

Draft Minutes of
The East Aurora Council of the AFT Local 604
November 17, 2021

Meeting called to order at 5 PM via Zoom

In attendance:

Arlette Gomez, Aviva Pollack Paradise, Airen Freese, Alan Scott, Christy Harding, Dulce Jonsson, Francisco Zafra, Gloria Salinas, Gerry Mestek, Janel Jaros, Julie Melendez, Jon Kuehl, Jessica Joyce, Judy Durham, Jennifer Gentile, Jeffrey Mleczo, Joyce Ladewig, Mara Clucas, Michelle Hanna, Michelle Taylor, Rhonda Bass, Stephanie Paul, Sandra Williams, Victoria Haier

Treasurer's Report:

- Reviewed November's budget report.

Some items reviewed by Jeff included our income (through five pay periods), dues collected, dues payed, interest in the bank, 1st stipend payments, parent-teacher conference pizza for staff, and that leaves us with an overage of \$20,268, which will "definitely be gone by the end of the year" due to attorney's fees and our budget.

Motion to approve: Francisco Zafra, Judy Durham - Approved. Pass: all. Nays: none. Abstains: none.

President's Remarks

- December 9th Meeting Canceled

We don't typically have a union meeting in December, and due to generally business and Jeff's illness, he is canceling the meeting.

- Approve Treasurer and Secretary appointees
Secretary - Alan Scott
Treasurer - Sandra Williams

Leadership met and went over the interested candidates, and it was decided that the two appointees are going to be Alan Scott for Secretary and Sandra Williams for Treasurer.

Motion to approve Alan Scott: Mary Taylor, Stephanie Paul - Approved. Pass: 26. Nays: 1. Abstains: none.

Motion to approve Sandra Williams: Francisco Zafra, Mary Taylor - Approved. Pass: 26. Nays: 1. Abstains: none.

- Member Meeting Representation

Any building representatives who get contacted by the administration to represent a member at the district office, Jeff asks that you contact him first. There have been instances of the administration not being timely when

notifying members about meetings/investigations, which has meant that those on the Executive Council have been unable to attend, resulting in building representatives being put into the position of having to attend meetings for which they may not be adequately prepared. If a building representative wants to attend a meeting at the district office, that is fine, but it should be a choice, not the result of being told an hour before a meeting is supposed to take place by the administration.

Francisco Z. asked if we can expect at least a 24-hour notice. Jeff M. said that this would be nice and professional, but lately there had been instances of the administration notifying the union of meetings with much less time, including an hour or two, and even though members of the Executive Council had scheduling conflicts, and the administration tried insisting that someone else should attend.

Alan S. made the point that if a member is told that a meeting needs to take place but it is in a timespan in which a rep cannot get there, the member can go to the meeting and say that they want a rep and pause the meeting. Jeff M. said that a member *has* to attend the meeting but they don't have to answer questions. Judy D. said that in such meetings there are often more than one administrator present and they are asking lots and lots of questions. Although some reps will hold strong and not answer questions, some members will want to answer questions even without a rep there which is a bad situation because the rep can't advise and/or take notes and the administration can be very tricky in their questioning and reps. Alan S. made the point that more than one building representative can attend the meeting. Jeff M. made the point that if the situation is severe enough, not having a rep present would not stop the administration from putting a member on administrative leave. Sandra W. asked for clarification about Weingarten Rights, and Jeff M. stated that our Weingarten Rights protect our right to not be questioned without union representation present, however it would not stop a person from being put on leave if the situation were severe enough, e.g., a DCFS issue. Jeff M. made the additional clarification that he does not need to be notified about building-level meetings, only meetings at the district office.

- Building Food Drives - Carrie Snyder

Carrie Snyder was not present, so Jeff M. let us know about our local's food drive. He let us know that we can organize a drive at our buildings.

Judy D. told us that we donate to Marie Wilkinson, and that we've been the top union for a number of years in terms of our donations, so we should "keep it up."

- Union Superintendent Minutes

Jeff posted them to review; discussion ensued. A building rep (?) at Fred Rogers said that they had not received payment for nostalgia curriculum writing. The timesheets were submitted to the secretary and their principal, but they have not heard anything from Lisa Dallacqua. Two verbal conversations and one in writing conversation with the principal. Eight people still have not been paid. Jeff M. asked that the email be sent to him so he can bring the issue forward at the U-S meeting.

Teachers Pay Teachers: Jeff M. said that Teachers Pay Teachers will be covered prior to the district's memo (10/04) that went out but not afterwards. Jennifer G. and Judy D. confirmed this. The district said that there is a potential conflict of interest with the site in that a member might create some content, then tell other teachers in the district to buy it using their \$200.

District Bonuses: Jeff M. talked about the \$9000 signing bonus that has been added and stated that he'd told the district that such issues need to be negotiated with the union first (which did not take place). The bonus is for bilingual teachers and is to be paid out over three years (\$3000 per year). After Jeff M. talk with them, the district voiced agreement that a retention bonus from the ESSER funds will be paid out to our members. After some negotiating, it was agreed that it would be based on several criteria but that the criteria should be as equitable as possible. But a final confirmation has not been given to Jeff M. yet. A building representative (?) asked for clarification about the attendance criteria, and Jeff M. said that he believed they'd be looking at the state report card, with the 1st year they will use the high school for everything (the high school has had increases). The bonus would be for the next three years. At worst, everyone should get \$500, but he isn't too sure about how obtainable the other goals will be. Jeff M. said he is not a big fan of incentive bonuses based on goals (as he'd prefer a flat bonus) but if it is bringing money to the members, then he isn't against it. The main piece is student attendance but in years two and three there is a staff attendance piece too (if they stick to their October plan). Building representative (?) asked about what counts or doesn't count. FMLA does not count against the bonus. Alan A. was worried that staff will be pressuring other staff about their absences. Jennifer G. and Judy D. said they pushed hard about this issue. Jennifer G. said she is glad that we are getting money but not some of the details of how this is being done. Jessica J. said that we should be concerned with how mental health issues are treated because mental health issues cannot be put on FMLA. Judy D. said that mental health issues can be put on FMLA. And it can be intermittent FMLA. This can be one day a month. Jennifer G: Intermittent FMLA can be done by the hour, if it has been approved by a doctor. Michelle H. asked when the district plans to share this information with staff. Jeff M. said probably in December. It has been in discussion for six or seven months yet, but it could still get shot down and we won't get it. Mary T. asked if it is also for TAs and PPAs. Jeff M. said it would be for all staff. Gerry M. asked if the bonus if applied like a stipend or will it be applied to our base salary. Jeff M. said it would be applied as a stipend.

Sick Bank Enrollment: Jeff compiled a list, about 280 people (so 560 days in the bank). Next thing that needs to be done is for a Sick Bank Committee to be created and a form to be created. Alan S. asked if everyone who signed up has been notified. He said that two people asked him about whether or not they should have received notification. Jeff M. said that at this point everyone should have been notified. If there was a glitch, people can still be added. And people can still join but they'll be starting at year one in the bank.

VNA Times: Staff being told that the last time for an appointment 3:30 PM but it is in fact 2:50 PM

Pre-K Full Day Preps: District has a plan for this. They should be implementing this soon.

Confusion on Sub Coverage Reporting: Rhonda B. and Dalilah will help complete forms for the district. It seems to be a bigger issue at elementary than middle and high school.

Improved Communication Regarding Board Meetings: The communicate produced on this issue by the Communication Committee was given to the administration. Initial feedback seemed negative but at the following board meeting Dr. Norrell said they may be looking into setting up a board meeting newsletter.

Parent Survey about Extended School Day: Run along Century 21 to give more education options for struggling students. Low results will most likely combine any interested persons with 21st Century. Stephanie P. spoke about a tutoring program at Benavides STEAM Academy and the people who are tutoring do not know their pay rate. Jeff M. said that at the high school he believes it is the supervision rate, which is \$29. If they don't know, they should ask. Tutoring "positions" are in the contact, but not those who just do tutoring for students (who should get the supervision rate). Janel J. said at Oak Park that they were told that there is \$40,000 that is getting paid out, but it hasn't been approved so those tutoring cannot be paid to tutor. Judy D. asked if they were asked to tutor or if staff are doing it out of the kindness of their hearts. Janel J. said it is formal (not personal volunteering). Jeff M. advised to tell the school's admin that other schools are being paid and therefore they should be doing it too.

Waldo No ISI Room: They will be looking to get that filled.

Waldo Math Class: They are working on remedying this.

Brady TA Covid Quarantine: The district is saying that this staff member was patient zero and that is why the class has to be quarantined. That is still a case in progress.

Copy Machines and Repro Issues: Steve Megazzini is looking into other local vendors who can help out in problem times.

General Communication Issues: We told them about their lack of response to issues. They said they'd "look into it."

Johnson PE Budget: Gym usage is an issue at the elementary level but will be discussed at the upcoming meeting. At Johnson, the gym can be used but it needs to be set up and taken down.

District Office SPED Department Workday: Schedule changed to 7:30 - 4:30. One hour lunch.

Evaluation Rollovers: PERA to discuss. We thought there was an understanding but they came back and said the principals and vice principals voted to keep the evaluations. This is not what the union was originally told.

Alan S. said that the updated PERA information is not on the district's website. That information is not available. The IFT told Alan that a new policy is that staff can appeal an evaluation they don't agree with and this can go to an appeal committee. In the past, staff could only write and attach a letter. Alan S. said that he is pretty sure that staff do not know about this appeals process. Jennifer G. said she's been asking for a PERA meeting since the beginning. Jeff M. said that a meeting was lined up in October but it was put

on hold until it was decided what to do about the rollovers but not that they aren't being rolled over, a meeting needs to take place. Gerry M. said that the appeals committee was supposed to have been announced last Spring but the administration did not get out the information and revisions so that staff could read it over the summer, and they failed to get it out at the start of the school year.

Vacation Policy for 12 months: There is no two weeks notice policy. The district can deny a vacation, but there is no two week requirement.

VP - Teachers:

Jennifer G. said that there are a lot of staff who are struggling right now and she hopes that we can band together as a union to help each other and stand strong. A committee will be needed for retirements. If interested in joining, contact Jennifer. Jennifer G. is hoping for an actual party/celebration this year.

VP - Staff:

Judy D. said that a library assistant had been given a whole classroom without a teacher and asked the union if she should be paid for that at the sub rate. After some work, H.R. got back that it would/should. Judy D. said, always ask the question and get it in writing.

VP - Clerical

Rhonda B.: If there are issues with office staff clerical, please ask them to contact Rhonda sooner rather than later so that it doesn't go all the way up to the district administration before preliminary steps to address the issues are taken.

Building Issues

Francisco Z said that TAs are subbing for certified staff. What should they get paid. Jeff M. said that this is addressed in the contract. They should be paid an extra \$20 if it is a period and if they are doing a whole day then they get an extra \$100 on top of their salary. Look in the contract under the support section.

Motion to adjourn. Francisco Z, Judy D. - Approved. Pass: all. Nays: none. Abstains: none.