

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 Executive Committee Meeting
Mechanics Place/Worcester
Friday, January 5, 2007

Present: President Joe LeBlanc, Vice President Donnie McGee, Treasurer Phil Mahler, Secretary Phyllis Barrett; At-Large Members Geri Curley, Lois Martin; MTA Consultants Katie D’Urso, Michelle Gallagher; Communications Coordinator Don Williams; Operations Manager Phil Kennedy. **Not Present:** At-Large Member Abe Sherf. **Guest:** Richard Sanders, MTA Affiliate Services.

President Joe LeBlanc called the meeting to order at 10:23 a.m.

The agenda was adopted, as amended, by consensus.

The minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of December 8, 2006, were approved, by consensus.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President LeBlanc reported that the MCCC and the College Presidents’ Labor Relations Committee have agreed to form a Classification Task Force/Blue Ribbon Commission for the purpose of “fixing” the classification system, meaning principally the 75th percentile issue. What is envisioned is a small working group which will call on various people as resources, including the MCCC’s research coordinator, Hilaire Jean-Gilles. There will also be another attempt to negotiate a statewide agreement on nursing faculty salaries. President LeBlanc also reported that efforts to get the contract funded before the legislative break continued right up till the end. The money is now expected to come in the first “supp,” or deficiency budget, filed in the new year. President LeBlanc thanked MCCC lobbyist Charlie Flaherty, MTA Higher Ed Director Art Pippo, and the college presidents’ lobbyist Michael Muse for their efforts to date.

On January 11, President LeBlanc will be meeting with a working group from the Higher Education Leadership Council (HELIC) to refine the pledge being developed in conjunction with UMass-Amherst’s Public Higher Education Coalition. If HELIC approves the document at its meeting on January 12, this will be the first step towards finalizing the more detailed document shared with members last month. President LeBlanc has also forwarded a copy of the draft of the Faculty and College Excellence Act, prepared by AFT-Massachusetts President Dan Georgianna, to Senator Pat Jehlen, in response to her request for language for a bill that would provide salary pro-ration for adjuncts. President LeBlanc has been asked to serve on panels at an upcoming NEA regional conference in Boston and at the Hunter College Collective Bargaining Conference in New York in April.

President LeBlanc reported that there are now about 22 confirmed participants, plus the MCCC officers, for the Strategic Directions Retreat later this month. He thanked those who attended the inauguration of the new governor and lieutenant governor: Vice President Donnie McGee; Susan Dole and Mike D’Entrement from Bunker Hill; Andria Schwartz from Quinsigamond; Liz Recko-Morrison from Berkshire; Ned McQuire from Mass Bay; and Frank Leary, representing the MCCC-PAC. Noting that he had written to Gov.-Elect Patrick in December, asking him to reverse Gov. Romney’s 9C cuts, President LeBlanc said he will be writing to thank the new governor for promising to do so, to wish him well, and to offer the support of the MCCC.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Donnie McGee reported on a telephone discussion with Jan Motta, Executive Director of the Presidents Council, on December 11. Among the topics covered were the Higher Ed Reform/Funding Bill; the Presidents Council is urging full support for the latest Board of Higher Education budget, which would, over seven years, fund the \$400 million plus gap that exists between current funding for colleges and universities and sufficient funding. Another topic discussed was the current audit of campuses relative to the reassigned time issue; Ms. Motta expressed optimism about the overall emphases and results of this recent audit of a few of the community colleges, saying that the auditors understood that reassigned time was legal and contractual. Vice President McGee also pitched the idea of the joint task force on classification and the 75th percentile to Ms. Motta and received a favorable response.

Vice President McGee met with Consultant Katie D'Urso and Arline Isaacson and Jack Flannagan from MTA Governmental to discuss a game plan for filing a bill addressing the Optional Retirement Plan issues. The vice president will also be working with Consultant D'Urso on a Frequently Asked Questions handout on Chapter 150E issues. In an effort to gather more applicants for the MCCC Legislative Intern Program, there will be an ad about the program in the next *MCCC News*, and the vice president plans to send a special email message to SAC representatives, suggesting that the Student Senate and teachers of political science and history on each campus be asked to recommend students. The deadline for applications will be flexible, but early applications are advised as only four slots are left for the spring semester.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS RETREAT

The committee discussed plans for the upcoming retreat with Richard Sanders from MTA Affiliate Services, one of the facilitators of the event. Registration will be from about 9:00 till 10:00 a.m. on Friday, January 26, with the meeting to follow; activities will wrap up on Saturday afternoon. The location, information about accommodations, and other materials, including two surveys, will be shared with participants soon. The retreat will focus on team building and organizing; the goal will be empowering and activating the membership around core values and principles arrived at by the group.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Treasurer Phil Mahler shared the financial statements and reported on the office operation. He is currently involved in some programming projects aimed at making member-related tasks more easily accomplished. Work continues on the reconciliation of MTA and MCCC membership records and on the creation of the FY'08 Budget. The Finance Committee has met several times to work on the budget and on a proposal for a revised chapter support plan. The treasurer plans to send copies of the proposed chapter support plan to the chapters in late January. The proposed budget will be presented to the Board for comments on January 19. A revised budget will go to the Board in February, and then again in March for a vote. A major upcoming project in the office will be the creation of online membership forms and credit card payment capability.

MOTION: Recommend that the Board of Directors waive the following policy for two chapters, Holyoke and Springfield Technical, related to Fall 2006 chapter support: To receive Fall chapter support, a chapter must have on file a final financial report from the previous fiscal year (Mahler/Martin).
PASSED.

MOTION: Refer the existing policy concerning failure to supply the annual chapter financial report to the Finance Committee for consideration of changes to the policy (Mahler/Curley). **PASSED.**

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Secretary Phyllis Barrett will be canvassing those listed in the *Leadership Directory* for changes to personal or chapter information before the end of the month.

REPORT OF THE MTA CONSULTANTS

Consultant Katie D'Urso reported that she has received a proposal to share full-time faculty among Bristol, Massasoit, and Cape Cod. It is not yet clear if the position or positions are related to a specific program. Consultant D'Urso also reported that an impact bargaining meeting will be held soon on the statewide issue of salaries for nursing faculty.

Consultant Michelle Gallagher reported that she met yesterday with management's point person, James Brown, and with mediator Mike Ryan on the unit determination (CAS) cases. Mr. Ryan is expected to render a decision on four global issues soon. It is hoped that in the future individual chapter-level issues can be aired before an appeals committee modeled on the Classification Appeals Committee. Consultant Gallagher will seek advice from the two grievance coordinators about how to handle CAS cases that are currently pending. Consultant Gallagher also reported that a truck driving certificate program at Northern Essex, with instructors provided by a trucking company, is going from non-credit to credit. Consultant Gallagher will insist that faculty in the program be considered DCE unit members. Consultant Gallagher also reported that management's counsel, Haidee Morris, is currently costing out the agreement reached by the joint union-management Under-Enrolled Courses Committee: the goal is to establish a system-wide minimum of 12 students for a DCE course to be considered fully enrolled.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Coordinator Don Williams said this month's newsletter preparation is a bit behind because of the holidays. This issue has fewer pictures and more long articles, including coverage of then Governor-Elect Deval Patrick's trip to UMass-Amherst last month. There will also be a front-page article on the graduation rates issue and an interesting story in the "Your Union at Work" feature.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **MOTION:** Recommend to the Board of Directors the appointment of Kathleen McDonough as an alternate member of the Personnel Committee for the spring semester (Barrett/Mahler). **PASSED.**
- B. **MOTION:** Recommend that the Board of Directors support the "Advancing Public Higher Education" Blueprint from the Public Higher Education Coalition at UMass-Amherst, as amended (attached) (Curley/McGee). **PASSED.**

DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. FY '08 Budget Priorities

President LeBlanc noted that he has already given some ideas to the Finance Committee about possible expenditures and encouraged others to contact the Finance Committee with any anticipated needs. He also pointed out that annual raises for the organization's employees need to be covered in the budget.

B. Faculty and College Excellence Act

President LeBlanc asked for feedback on the draft of this act, which is being proposed by the American Federation of Teachers-Massachusetts. Among the goals listed are the hiring of more full-time faculty and better compensation, benefits, and rights for part-time faculty. Quite a lot of editing was suggested by the group. President LeBlanc will share concerns and suggestions with both AFT- MA and HELC.

C. Possible Dues Structure Changes

Treasurer Mahler summarized common complaints from members regarding the dues structure, pointing out that change is complicated by policies and bylaws at MTA and NEA. He asked that committee members give the issues some thought. It was also agreed that making changes to MCCC policy alone might be somewhat helpful in some areas.

D. NEA Higher Education Conference

President LeBlanc raised the issue of encouraging participation in this annual conference, which this year will be held in San Diego on March 2-4. This year's theme is "The Academy at Work." (For further information, go to <http://www2.nea.org/he/conf.html>.) President LeBlanc has recommended that funds be set aside for this purpose in the FY'08 Budget. There are no funds specifically earmarked for the conference this year.

E. Teaching Learning Conference Conflict

President LeBlanc noted that this annual conference, which the MCCC co-sponsors, will take place at Roxbury on April 20, the same day as the MCCC Board meeting. The Delegate Assembly is on April 28. Board members will be asked this month about the possibility of moving the April Board meeting to either the 13th or the 27th.

F. MCCC News Ideas

There was a discussion about possible features for upcoming issues.

G. Personnel Issues

Secretary Barrett, who chairs the Personnel Committee, will report to the Board of Directors this month on this fall's evaluations of the Day and the DCE grievance coordinators. Both evaluations went well, and the Personnel Committee found both coordinators to be continuing to do outstanding work for members. The committee's evaluation reports are now on file. Evaluations of the research and communications coordinators will be conducted this semester.

Some issues that were shared with the Personnel Committee during the evaluation process this fall were discussed in a brief Executive Session.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,



Phyllis Barrett, Secretary

Attachment.

Advancing Public Higher Education

We believe that Massachusetts deserves the finest, most affordable, and most accessible public higher education system in the country. We pledge to work to achieve that goal and call on the Commonwealth to:

1. Fund public higher education so it can serve the Commonwealth

Provide a substantial increase in year-to-year operating budgets, funds to address long deferred maintenance of buildings, and find a means to ensure stable state funding for public higher education.

2. Make higher education affordable

Students have been asked to pay dramatically more to make up for the deficiencies in state funding. As a result, the poor, the working class, and increasingly the middle class are being squeezed out of higher education, at exactly the same time that college is becoming increasingly necessary for the well-being of our residents and for the economic future of the state. All residents of the Commonwealth should be able to afford public higher education. In the long run higher education should be free – just as high school is.

3. Make higher education accessible to all

All our institutions of public higher education should serve the full range of students in the Commonwealth - neither race nor class should serve as a barrier to attending and completing college. Today students of color and working-class students are less likely to attend college than their white middle-class peers. There should be a place for every high school graduate in a public college or university.

4. Hire more teachers, ~~and~~ researchers, and staff

Over the past decade the number of full-time faculty *and essential support staff* at virtually every single one of our state colleges and universities has been in decline, despite a constant number of students. The steady decrease in the number of faculty *and staff* is undermining the teaching, research, and economic development mission of our public higher education system. ~~Hiring part-time and adjunct faculty instead of full-time faculty recruited through nationally competitive searches lowers the quality of education.~~

Our system of higher education has become dependent on a contingent workforce that is poorly compensated and too often lacks basic supports such as health insurance. Providing sufficient numbers of faculty with full-time employment and improving the conditions under which part-time faculty work will result in better service for our students, our communities and our economy. As we ~~add~~ *rebuild the* faculty we must also hire the staff needed to support both students and faculty.

5. Honor collective bargaining and ~~campus governance~~ *student government* decisions

Unions and governments are both entities which increase the democratic capital of a community. In accordance with this principle, the ~~The~~ state should respect collective bargaining by making timely salary offers ~~and~~ honoring union contracts negotiated in good faith and agreed to by both parties. *Furthermore, colleges* ~~Colleges~~ and universities should respect the autonomy of student governments, ~~interfering with their decisions only in extraordinary circumstances.~~