

MSP Executive Board - October 7, 2020

Present: Eve Weinbaum, Jen Adams, Christine Turner, Paulina Borrego, Michael Ash, Marc Liberatore, Kate Hudson, Sigrid Schmalzer, John Staudenmayer, Caleb Rounds, Fareen Parvez, Tristram Seidler, Jeremy Smith, Priyanka Srivastava, Jeanne Brunner, Maciej Ciesielski, Kevin Young, Dean Robinson, Asha Nadkarni

Staff: Lori Reardon, Mickey Gallagher, Emily Steelhammer, Heather LaPenn

1. **Approve Board minutes from 4/15/20, 8/4/20, 9/9/20 and 9/23/20.** Motion to approve from Christine Turner, seconded by Jen Adams, passed unanimously.
2. **Updates**
 - Thanks to everyone for coming out for the standing out action in Northampton.
 - PSU now being told by administration that some of the furloughs they insisted on are not actually desirable (staff do essential work!) There will be more meetings around this issue. We'd like to see a push to remind people that ALL staff are essential.
 - Yesterday was a meeting of the Joint Committee on Higher Education, which was attended by Carlos Santiago, Marty Meehan, Max Page and others. The legislators reiterated their intention for level funding this year, including for higher education. Level funding has been extended another month until December and after the election.
3. **UMass Green New Deal.** There was a meeting yesterday of the Climate Justice & Sustainability bargaining support committee. Chair Madeleine Charney called a meeting to talk about work that could be done (putting furloughed employees back to work). MSP & PSU members, and administration members attended, including representatives of the campus committee who wrote a report (written by Ezra Small, although he wasn't there). Campus has already stated a goal of being Carbon Neutral by 2025. There is a lot of work that our buildings need in order to promote climate justice and health & safety; e.g., ceiling leaks, improving ventilation (data presented that this improves productivity and work performance in addition to being necessary in COVID times), work retrofitting labs, solar, inventory and assessments to find out what kind of radiators, wall spaces available, etc. Eve will be talking to other unions today about a "Green New Deal" for UMass, because this is a great opportunity to take advantage of empty buildings. This would keep everyone working, would save money in the long run (or not even particularly long run), and supports goals that have already been identified by the campus. This idea feels good, since it is something positive we can do during difficult times.

Thoughts and Next Steps

- Auxiliary Services - is it a separate unit or not in terms of budgeting? Swamy seems to have shifted on this; although we've always been told that the budgets are completely

separate, this has changed because the pandemic is “not their fault” and the campus has an obligation to support them and cover their losses.

- Seems like Green New Deal is a no brainer since it has a short-term payback in 3-5 years.
- What would a UMass Green New Deal campaign look like? It would have several audiences. First audience is campus, second is the President’s Office and Board of Trustees (Trustees say that any deficit spending is irresponsible - we don’t feel that balancing the budget every year during a crisis is wise.) Third, we can show the legislature, we have a plan which will take some spending up front, but is a way to achieve some goals that the legislature and the state have articulated regarding sustainability. We should be a leader in climate justice and making this campus sustainable.
- What do we think our members will think about UMass Green New Deal? What’s not to like? Fantastic idea. Need to understand how many of these jobs are ones that currently furloughed staff can undertake or be trained to do (this won’t solve all our problems.)
- Building coalition among the unions is crucial at this point - this could be a good issue to build around.
- Building coalition is our number one priority right now.
- This will be a big administrative task, coordinating projects and connecting actual people to actual tasks. Are there enough hours in the day?
- More to come. Eve will report back.

Debrief about Membership Meeting on 10/1

- We’re not going to reach consensus with all our members around furloughs and whether MSP members should take them. We are getting the whole gamut of opinions on the matter. We can provide information about our thinking.
- In talking to departments - in general the TT faculty seem most interested in “sharing the pain,” and the NTT faculty are most appreciative of the union’s work pushing against furloughs.
- Staff are worried that if MSP holds firm, that the pain is going to be put onto staff again.
- MSP members are being affected by contract non-renewals of PT lecturers - a hidden cost that is often overlooked (and it’s been difficult for us to get numbers from the administration.)
- Many faculty want to support their staff who are affected. Directing money through mutual aid. Gift cards and child care is not enough.

Creation of New Committees.

- Organizing Committee (UMass, Green New Deal, coalition building, job actions)
- Financial Analysis Committee
- Mutual Aid Committee
- If you are interested, or know people who are, please let us know

New item: AFRs due on October 15 - seems like an unnecessary burden, especially for our NTT. Can they be delayed this year? There's no merit, so there wouldn't be a direct impact. Delay to end of semester? Eve will raise this with the administration.