

# Massachusetts Community College Council

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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

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Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting  
Mechanics Place/Worcester  
Friday, September 7, 2007

**Present:** President Joe LeBlanc, Vice President Donnie McGee, Treasurer Philip Mahler, Secretary Phyllis Barrett; At-Large Members Claudine Barnes, Geri Curley, Lois Martin; MTA Consultants Katie D’Urso, Miles Stern; Communications Coordinator Don Williams. **Guests:** Ned McGuire (MB), Rosemarie Freeland (G), and Richard Sanders (MTA).

President Joe LeBlanc called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

The minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of August 3, 2007, were approved, by consensus.

## REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President LeBlanc reported that efforts are ongoing regarding the situation at Mass Bay. Noting that his letter to the college president went unanswered, he reported that he met with MTA Attorney Matt Jones on August 20 and that an Unfair Labor Practice charge is being drafted in response to threats made against Mass Bay chapter leaders. President LeBlanc also shared a letter to President Berotte Joseph supporting the chapter leadership that has been signed by all of the other chapter presidents. He and Katie D’Urso will meet with BHE Chair Clark and Chancellor Plummer later this month on this issue.

Noting that part-time members are receiving Health Insurance Responsibility forms in the wake of the new Massachusetts health insurance requirement, he clarified that individuals face no threat from the colleges, but will face state penalties eventually if they do not subscribe. Part-timers who wish to enroll in a Connector plan are eligible for pre-tax contributions; they should see their local Human Resources person.

Regarding contract matters, President LeBlanc reported that some other higher ed unions have recently agreed to new one-year contracts with the following increases: 3 percent on base; .5 percent merit; .3 percent to be used for improving salary systems. In light of this development, the MCCC Day Team has written to the employer to demand to reopen contract talks on salary. Meanwhile, Archer and Co. will report soon on their research into the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile comparisons. Members will also be receiving forms asking for an update on their licenses and certifications so that new requests for credit can be reviewed.

President LeBlanc thanked Consultants Katie D’Urso and Miles Stern for writing a new NEA grant under a tight deadline. He thanked Lois Martin and Geri Curley for agreeing to serve as Executive Committee representatives on the Day and DCE Grievance Committees, respectively. Finally, he reported that a meeting with the “DCE Team”—Consultant Miles Stern, Coordinator Joe Rizzo, and Team Chair John Palmer—went well.

Following the president’s report, the Executive Committee went into Executive Session, by unanimous consent, for further discussion of the Mass Bay situation.

## REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Donnie McGee urged members to contact legislators to support the Adjunct Health Insurance Bill (SB 1587) and the Adjunct Pension Bill (HB 2821). She reported that a Congressional

Hearing on the Social Security Fairness/Repeal of GPO/WEP legislation (HR 82) should occur this fall. Petitions in support of this issue may now be returned to MTA Vice President Paul Toner up until September 30. A request has been put in for an Oversight Hearing on the Optional Retirement Plan issue. A postcard announcing the ORP online survey will be sent this month to all MCCC members enrolled in this retirement plan. Members affected by the Peace Corps Creditable Service Bill (SB 1619) should contact the vice president. There is a Public Service Committee Hearing scheduled for this issue on September 27; the vice president, MTA's Jack Flannagan, and Katia Lund from Bristol Community College will be testifying.

Vice President McGee reported that Senator Downing's Berkshire office has requested an MCCC legislative intern. She also noted that Tim Flaherty, recently endorsed by the MCCC Board for the State Senate, has been endorsed by the *Boston Globe*. Vice President McGee and Mike D'Entremont, the Strategic Action representative from Bunker Hill, will be working with volunteers on his campaign this weekend. Interviews are currently being conducted with candidates for the SAC Steering Committee.

### **REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

Treasurer Philip Mahler reported that he has done a lot of work related to the website. He has created an online events calendar; corrected the online version of the contract; and updated the college service form and installed the waiver form for those voluntarily taking on an additional preparation, both because of new contract language. He has also posted numerous Strategic Action Committee items for the vice president as well as Contract Administration items for Day Grievance Coordinator Fitzgerald, and he has created an online registration form for the Fall Conference.

Treasurer Mahler reported that five chapter treasurers attended a recent training session. He is updating a manual for use by chapter treasurers and wants to work with them on an ongoing basis on membership issues. The treasurer also reported that Edy Stoddard, a member of the office staff, will be out for a few weeks for medical reasons; Mamie Leblanc, a former employee, has agreed to fill in for Edy in October. Treasurer Mahler said he will consult with the Finance Committee about purchasing a better postage machine for the office; having one would be a time-saver. The purchase of a second LCD projector was approved by the Finance Committee, and the projector has arrived. The treasurer noted that a policy regarding access to the wireless network in the office needs to be developed. Finally, he reported that the auditors should visit in mid-October, with the possibility of a two-year audit report.

### **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

Secretary Phyllis Barrett reported that the September edition of the *Leadership Directory* was distributed this week. However, it will have to be edited and re-distributed because of subsequent corrections.

### **REPORT OF THE MTA CONSULTANTS**

Consultant Katie D'Urso reported that nursing faculty at Springfield Technical have filed individual grievances on their salaries; these are going through the mediation process. Consultant D'Urso has also been preparing for an arbitration involving a faculty member at Northern Essex and seeking further restitution for a faculty member at Mass Bay who was reinstated. Both Consultant D'Urso and Consultant Miles Stern have begun work on an Unfair Labor Practices case at Mass Bay involving the administration's lack of compliance with information requests and a chilling of union activity.

Consultant D'Urso also reported that Day Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald has discovered that there are 70 tutors who are not in the bargaining unit at Quinsigamond. Some of these individuals may have very limited earnings, of course. It was agreed that the Executive Committee will discuss a possible minimum earnings level for dues liability at the October meeting.

Consultant Stern stressed the importance of reminding adjuncts to take advantage of their right to unemployment benefits; it was agreed that this message should be spread by chapter leaders, email, and the newsletter. Consultant Stern has also been doing research in support of the NEA grant proposal and is awaiting word from MTA Legal regarding questions that arose during the discussion of proposed changes to the Elections Policy.

## **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

Coordinator Don Williams began by disseminating copies of a corrected page 91 for the new *Day Agreement*; the section has to do with workload computation. He reported that the latest edition of the newsletter should be arriving at people's homes. For the next issue, he is working on an article about the problems at Mass Bay, as well as an article on MCCC members' involvement in the Emerging Leaders track at the MTA Summer Conference in Williamstown in August. Vice President McGee made suggestions for some human interest stories about members in upcoming editions.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Election Dates**

President LeBlanc distributed the proposed election schedule for the spring, prepared by Roberta Passenant, Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee. Some changes were made, by consensus, in order to avoid having deadlines fall on Saturdays and Sundays.

**MOTION:** Recommend the Election Dates, as amended, to the Board (Curley/Mahler). **PASSED.**

## **DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **A. Nominations and Elections Committee Elections Policy Proposal**

**MOTION:** Recommend that the Board amend the Elections Policy Proposal by deleting language under "Campaign Requirement," B, 4, b. Recordkeeping and Reporting, which would now read: "For statewide elections, an itemized list of expenditures and amounts must be filed with the MCCC Executive Committee within 30 days of the close of the election" (Mahler/Curley). **PASSED.**

**Rationale:** Information regarding donors and contribution sources is unnecessary.

### **B. Optional Retirement Plan Survey**

Vice President McGee shared the draft of the ORP postcard and asked for advice about the text, a deadline for getting it to the printer, and a mailing date.

### **C. Information Requests/ Policy Questions**

Treasurer Mahler reported that there will be a meeting next week involving coordinators and office staff to discuss the issue of archiving information in print and electronic forms. A policy will also be developed that will give office staff helpful guidelines concerning what information can be shared and with whom. For examples, the staff should know that many kinds of information should automatically be shared with chapter presidents.

### **D. MCCC Office and Staffing**

In Executive Session, the committee discussed a recent problematic situation.

### **E. BHE Meetings Dates**

President LeBlanc reported that the new chair of the Board of Higher Education wants to schedule meetings on Fridays, creating some conflicts with MCCC Board meetings. All agreed that it is important for the MCCC president to be free to attend the BHE meetings. Two possibilities arose: To ask directors if rescheduling the October and November Board meetings is a possibility; or to have President LeBlanc and Vice President McGee each attend one of these two BHE meetings, with the other chairing the MCCC Board meeting.

### **F. NEA Membership Grant**

MTA Consultant Miles Stern shared copies of a recently submitted grant request. He pointed out that it was necessary for the grant to have a different thrust from the one procured last year, even though its main purpose is to allow the MCCC to continue with organizing efforts through new member orientation/outreach. Given that the MCCC must commit to “matching funds,” some reservations were expressed about whether in kind contributions described in the grant were indeed already part of the operating budget and whether or not some expenses covered by the grant might become ongoing expenses for the organization.

### **G. Fall Conference Planning**

Preparations for the Fall Conference on Monday, October 1, at the Worcester Crowne Plaza, are fairly complete. The evening will begin with registration between 3:30-4:00 and will end around 8:00. The keynoter will be Jim Rice, former MCCC president and newly elected president of the National Council of Higher Education. Breakout sessions will be geared towards new members; chapter presidents; members approaching retirement; professional staff; adjuncts; and those involved in Distance Ed. A buffet dinner will be served.

### **H. CCCC Orientation Issues**

Claudine Barnes reported her dismay that the Cape Cod chapter leadership was not included among the presenters for orientations for new adjuncts and new full-time members. There was also a discussion about the importance of having chapter bylaws that outline the responsibilities of chapter officers, mandate a certain number of chapter meetings, etc.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m., but some committee members stayed for a discussion about future activities related to the Strategic Directions initiative.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,



Phyllis Barrett, Secretary