

UDMPU Board
Minutes of January 24, 2007 meeting
C&F 228

Present: Maureen Anthony, Stokes Baker, Mike Canjar, Cindy Gillham, Heather Hill-Vasquez, Clint Hirst, JoAnne Isbey, Stephen Manning, Kris McLonis, Tricia Thomas, Larry Zeff

Excused: Mary Higby, Jill Spreitzer

Absent: Doug MacDonald

The meeting began at 12:47 PM with the motion to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2007 meeting. There was also a motion to thank McLonis for stepping in and taking the meeting minutes in Higby's absence. Both motions were seconded and carried (with one abstention).

Treasurer's report

Hirst distributed copies of the report from the Labor Department. He pointed out the main point of the report; namely, that financial record-keeping on the part of the UDMPU Board has been incomplete. From now on, every check that is written as reimbursement for travel and conference attendance must include not just copies of credit card statements for related costs but also supporting documentation such as hotel bills and receipts for expenses such as food, parking and registration fees. Payments to support staff for services rendered must be explained in writing and in much greater detail. All supporting documentation must be retained for at least five years.

The bank balance as of the time of the meeting was \$92,162.27. Hirst reported that all incoming funds since the previous meeting have been union dues and all outgoing funds have been payments made to the MEA.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the treasurer's report. The motion carried.

Grievance report

Manning mentioned an upcoming faculty orientation scheduled for February 8. In recent years, Manning has attended these sessions to explain the options for UDMPU membership (full member or fee payer status) to new faculty members; he has also taken membership forms to these orientation sessions so that new faculty members can complete the forms on site. This has been the practice for several years because Human Resources did not always inform the UDMPU Board of new hires. Hirst believed that, as a result of his own updated record-keeping since becoming Treasurer, it was no longer necessary for Manning to attend these sessions. It was suggested that Manning attend the February 8 orientation and get a sense as to whether it was indeed necessary for him to continue this practice; Manning agreed to do so.

There was some discussion about the requirement that CLAE faculty submit their course syllabi to their program chairs one week before classes start. There was concern that the syllabi being submitted are being reviewed for content, which violates the faculty members' rights to intellectual freedom. The Committee on Academic Procedures seems

to be responsible for this demand for syllabus review. So far, though, there have been no repercussions for faculty members who have not submitted their syllabi for review.

Zeff suggested that the union do nothing at this point. His sense is that any response at this point would legitimize the rule. The requirement came from the CLAE Committee on Academic Procedures (CAP). Hirst said that this situation sounded like something to be dealt with by the McNichols Faculty Assembly (MFA). He also stated that while it isn't unreasonable to try to standardize syllabi in some ways (e.g., fonts, headings, University-wide mandates against plagiarism), such standardization must be consistent.

Zeff said that if a violation of process, such as administration enforcing this "rule" inconsistently, were to become apparent, the union could step in. For the time being, it was recommended that Manning take this issue to the Shared Governance Task Force on behalf of the CLAE and the UDMPU. Manning agreed to do so.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the grievance report. The motion carried.

Union elections

Nominations for the positions of president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer will open in late February. An Elections Committee would be needed; Isbey volunteered to head it one more time and in the process train anyone interested in taking on the role in the future. Gillham volunteered to assist Isbey. MacDonald and Brigette Murphy will be approached about also helping out.

AAUP affiliation discussion

Attention then turned to the email which Manning had received in December 2006 from Julie Schmid of AAUP explaining the AAUP membership dues the type of support that could be expected from AAUP if the union switched its affiliation from MEA. One possible challenge which Schmid had raised in her email was the case in which the union at Yeshiva University was denied the right to bargain collectively because it is a religious institution. In her opinion, unless the membership of the UDMPU was strong enough to resist administrative pressure, it might meet a similar fate.

McLonis mentioned some areas in the MEA bylaws which seemed to imply punitive measures if the UDMPU switched affiliations: IX.B.8 and IX.K.2. It was pointed out, however, that the MEA Bylaws also include language explaining the conditions and procedure for a local association to disaffiliate from MEA: XIII.D and XIX.G. Basically, there is a currently window of time during which the UDMPU could indeed switch affiliations; and it practically coincides with the end date of the current contract.

The big issue is that AAUP, unlike MEA, does not provide legal representation as a benefit for membership. It is possible, though, that because of the lower amount in dues that would have to be paid to the AAUP, local dues could be adjusted to create a larger nest egg to cover the cost of hiring a lawyer in the event that the UDMPU had to go into arbitration with the University administration. Local dues could also be used to keep a lawyer on retainer, an option suggested by Baker.

Canjar said that the board needed to consult a completely impartial lawyer to learn the ramifications about all these options – switching affiliation in light of the

Yeshiva case and the cost of arbitration and/or keeping a lawyer on retainer. Isbey recalled a lawyer named Scotty Brooks who had served as an arbitration lawyer in the past. Although he now deals with civil rights cases, he might know of other qualified lawyers. Baker did a keyword search under Brooks' name and found a website that provided information on lawyers with different specialties. Hill-Vasquez moved that the board direct Manning and Baker to check out possible lawyers and find out how much it would cost to consult with one. The motion was seconded and carried.

Other business

Isbey recalled that in previous years the board had donated money annually to benefit the hungry and wanted to know whether the board members were interested in resuming that practice. She also asked whether the board members would like to donate money to the scholarship fund. It was decided to bring up these questions at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kris McLonis