

# 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, March 2, 2007

**Present:** President Joe LeBlanc, Vice President Donnie McGee, Treasurer Phil Mahler, Secretary Phyllis Barrett; At-Large Members Lois Martin, Abe Sherf; MTA Consultant Michelle Gallagher; Communications Coordinator Don Williams; Operations Manager Phil Kennedy. **Not Present:** Geri Curley, MTA Consultant Katie D'Urso (on vacation).

President Joe LeBlanc called the meeting to order at 11:47 a.m.

The agenda was adopted, as amended, by consensus.

The minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of February 2, 2007, were approved, by consensus.

## REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President LeBlanc reported that about 100 people attended the PHENOM (Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts) launch at the State House on February 22. Vice President Donnie McGee was interviewed about the rally on the radio, by the State House News Bureau, and by the Worcester *Telegram-Gazette*. The next event is scheduled for April 25. The president also attended a recent Administration and Financing briefing on the governor's proposed budget. Increases for the colleges are small due to the structural deficit, and the college presidents are concerned that there are no longer line items for each college, leaving allocations up to the Board of Higher Education, using the funding formula (though this may change as the process continues). But the budget will cover collective bargaining contracts, and, for the first time in recent memory, there is no threat to increase the health insurance contribution percentage paid by members.

Regarding the MCCC pay raise, President LeBlanc reported that the 3% across the board increase will appear in the March 9 payroll, and the retro (from July 1, 2006) will be included in the March 23 payroll. Information will be distributed to those hired after July 1, since their increases will vary depending on whether or not they were hired on the new salary schedule.

President LeBlanc reported that adjuncts met with him, DCE Grievance Coordinator Joe Rizzo, and MTA Consultant Michelle Gallagher at regional meetings held at Northern Essex and Quinsigamond recently, with about 20 people in attendance at each meeting. He was pleased that many expressed interest in getting more involved in the union. The next regional meeting will take place at Holyoke on Thursday, March 8. Meetings are also planned for Roxbury, on March 27, and Bristol, on April 19.

Finally, President LeBlanc thanked Sarah Nathan at MTA Communications for her help with a letter to the *Boston Globe* responding to Mayor Menino's recent broadside against community college graduation and retention rates.

## REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Donnie McGee also reported on this week's release of the Governor's Budget, House 1. She described it as barely meeting the colleges' current operational expenses, but said that there may still be reason to hope for some improvement. Our members and other public employees need to help the

governor rebut the media's mantra concerning the unfair treatment of business in the state. In fact, businesses have had a series of tax breaks during recent administrations.

As reported last month, several bills of interest to the MCCC and the MTA have been re-filed. Some of the House bills have now been numbered:

- HB 2697: Chapter 150E Amendment Bill (contract funding process)
- HB 2821: Adjunct/Part-time Pension Bill
- HB 2602: Sabbatical Leaves Bill
- SB: Adjunct Health Insurance Bill
- SB: Peace Corps, Americorps, VISTA bill

Vice President McGee reminded members to tell her about problems and successes related to the 03 Buyback Law. She noted that some members are still having trouble getting credit for a full year of service if they had an academic year appointment. She stressed that the retirement board will accept whatever the Human Resources Office indicates, so they simply need the college's support. The college president may need to be contacted if the human resource director is not helpful. Denials should be sent to Consultant Katie D'Urso for a legal review.

Vice President McGee also reported that there is now an e-lert system to keep members informed about developments on the GPO/WEP social security issue: <http://www.nea.org/lac/socsec/offsets.html>. Another valuable site is the Online Voice of the Retired Public MA Employee: <http://www.massretirees.com/>, whether for GPO/WEP issues, increasing COLAS, etc.

The Strategic Action Committee met on March 1. Meetings with Dana Mohler-Faria, the governor's point person for public education, and the chairs of the Public Service Committees, Rep. Kaufmann and Sen. Downing, are scheduled for March 7. Vice President McGee and SAC activist Brooks Smith will also attend an upcoming event for Senator Therese Murray, Chair of Ways and Means, hosted by Senate President Travaglini. And the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) Ad Hoc Committee will meet on March 28.

### **REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

Treasurer Phil Mahler announced that a new copier has been leased for the office. He has also replaced one computer and is trying to save another one. He reported that the audit for FY'06 will not be completed till late April; delays in reconciling MTA and MCCC membership lists pushed the process into tax season, so the auditors have asked for some time. Meanwhile, the office staff is very busy with spring DCE teaching lists; this is tedious work. Fortunately, the new payroll program has reduced office work dramatically. Making dues payable by credit card is the next hurdle. The treasurer would also like to take the staff to visit the human resource office at Quinsigamond and the membership staff at MTA; two of our three employees are relatively new and have not had this opportunity. The treasurer also reported that he now has a better link to people and information at NEA. Phil Kennedy fielded questions on the financial report numbers.

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

Consultant Michelle Gallagher reported that a steering committee composed primarily of new chapter leaders is planning various follow up activities to the Strategic Directions Retreat held in late January. She also reported that although there were a lot of requests for NEA grants this year, the MCCC can probably count on getting at least some of the money it requested for organizing activities like Strategic Directions. Consultant Gallagher also reported that she continues to file unit determination (CAS) petitions while awaiting a report from the mediator which is expected early this month. A grievance at Quinsigamond concerning eligibility for a tentative assignment in a second area of seniority was settled to

the unit member's satisfaction recently. Meetings are scheduled for later this month for both the Electronics Communication Committee and the Under-Enrolled Courses Committee.

## **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

Coordinator Don Williams reported that postcards have been mailed inviting adjuncts to the DCE cluster meetings. The mailing for the election of MTA and NEA delegates will go out today. The galleys for the next newsletter should be ready on Monday. He is awaiting some columns and is researching an article about the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The newsletter will also include a piece on Strategic Directions and elections-related material, as well as a reminder about this year's Delegate Assembly.

## **HEALTH AND WELFARE BOARD REPORT**

Abe Sherf reported that the Health and Welfare Trust Board met last Friday. He reported that, because MetLife made a good profit on the dental plan last year, there is some possibility of negotiating the addition of some vision coverage.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. MCCC FY'08 Budget**

**MOTION:** Recommend to the Board of Directors the adoption of the MCCC FY'08 Budget, including a \$9 dues increase (Barrett/Martin). **PASSED.**

### **B. Butler and Lemieux Awards**

In Executive Session, the Executive Committee voted on nominees for the Jon Butler and Raymond C. Lemieux Awards. The recommendations will go to the Board of Directors at this month's meeting.

President LeBlanc suggested putting a discussion about the possibility of opening up the nomination process for these awards on the agenda for the April Executive Committee meeting.

### **C. Bylaws Committee Recommendations**

It was noted that directors may want to vote at this month's Board meeting on the three proposals presented by Bylaws Committee Chair Bob Gillies at last month's meeting. Two would establish new standing committees; the third involves the one person/one vote DCE issue.

## **DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **A. BHE Graduation/Retention Task Force: Next Steps**

President LeBlanc reminded committee members that Mark Lange and an administrator who served on this task force will address the Board this month. He and Vice President McGee warned about the seriousness of recent attacks on community colleges and the ignorance in some quarters of the community college mission. They argued that the MCCC needs to rebut recent bad publicity, particularly since efforts to improve the classification salary grid could be impacted by negative media reports. President LeBlanc will put a discussion of how to address this problem on the agenda for the Board meeting.

### **B. 2006-2009 Day Agreement Printing**

President LeBlanc reported that MTA Consultant Katie D'Urso and Day Team Chair Rick Doud will meet with Peter Tsaffaras from the Board of Higher Education soon for a final review of language before the contracts are printed. There was a discussion of logistics and costs.

### **C. Editorial Submissions Policy**

There was a discussion about possible amendments to the policies in this area—namely, allowing for somewhat longer guest columns and letters to the editor. The need for consistency in format—e.g. a name and contact information for both kinds of submissions—was also mentioned. Finally, it was suggested that the policy concerning appropriateness—e.g. the inappropriateness of personal attacks in submissions—be made clear. Coordinator Williams will continue to work on language revisions in light of these suggestions.

### **D. MCCC Delegate Assembly Planning**

Vice President McGee will contact the hotel to make arrangements for this spring's annual delegate assembly. President LeBlanc will encourage chapters to elect their full quotas of delegates. The program will be designed to attract the widest attendance. Strategic Directions will be a focus.

### **E. PCA Negotiations**

President LeBlanc will speak with Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald before deciding on the size and composition of a management team to negotiate with representatives of the coordinators' union.

### **F. Classification Task Force/Blue Ribbon Commission**

The next meeting of the task force will take place in late March or early April.

### **G. MCCC Banner**

Plans are afoot to hang the MCCC Banner in the Board Room. Vice President McGee and Communications Coordinator Williams are also looking into the purchase of a smaller, more weather-resistant banner for use at rallies.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,



Phyllis Barrett, Secretary