

Massachusetts Community College Council

Joseph LeBlanc, President
Diana (Donnie) McGee, Vice President
Philip Mahler, Treasurer
Phyllis Barrett, Secretary



Don Williams, Communications
Dennis Fitzgerald, Grievance
Joseph Rizzo, Grievance
Hilaire Jean-Gilles, Research

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Mechanics Place/Worcester
Friday, August 17, 2007

Present: President Joe LeBlanc, Vice President Donnie McGee, Treasurer Philip Mahler, Secretary Phyllis Barrett; Geri Curley (BH), Catherine Adamowicz (Br), Claudine Barnes (CC), Rosemarie Freeland (G), Pennie Marcus (H), Lois Martin (Ma), Ned McGuire (MB), David Kalivas (Mi), Elena Natalizia (MW/alt.), Steve Proietti (NE), Sharron Gillies (Q), Clark Grain (R), Roberta Albano (ST); Operations Manager Phil Kennedy; Communications Coordinator Don Williams; MTA Consultants Katie D'Urso and Miles Stern. **Not Present:** June Tooley (Be), Abe Sherf (NS), Sara Satham, MTA Board. **Guest:** Paulette Howarth (Br).

President Joe LeBlanc called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

The agenda was adopted by consensus.

The minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of June 15, 2007, were approved, by consensus.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President LeBlanc began his report with a summary of recent events at the troubled Mass Bay campus. Following Chapter President Joe O'Neill's visit to the Board in June, President LeBlanc sent a letter to the college president, Carole Berotte-Joseph, listing the MCCC's serious concerns about her administration's breach of contractual obligations and general disregard and disrespect for both protocol and people. Among other things, the administration's ineptitude has severely compromised the college's nursing program, with lots of negative media coverage over the summer. Despite this situation, the Mass Bay trustees have given President Berotte-Joseph a "very good" evaluation and both a cost of living and a merit raise. President LeBlanc has insisted that President Berotte-Joseph meet with the chapter leadership, some of whom have recently received letters threatening defamation suits, before he will meet with her. That meeting has now been scheduled. Members of the Board reiterated their strong support for the embattled chapter at Mass Bay and are prepared to take appropriate action when it is timely.

President LeBlanc reported that all Day unit members will receive a form this fall allowing them to request that new licenses and certifications be added to the report compiled in 2002. The MCCC continues to argue that points should be awarded for "relevant," not necessarily "required," licenses and certificates. President LeBlanc, Research Coordinator Hilaire Jean-Gilles, and MTA Consultant Katie D'Urso will be meeting with a representative of Archer and Co. on August 29 to discuss their data analysis project on the 75th percentile figures; it is hoped that the study will be completed by mid-September. Once that information is in hand, the Classification Task Force will meet with officials at the state's Office of Administration and Finance, the Board of Higher Education, and legislative leaders, with grassroots work in support of salary adjustments to follow.

President LeBlanc shared several pieces of good news: The employer is arranging for part-timers to buy the new state health insurance with pre-tax dollars. Meanwhile, the MCCC continues the fight to make the GIC health plan available to some adjuncts. Fred Clark, Esq., has been named the new Chair of the Board of Higher Ed, replacing Stephen Tocco; President LeBlanc is pleased with this choice and optimistic about a change at the BHE. The MCCC has received a \$5000 grant from NEA to support organizing efforts for new full-time members and adjuncts. PHENOM (the Public Higher Ed Network of

Massachusetts) is off to a strong start; representatives will be visiting the community college presidents this fall, seeking their support for PHENOM campus councils.

Finally, President LeBlanc reminded directors that the MCCC Fall Conference is now scheduled for Monday, October 1, from four to eight p.m., at the Worcester Crowne Plaza.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Donnie McGee reported that the state budget is still shy of the funds needed for Public Higher Education by about \$30 million. A report on business/corporate tax loopholes is due out in January, however, and the state has seen substantial revenue increases this summer. Governor Patrick is calling for a \$12 billion capital plan over five years, including \$375 million for state and community colleges.

The vice president reported that the MCCC focus in the legislature continues to be on the adjunct health insurance and pension bills, as well as on bills aimed at improving higher education funding and amendments to the collective bargaining law, Chapter 150E. She and the Strategic Action Committee are also involved in the fight for social security fairness at the federal level. A congressional hearing will be scheduled for the fall before the House Ways and Means Committee on HR 82. Between now and then, every MTA member should circulate a copy of the petition to repeal GPO/WEP, gathering ten names of registered voters by September 10, in support of this goal. Another important SAC initiative is the effort to get an oversight hearing before the Joint Committee on Public Service on the Optional Retirement Plan issue. A survey has been developed to gather information and concerns from the 444 MCCC members who chose ORP over the state retirement plan.

Vice President McGee noted that SAC representatives are needed from Bristol, Greenfield, Massasoit, Mount Wachusett, Northern Essex, and Roxbury. In addition, applications are welcome for three positions on the SAC Steering Committee; applicants for these positions must have at least one year of previous SAC experience.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Treasurer Philip Mahler reported that he has zeroed out all prior-year DCE credits, invoiced all Day members for this year, and worked with Edy Stoddard to enter part-time Day members from last year, for invoicing this year. He has also entered the first two HRCMS payrolls for FY'08, created an up-to-date unit member mailing list for the newsletter, and rationalized the electronic submission and archiving of contract materials by creating appropriate email accounts. Edy is entering the Summer II teaching lists and has already entered Day part-time members from February 2007 contractual reports, for invoicing this year. She also entered last year's part-time seniority lists, and Meg Kennedy and Treasurer Mahler are invoicing them. The staff are also incorporating electronic DCE dues payments into procedures and have been clearing out materials in the storage room.

Upcoming projects include cleaning up the Day membership list; establishing a schedule for ineligible lists and past-due invoicing; finalizing the FY'07 membership with MTA; finalizing the FY'06 audit; and getting the FY'07 audit done this fall. Treasurer Mahler will be meeting with the chapter treasurers and updating a manual for their use, as well as working with the Finance Committee on a family plan health insurance option for office staff.

Treasurer Mahler suggested that questions on the financial sheets be directed to Phil Kennedy. Finally, the treasurer reminded directors that he and Phil Kennedy would be distributing boxes of new Day contracts, membership packets, and other materials at the end of the meeting.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Secretary Phyllis Barrett will put out a last call for changes to the September edition of the *Leadership Directory* next week. She noted that the *Policy Manual* revision will be later than usual this year because of a flurry of proposed policy changes this spring and summer that are just now being addressed by the Board.

REPORT OF THE MTA CONSULTANTS

Consultant Katie D'urso reported that Roxbury Community College is claiming that about 25 people were incorrectly paid with the implementation of last year's raise. She and Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald are working on getting the Board of Higher Education involved in a resolution of the matter. Consultant D'Urso also reported that a sexual harassment case between two unit members at Massasoit has been settled. Some problems continue with the 03 Buyback: At Springfield Tech, for instance, faculty are not being awarded a full year's credit even though they taught the requisite eight courses over two semesters; and professional staff on academic-year contracts are being similarly docked time. MTA Legal is working on appeals for these 03 cases. Consultant D'Urso also reported that she and Day Team Chair Rick Doud achieved the best settlement so far regarding the nursing faculty salaries issue at Middlesex recently. She hopes the agreement will set a precedent and that there will eventually be some consistency among the campuses in this area.

Consultant Miles Stern reported that a reasonable settlement has been reached in a case at Roxbury that alleged grade tampering. He noted that he has been meeting with his predecessor, Michelle Gallagher, preparatory to taking over her work on the unit determination (CAS) petitions. He has also been working with Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald on filing additional petitions while awaiting the mediator's recommendation on the backlog of cases. At the request of the Executive Committee, he has been working with MTA Legal to address questions about the bylaws. Consultant Stern hopes to make the rounds of the campuses this fall to get to know people and issues. He welcomes invitations from the chapters.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Coordinator Don Williams reported that the current issue will go to press soon. It features a profile of former MCCC President Jim Rice, recently elected president of NCHE (the National Council for Higher Education, the higher ed caucus of NEA), as well as an article on Mass Bay Professor Bruce Jackson, whose program has produced numerous Goldwater Scholars in the sciences. There is also a guest column by Jane Arnold, formerly an adjunct at Middlesex. Members of the Board shared ideas for upcoming issues.

GRADUATION AND RETENTION AD HOC COMMITTEE

Claudine Barnes reported that the full committee met in May. Since then, five individuals have taken on five subtopics which will become sections of a White Paper to be released by the committee in the fall. President LeBlanc noted that extensive media coverage will be sought once the report is complete.

NEW BUSINESS

A. MCCC News Letters and Guest Column Policy Revision

MOTION: Adopt the new policy (attached). **PASSED.**

B. Nominations and Elections Policy Revision

Consultant Miles Stern reported that some proposed new language for the Elections Policy is currently being reviewed by MTA Legal to determine its consistency with state and/or federal law. Consistency of some passages with the MTA Bylaws is also being reviewed.

MOTION: Postpone consideration until the September Board meeting, pending more information (Kalivas/Curley). **PASSED.**

C. Flaherty Endorsement

MOTION: The MCCC endorses Tim Flaherty, a candidate for State Senator, in the September 1, 2007, Special State Primary to be held in the Suffolk, Middlesex, and Essex District, as recommended by MCCC SAC leaders (McGee/Curley).

Rationale: Flaherty's vision and platform have been received favorably by both MTA Governmental and MCCC SAC leaders who assessed his candidacy worthy of such endorsements. This is a close race and his articulated support of public education and its funding complement ours. **PASSED.**

D. Paolillo Endorsement

MOTION: The MCCC endorses Len Paolillo, faculty member at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, for the NEA Executive Committee (Gillies/Curley). **PASSED.**

E. Privatization Issue

MOTION: The MCCC supports AFSCME in its fight against the efforts by Massachusetts College of Arts to privatize dormitory operations, including maintenance and security (Curley/Adamowicz). **PASSED.**

DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Fall Conference Planning

President LeBlanc shared information about possible speakers for the October 1 event and asked for the Board's advice for breakout sessions. Among the suggestions were sessions focusing on new members, retirement, adjunct issues, professional staff issues, distance education, optional retirement vs. state retirement, social security issues, and Strategic Directions. President LeBlanc will be personally inviting all new hires and hopes for a turnout of 110-120 overall.

B. NEA RA News

Vice President McGee circulated a daily newsletter from the last day of the NEA-RA to share the exciting flavor of the conference, which drew approximately 16,000 educators and guests to Philadelphia this July. President LeBlanc reminded directors that the MCCC has budgeted funds for a few people to attend the NEA's Higher Education Conference in the spring.

C. MTA Summer Conference

Directors who attended this August's conference in Williamstown had good things to say about the workshops and entertainment, as well as the beauty of the campus and the area. It was noted that five MCCC members were involved in this year's Emerging Leaders Track. All agreed that more participation should be encouraged.

D. Strategic Directions and MCCC Mission Statement Revision

It was agreed that it is time to re-focus on the Strategic Directions initiatives and particularly the revision of the existing MCCC mission statement.

E. Adjuncts Ad Hoc Committee

President LeBlanc reported that this group is off to an energetic start, as evidenced by lots of email communication. He reminded directors that the structure established for the committee calls for one representative from each chapter and one alternate. Chapters will reimburse participants for their travel. The MCCC will provide the venue and refreshments for meetings.

F. MCCC State House Interns

Vice President McGee distributed copies of applications and cover letters for these positions. The forms will also be going out electronically. The deadline for applying is September 17. She urged directors to share information about this opportunity for students with their colleagues, particularly political science, government, and history faculty whose students might be likely applicants.

G. Underaged Students

The Bristol Chapter expressed its concern about the growing number of students under the age of eighteen who are matriculated at the community colleges. Issues include such things as emotional readiness for content in some courses and parental involvement with faculty and staff. Miles Stern will approach MTA Legal for advice. Treasurer Mahler suggested the formation of an *ad hoc* group that could develop and recommend consistent guidelines for all of the colleges to follow in dealing with these students.

H. Reassigned Time Request

A request for reassigned time for a chapter officer at Bristol was ruled out of order. The chapter had submitted the same request last spring, and it was not among those funded by the vote of the Board. The chapter was encouraged to recruit more individuals to share the workload so that one person is not overextended.

I. Campus Round Up

Brief reports from the directors drew attention to problems with adherence to the new under-enrolled courses policy at Northern Essex; problems with payroll accuracy at Roxbury; concern about the accuracy of records in the wake of changes in the Human Resources Department at Springfield; an increase in formal grievances filed at Greenfield; and, in addition to everything else, poor communication and clandestine maneuvers at Mass Bay, resulting in missed deadlines for union intervention. On a somewhat brighter note, union intervention on behalf of part-time advisors at Quinsigamond resolved problems with an inflexible director, and Holyoke is welcoming lots of new full-time faculty and three new full-timers in the advising center, which was long over-dependent on part-time staff.

J. Press Round Up

President LeBlanc referred directors to the various newspaper articles included in today's folders, and Vice President McGee congratulated Massasoit Director Lois Martin and Treasurer Phil Mahler, from Middlesex, who were featured in *MTA Today*, for their champion math students and teams.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,



Phyllis Barrett, Secretary

Attachment: Letters and Guest Columns Policy

Proposed deletions struck out, and proposed additions are underlined.

Editorials

MCCC Editorials

The Editorial Review Board may present editorials in each issue. These must be approved by the Executive Committee before publication.

~~Guest Editorials~~

~~Guest editorials should be approximately 300 words in length. A pro/con format might be used in this context. The ERB should review the editorial and provide feedback to the writer(s). The editorial may be rejected by a majority vote of the ERB.~~

Guest Columns

Guest Columns should be no more than 400 words in length. Columns by authors who are not MCCC members may be accepted. The author's name and affiliation will be published with the column.

Letters to the Editor

Only submissions by MCCC unit members will be considered. ~~These should be 50 to 150 words in length. The author must include name, date of submission, work or home mailing address, work or home phone number, campus affiliation. The name and campus will be included with all published submissions. Letters will be printed on a space available basis and may be edited for length.~~

Letters should be no more than 200 words in length. The author must include name and chapter affiliation, which will be published with the letter. Authors must provide the editor with contact information in the form of either email address, mailing address or telephone number. Letters will be published on a space available basis and may be edited for length and appropriateness. Not all submissions can be published.

The MCCC wishes to allow freedom of expression to the membership with regard to letters to the Newsletter. This must be balanced against MCCC needs with respect to strategizing and position taking. A divided union is of little use to the membership. A Letter to the Editor will be rejected if, in the opinion of the ERB, the letter's chief intent is to subvert the strategies, policies, or structure of the MCCC. This guideline does not preclude thoughtful criticism of any of these or other things.

Letters which criticize outside entities must maintain a reasonable decorum and be respectful of the Commonwealth's institutions and policies. This guideline does not preclude thoughtful criticism in these areas.