusive. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Faculty Issues

A CCFT-sponsored flex activity on "best practices" of faculty evaluations, the evaluation calendar, what the contract says about evaluations, and other evaluation issues will take place on January 15, 2009. Marie Larsen and Matt Fleming will lead the activity. It is not scheduled to include specific discussions of evaluations of distance education faculty members, a separate topic that is currently undergoing review.

6. Committee Reports

COPE – No report.

Constitution and Bylaws Revision Committee – Tomes reported that, according to AFT Legal Counsel writing to CCFT on federal labor law, in order for EB members to vote on the EB, they need to be elected by the membership or a constituent group of the membership. Hence, the committee is drafting language so that the committee chairpersons who will serve on the EB will be elected by the Council of Representatives (a bona fide constituent group, according to AFT legal opinion).

A dilemma has arisen regarding Grievance Committee Chairpersons, however. The working relationship between the President and these chairpersons is critically important to the success of each other's work, and so leaving the chairperson selection up to an election and "politics" might not be prudent. There was general agreement that it would be better to have the President nominate the Grievance Committee chairperson(s), the EB approve the nomination, and these chairpersons not be able to vote rather than have the chairpersons being elected by a larger group and risk conflicting policies and politics between the Grievance Committee Chairpersons and the President (and the EB, for that matter). Tomes asked the EB to think of ways in which the Grievance Committee Chairpersons can be a voting member of the EB without being subject to possible politicking.

Part-Time Faculty Committee – Beck reported that Nancy Hart and Beck have notified part-time faculty members of how to apply for unemployment benefits over the winter and summer breaks.

Benefits Committee – Also known as the Health Committee, this committee bargains for vision and dental insurance benefits and premiums, as well as medical insurance. Merzon noted that we need to start bargaining much earlier in the calendar than we have in the past.

Merzon reported there has been only one dental insurance premium increase in the past seven years. Ed Maduli notified the committee last year that a 15 to 18 percent increase was needed to offset the dental program's increased costs, but only 12% was finally implemented. Also, although a \$7.40 fringe increase (for full-timers; \$3.70 for part-timers) was negotiated for the 2008 calendar year, a commensurate premium increase was not finalized (at least, not to the knowledge of the current CCFT Negotiation Team). Maduli covered the increased costs through the dental program reserve rather than a premium increase. This week the Negotiation Team agreed to a 9% premium increase for calendar year 2009 and to keep the

dental plan the same as last year (\$1200 maximum benefit). Merzon will begin attending the Benefits Committee meetings, and she noted that we still will be bargaining for a fringe increase to cover the premium increase. The Negotiation Team hopes to bargain for the upcoming year and not just retroactively, as it was forced to do this year.

Calendar Committee – This committee negotiates the academic calendar; the committee has already set the 2010 calendar and will be working on the 2011 calendar soon. Ruppert noted that he has been a member of the committee and that they tend to meet too close to deadlines and, hence, do not have much time to research and/or discuss issues. This committee, like the Benefits Committee, needs to begin its work earlier.

Peace and Justice Committee – Merzon reported that CCFT's membership in the US Labor Against the War (USLAW) organization has expired. Tomes has asked USLAW for a renewal form.

Communications Committee – Beck had emailed the EB earlier with her ideas for the next newsletters, including having a theme of empowering the union members. There was general agreement about implementing the ideas and Beck's good work with the newsletter.

7. Personnel Issues

The EB discussed responding to some member email comments and questions regarding the dental insurance program and Interest-Based Bargaining. Many of the comments from members appear to be based on misinformation; hence one task for the EB is to educate its members more.

CCFT is still waiting for an arbitrator's decision regarding a certain case. The EB discussed the settlement status of another case. Krulikowski reported he has filed a grievance against the district for a particular case.

Merzon reported that one dean does not appear to understand that collective bargaining agreements are legal contracts, nor does this dean understand some basic faculty rights, such as the fact that faculty members have final authority on student grades. Dealing with a district "communication hierarchy" has made it difficult to solve problems in a timely and efficient manner.

Merzon reported on a confidential case involving a union member. A motion was made (Tomes/Cocke) to allow Merzon to have autonomous decision-making authority over the winter break regarding how to pursue this case legally. She will confer with certain EB members, as needed. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Mark Tomes, Secretary-Treasurer.