

MSP Executive Board Meeting Minutes

March 27, 2019

Present: Eve Weinbaum, Dean Robinson, David Gross, Kate Hudson, Jeremy Smith, Randy Phillis, Maciej Ciesielski, Marc Liberatore, Christine Ho, Erica Scharrer, Jim Smethurst, Kevin Young, Eric Berlin, Steve Brewer

Staff: Emily Steelhammer, Lori Reardon, Mickey Gallagher

Guest: Eric Plowden/PHENOM

- A. Approval of minutes from 2/20/19 and 3/6/19. Randy moved, Jim seconded, passed unanimously.
- B. Report from Fund Our Future campaign - people enjoyed their visits to the legislature, felt that they made a difference, stressed importance of continued follow-up. Day after our visit were hearings on the Promise Act, four Patriots came, lots of teachers, testimony went well. Seems to be a lot more energy behind Promise Act than Cherish Act. Ask is for legislators to commit when they meet with the Speaker or Senate President and say that it is one of their top priorities, to write Op-Eds, other ways to publicly support. Emily suggested follow up with postcards with images of faculty. Hearing is April 30 (last day of classes.) Lindsay Sabadosa suggested collecting written testimony.
- C. Eric Plowden w/ PHENOM. Week of action for Fund Our Future and Debt Free Future. Second week of April. Orientation interactions, music, street theater, march to Whitmore. Rally and march is Friday, April 12, 1:30 from Goodell lawn. It would be wonderful to have faculty and staff participate.
- D. Budget - We have quite a good chunk of money in the bank (more than two years). Probably more than we want to keep according to auditor. Changes from last year:
 - o No more agency fee payers (about \$25,000 less.)
 - o Grievance Committee stipends - zeroed out. Eve - at one time those were the people who were doing the most for the union, but now we have lots of others doing lots of work, but receive no stipend. Also uncomfortable paying people to do union work - we're all in this together. Instead there is a course release that rotates among folks.
 - o MSP grant program - we are proposing that this changes to a dues abatement fund
 - o Amendment - Insert a new line into the budget (transfer from reserves) and put a \$16,150.06 transfer into next year's budget
 - o Budget approved unanimously (with Steve Brewer abstaining .)
- E. MSP Grant Program to Dues Abatement Fund? - The grant program began ten years ago, has required a lot of staff overhead, and interest has declined after the first couple of years. Instead the officers discussed having an abatement fund for people who really struggle to afford dues. Randy - perhaps we can have a "special projects" fund that

comes out of the ideas from the board. Marc - worries about fairness in implementation of abatement fund, or spurious claims of hardship. What are the logistics? Mickey - this is ultimately an MTA issue given how the dues are divided up. Concern around the state about people at the lower end of the salary range, lecturers, part-time folks. MTA has a hardship program, which no one knows about. Emily - nonetheless, can we do something small now to make a difference. Officers will come back with some more specific proposals.

- F. Special Projects Fund - Randy, motion to establish the idea of special projects, which could be taken from reserves to be available to fund projects that the board feels are valuable. Jim seconded. Approved unanimously.
- G. Non-payer outreach. Beginning this fall we will ask people to use the payroll deduction option due. Membership on payroll deduction is more secure and cash payers use staff resources to track people down. Send letter to inform them about payroll deduction, and you need to pay for this year. There will be an additional letter going out to all cash payers. We will also be visiting those who said they would fill out forms but have yet to do so.