

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 Delegate Assembly
Worcester Crowne Plaza
Saturday, April 26, 2008

President Joe LeBlanc called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

MOTION: To adopt the Order of Business and the minutes of the Delegate Assembly of April 28, 2007 (Sharron Gillies/Betsy Smith). **PASSED.**

MOTION: Adopt the Standing Rules (Ned McGuire/Betsy Smith).

MOTION TO AMEND: Under Standing Rule 1: Amendments to the Bylaws, Section 1, change the deadline for submission of Bylaw changes from “February first” to “March first” (Bylaws Committee). **PASSED.**

MOTION: Adopt the Standing Rules, as amended (Ned McGuire/Betsy Smith). **PASSED.**

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Joe LeBlanc began his remarks by denouncing the climate and culture of fear created by the college president at Mass Bay. He lauded the chapter leadership for its courage and the presidents of the other chapters and the Board of Directors for their support of the chapter. He noted that he has taken the fight to remove the president to the State House, the Board of Higher Education, and the press. Chapter President Joe O’Neill prompted a standing ovation for President LeBlanc. The president turned to the issue of the Classification Study, and announced that the report of the Joint Task Force has now been endorsed by the BHE and brought to the attention of the governor. An answer is forthcoming on the .8% re-opener and the 13.85% adjustment that would restore salaries to the 75th percentile. The president also reported that two NEA grants in two years have contributed to the union’s ability to establish an Adjunct Ad Hoc Committee, to conduct regional cluster meetings for adjuncts and for chapter president meetings, and, most recently, to initiate an Emerging Chapter Leaders Program. The president also reported that the DCE Negotiating Team is up and running, having just administered the most comprehensive survey of member priorities in MCCC history. In closing, President LeBlanc cited the inspiration of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.’s support of the sanitation workers in his final days as having led to his own decision to support the full vote for adjunct members of the MCCC.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT/STRATEGIC ACTION

Vice President Donnie McGee welcomed delegates who traveled from the Berkshires, the Cape, and everywhere in between, describing them as the heart of the MCCC. She talked first about the state’s economy, which has suffered for years from a structural deficit, noting that, once again, the strategy is to balance the budget on the back of public employees through a proposal to increase the health insurance contribution. She thanked friends in the legislature, particularly Representative Marty Walsh, as well as all of those members who made calls. She is optimistic that Rep. Walsh will succeed in removing the amendment from the budget. The vice president then gave Strategic Action Committee highlights: First, she described the effort to overturn the GPO/WEP provisions of Social Security. There have now been two Congressional hearings on this issue that had lain dormant. She thanked the MTA for championing this effort and allowing her and others to attend the hearings in Washington, D.C. Another important issue has been capital improvement funding for the campuses, which is beginning to look like it might

come through. In the effort to address concerns about the Optional Retirement Plan, the ad hoc committee has put together stories and testimony, and they are hoping to get an oversight hearing to address enrollment issues. The goal is a one-time buyout option for enrollees who would like to switch into the state retirement /defined benefit program. Vice President McGee also addressed the threat of the ballot initiative to eliminate the income tax. And she noted that organizing will be soon needed around the effort to secure a good DCE contract and then, before too long, a successor Day contract. She suggested that “Get out the Vote” efforts will be important on the campuses in the fall. She also argued that a crusade is needed to counter the college presidents’ indiscriminate outreach for more students, whether or not the colleges’ have the wherewithal to support them. She thanked the SAC Steering Committee, the SAC chapter representatives, and the membership for their activism this year and closed her remarks with her spring poem. (The text is available in the April *MCCC News*.)

Vice President McGee thanked the co-chairs of the MCCC PAC, Frank Leary and Thelma Halberstadt, as well as Phil Kennedy, PAC treasurer, for their valuable service to the union. Frank Leary talked about the importance of supporting legislators who support the MCCC and its priorities, and Thelma Halberstadt encouraged donations during today’s meeting.*

*President LeBlanc announced before lunch that \$1909 had been collected for the MCCC PAC; later the figure climbed to \$2133.

GREETINGS FROM THE MTA

MTA President Anne Wass greeted the delegates and shared some additional information about the ballot initiative to eliminate the state income tax, which she described as tantamount to declaring a Going-Out-of-Business Sale. President Wass announced that a coalition has been formed, including non-profits, faith-based groups, and unions, to fight the initiative. It will be called Campaign for Our Communities. President Wass noted that a recent poll reveals that education has dropped to fourth place among Massachusetts voters’ priorities. And while poll respondents are most troubled by property taxes, they are so “tax-sensitive” that they are likely to vote to eliminate any tax, even the wrong tax (since eliminating the income tax will make their property taxes skyrocket). Those polled even said they preferred a tax cut to improving or even keeping services. A similar initiative a few years ago garnered 45% of the vote; it appears that at least 40% of voters are already prepared to vote for this one. President Wass said that the best strategy is to convince voters that their property taxes will go up if the income tax is eliminated. She said that all members need to be foot soldiers in the battle to defeat the initiative. Chapters of the MCCC are encouraged to send their president or a designee, or perhaps two people, to a coalition kick-off meeting on May 31 at the Natick Crowne Plaza.

JON BUTLER MEMORIAL AWARD

This year’s Jon Butler Award, for an outstanding chapter president, went to Susan Dole of Bunker Hill and Joe O’Neill of Mass Bay.

Geri Curley presented the award to her chapter president, Susan Dole. Geri gave an overview of Susan’s rise from being the first professional staff member at Bunker Hill to aspire to chapter office to becoming president of the MCCC in 1996. Arguably having done it all, Susan agreed to return to the chapter presidency when they needed her and has continued to be a leader and mentor, recently rallying all of the other chapter presidents to the defense of the embattled chapter at Mass Bay.

Ned McGuire presented the award to his chapter president at Mass Bay, Joe O’Neill, whom he described as vibrant and engaging, an intellectual with unquestionable integrity and a passion for students’ and members’ rights. Ned said that Joe has not just maintained, but has strengthened the chapter in the face of the onslaught by the college president. He succeeded in bringing the membership together to accomplish

the Vote of No Confidence last fall and, along with other chapter leaders, has endured the repercussions of taking a stand.

Both Susan and Joe spoke briefly, Susan citing her Charlestown roots and love for the people she serves at Bunker Hill Community College, and Joe comparing the role of a chapter president to that of Sisyphus, the mythic figure famous for perpetually pushing a rock up a mountain and never giving up.

RAYMOND C. LEMIEUX AWARD

This year, the Raymond C. Lemieux Award, for outstanding contributions to the union, went to Philip Mahler, MCCC Treasurer, from Middlesex. Lois Martin, director from Massasoit, presented the award. She noted the many roles Phil fulfilled at the chapter level at Middlesex before becoming MCCC vice president, president, and now treasurer and listed some of the numerous committees, negotiating teams, and campaigns that Phil has participated in or chaired over the years. She drew special attention to his recent work with the Finance Committee, his efforts to streamline the office operation, and his creation and maintenance of the MCCC Website, and to his service on the MTA Board and the MTA Pension Committee. Calling the recognition long overdue, Lois said Phil, “lives and breathes the union.”

In accepting the award, Phil said he was touched by the recognition, and he thanked those he has worked with over the years, including the coordinators, chapter leaders, and current and past officers.

NAMING OF THE GERI CURLEY BOARDROOM

President Joe LeBlanc presented longtime Board member Geri Curley with a plaque that will soon hang beside the door of what will henceforth be called the Geri Curley Boardroom at the MCCC Office on Mechanic Street in Worcester. Listing a litany of Geri’s involvement in the MCCC, the MTA, and the NEA over many years, Joe said that Geri has always faithfully and forcefully defended her priorities and has been a friend, a mentor, a role model, and the quintessential union activist. Among those stepping up to the microphone to honor Geri were Susan Dole (Bunker Hill), Liz Recko-Morrison (Berkshire), Betsy Smith (Cape Cod), Sharron Gillies (Quinsigamond), Mike D’Entremont (Bunker Hill), Ted Carlson (Bunker Hill), Lois Martin (Massasoit), Anne Wass (MTA President), Pamela Donahue (Northern Essex), Roberta Albano (Springfield Technical), Paulette Howarth (Bristol), and Gail Guarino (Cape Cod).

After the many heartfelt testimonials, Geri stepped to the mike and said she was humbled to know that her work for and dedication to the union had had such a profound impact on others.

ADOPTION OF THE FY’09 BUDGET

Treasurer Mahler presented an overview of the budget. Important changes include increased availability of reassigned time for the chapters and an increase to the IRS level for mileage reimbursement. Other increases in expenses include salary increases for officers and coordinators, *per* policy, and the new Chapter Early Contact Program. The budget proposes no dues increase. Treasurer Mahler thanked the other members of the Finance Committee: Geri Curley, Ken Czuchra, Clark Grain, Gail Guarino, Lois Martin, and Phil Kennedy.

MOTION: VOTED, by a majority of those present at the annual meeting on April 26, 2008, to adopt the MCCC operating budget of \$961,000. This FY 2009 budget represents a FY 2009 MCCC dues rate of \$253 for DAY unit members, based on approximately 1860 Day unit members, and a MCCC dues rate of \$76 for DCE unit members, based on approximately 4180 DCE unit members. Dues for agency fee payers and others qualifying for other rates will be discounted accordingly. **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REPORT OF THE BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE

Chair Bob Gillies presented the proposed bylaw changes. The Committee also includes Gail Stuart, Catherine Adamowicz, Claudine Barnes, and President Joe LeBlanc, *ex officio*. Parliamentarian Patricia Legault-Frank served as a consultant to the committee this year.

Proposed Amendment #1

ARTICLE IV Officers **Section 1, paragraph 1.**

MOTION: Add “Nominations and elections will be held in accordance with officer elections policy” (Susan Dole / Ellen Madigan Pratt). **PASSED.**

Proposed Amendment #2

ARTICLE IV Officers **Section 1, paragraph 1.**

MOTION: Add after “...May 31st”, the words “or until a successor takes office” (Ellen Madigan Pratt / Sharron Gillies). **PASSED.**

Proposed Amendment #3

ARTICLE IV Officers **Section 1.B.**

MOTION: Add the words “run for or” to read “No officer shall run for or hold more than one elected or appointed position in the Council during the term of office, except for committee memberships or duties of the office as established by these Bylaws. (Ned McGuire / Robert Rodgers).

MOTION TO AMEND: Change “officer” to “member” (Rick Doud / Phyllis Barrett).

The motion was accepted as a friendly amendment by the maker and seconder of the original motion.

MOTION: Revise Article IV, Section 1.B. to read, “No member shall run for or hold more than one elected or appointed position in the Council during the term of office, except for committee memberships or duties of the office as established by these Bylaws.” **PASSED.**

Note: The intent is that no individual may run for more than one office at the same time; nor could one individual serve in two offices simultaneously.

Proposed Amendment #4

ARTICLE V—BOARD OF DIRECTORS **Section 1. Membership, Subsection A.**

MOTION: Eliminate the word “constitutional” to read “The Board of Directors shall be composed of the [constitutional] officers and one member elected for a term of one year from each chapter by members of the chapter”(Ellen Madigan Pratt / Gail Guarino). **PASSED.**

Proposed Amendment #5

ARTICLE V—BOARD OF DIRECTORS **Section 4. Quorum and Voting. Subsection A.**

MOTION: Eliminate the word “simple” in “simple majority” (Ellen Madigan Pratt / Kathleen McDonough). **PASSED.**

Proposed Amendment #6

ARTICLE III -- Membership, Section 3.a.

MOTION: Substitute the proposed text below for the existing text:

Present Text:

For purposes of election to the Delegate Assembly and the Board of Directors, and of officers of the Council and chapter officers, an adjunct member shall have a vote equal to one-fourth (1/4) that of a full-time member.

Proposed Text:

For purposes of election to the Delegate Assembly and the Board of Directors, and of officers of the Council and chapter officers, all active members shall have a full vote.

(Betsy Smith / Sharron Gillies). **FAILED 43-45.**

Proposed Amendment #7

ARTICLE VI, Section 1

MOTION: Substitute the proposed text below for the existing text:

Present Text:

The number of delegates that each chapter is entitled to shall be based upon the Full-Time active membership it has on January 1 of each year. This is a number equal to the number of full-time members and one fourth (1/4) of the adjunct members.

Proposed Text:

The number of delegates that each chapter is entitled to shall be based upon the active membership it has on January 1 of each year.

(Betsy Smith / Ellen Madigan Pratt). **FAILED.**

Proposed Amendment #8

MOTION: *Delete ARTICLE VII, Section 1.A.:*

“No director shall serve on the Executive Committee if an officer of the Council comes from his/her campus” (Philip Mahler / Dale LaBonte). **PASSED.**

Note: This motion makes all directors eligible to run for at-large seats on the Executive Committee.

Proposed Amendment #9

ARTICLE V – Board of Directors, Section 1. Membership, A.

MOTION: *Replace the present text with proposed text below:*

Present Text:

The Board of Directors shall be composed of the officers and one member elected for a term of one year from each chapter by the members of the chapter. The term of office for members other than officers shall be one year beginning with the June Board meeting of the year in which members are elected.

Proposed Text:

The Board of Directors shall be composed of the officers, one member elected for a term of one year from each chapter by the members of the chapter, and two at-large part-time/adjunct members elected by part-time/adjunct members as part of the regular election cycle each year. The term of office for members other than officers shall be for one year beginning with the June Board meeting of the year in which members are elected. The Board of Directors is empowered to fill vacancies in the two part-time/adjunct positions which occur after the election cycle (Donnie McGee / Clark Grain). **PASSED.**

Note: At the 18 April Board of Directors meeting, some changes were proposed and approved to clarify the terminology regarding “part-time” and “adjunct” members. Note also that the at-large part-time/adjunct directors will be elected via the annual ballot.

In closing, President LeBlanc called attention to the *Springfield Republican’s* front page picture of Greenfield’s Chapter President and Director Rosemarie Freeland, her daughter, and Governor Patrick. He thanked the delegates for their attendance and contributions to the MCCC.

The meeting adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Phyllis Barrett, Secretary

Nota Bene: The delegate count for this year’s meeting was 100.

Parliamentarian: Patricia Legault-Frank