

Draft Minutes of
The East Aurora Council of the AFT Local 604
April 14, 2022

Begin at 4:15 PM - end at 5:45 PM

In attendance: Arlette Gomez, Aviva Pollack Paradise, Alan Scott, Beth Cotter, Christy Harding, Cin Citro, Carrie Snyder, Fatima Ballesteros, Francisco Zafra, Gerry Mestek, Geoffrey Adler, Henry Johnson, Julie Melendez, Jon Kuehl, Jan Kolodziejek, Jessica Fisher, Judy Durham, Jennifer Gentile, Jeffrey Mleczek, Joyce Ladewig, Melinda Thomas, Michelle Hanna, Michelle Taylor, Pamela Miller, Rhonda Bass, Stephanie Paul, Sandra Williams, Trevor Schrage, Victoria Haier

Not in attendance: Angie Rosa, Angie Sanchez, Airen Freese, Amy Van Cura, Brittany Peterson, Beth Eadens, Dulce Jonsson, Dawn Stanfa, Eileen Pasturczak, Elaine Halleran, Gloria Salinas, John Burkhalter, Jeff Hansford, Janel Jaros, Julie Schmale, Jessica Joyce, Kaliegh Soumar, Karen Mueller, Kevin Thacker, Lisha Pauli, Lorraine Garciacano, Mary Carol Smith, Mara Clucas, Matt Harding, Mary Taylor, Nicole Connoly, and Stacey Martin

Group Work (10 min)

- Discuss Building Issues

Secretary's Report: (5 minutes)

- Union Meeting Minutes from [02/10/22 NA](#)

Motion to Approve 02/10/22: John Kauehl, Carrie Snyder - Approved. Pass: All, Nays: 0, Abstains: 0.

- Union Meeting Minutes from [03/10/22 NA](#)

Motion to Approve 03/10/22: Jan Kolodziejek, Melinda Thomas - Approved. Pass: All, Nays: 0, Abstains: 0.

Treasurer's Report:

- Reviewed April Budget Report

Motion to Approve: Melinda Thomas, Judy Durham - Approved. Pass: all, Nays: 0, Abstains: 0.

President's Reports

- New Building Reps - EAEC Trevor Schrage

It was requested by the EAEC building representative that another building rep position be created to assist at EAEC. Trevor Shrage volunteered for the position.

Motion to Approve the Interim Building Representative: Gerry Mestek, Judy Durham - Approved. Pass: all, Nays: 0, Abstains: 0.

- New Member Enrollment

If new staff have not signed up yet, they cannot vote. Nor should they get a staff appreciation gift. Please see if these members can be signed up.

- Election Committee Presentation - Jan Kolodziejek

Jan shared a draft of the ballot. Senators are being voted on too (ten positions are open, but only six are running). We accept write-ins. Local 604 elections will also be included. We accept proxy votes (must have a text, email, a call, or some documentation). Directions need to go out. The reps run the voting.

Some debate took place regarding whether or not a proxy ballot should include the name of the absent individual and the building rep who signed for them. Issue shelved for future discussion.

Some debate took place regarding whether someone on the ballot should also be working the ballot table. This issue was also shelved for future discussion.

The question was asked whether candidates can campaign. Jan answered that there are the bios, which will be sent to the Google Classrooms, and hard copies can be shared on the union boards. Candidates are not supposed to use district email.

Jeff: I heard from the Local that candidates are not supposed to campaign during school hours.

Jan read the names of candidates.

The question was asked when the election would take place.

Jan: The constitution says between April 15 - May 15. Maybe after our next Faculty meeting so that staff can be reminded/informed about the election.

The question was asked whether voting can take place during school hours (contractual time). The answer is yes. And staff can vote during their prep or lunch periods. If the building reps want, they can have voting before and after school.

The vote will be May 3rd.

- Staff Appreciation Gifts

Jeff told the reps that the appreciation gift flash drives are loaded with the contract and our constitution too.

Please don't hand out until April 25th. If reps want to type a little letter or speak with their members, feel free. Sheets are included with three columns: dues members, non-members, and how many flash drives there are. Red are those who have said they don't want to be members, blue are unknown or undecided.

Jan K: People can sign up to be members at the ballot box. So bring sign up sheets.

- Community Outreach Initiative

Jeff asked that we start thinking of ways of having Q+As, discussions, etc., with community members. Admin is always saying that the parents think this and that they think that. But if we can find ways to meet and speak with community members, parents, etc., we can better learn their views via first hand experience.

A member suggested that we can maybe meet with PTA groups, Bilingual Parent Association, African American Parent Association, etc.

It was asked that we brainstorm ideas on how to better connect with the community.

- Evaluation Agreement

Jeff: The Memorandum was posted to the website, it was discussed in the past, we're now discussing it again, and it has been posted to the Google Classroom.

Jennfier Gentile clarified that 1st years cannot roll their evaluations over because there is nothing to roll over too (no previous evaluation).

The MOU was drafted by the district attorneys and reviewed by Robert Bloch.

Motion to Approve the Evaluation Agreement: Gerry Mestek, Jessica Fisher - Approved. Pass: 0, Nays: 0, Abstains, 0.

- Union-Superintendent Minutes [04/07/22](#)

VP 1 - Teachers:

- License Renewals

Jennifer Gentile suggested that staff enter their hours in advance so that they aren't having to enter lots and lots of data all at the last minute.

Renewals have been smooth and fast this year.

Student teachers provide 20 PD hours to their supervising teachers.

One needs 120 hours total for renewal.

There is a new form. There are some questions you need to answer.

One must hold onto their evidence for at least five years because you might be audited.

If classes come from out of state, it won't be accepted.

Our school can be hard to find in the system because it is titled Aurora East.

A staff member asked about lane advancement. The issue was brought up at the U-S meeting and it is hopefully going to be paid on the next check (4/15).

A member suggested that if it is not paid, members should speak about the issue at the board meeting.

VP 2 - Staff:

- License Renewal for Support Staff

Judy Durham: On June 2023 it is going to expire and it is \$50 (for five years).

- Longevity

The admin were using the date of hire, which means when you retire you miss out on a year of pay. It used to be that you got paid in increments, then it was changed to quarters.

Once we get the final agreement and if we pass an MOU, support and office staff will get paid on the last day of the school year (May 30th). One flat payment. Based on the school year, not the service date.

- Training

New PPAs are often unclear how to perform their new jobs. For instance, during high conflict or emotional situations, PPAs without training are unclear how to respond. They need better training, shadowing veteran staff, etc.

VP 3 - Clerical

- Job Description Meeting

Office Staff job description meeting took place on 04/12. Reps need secretarial staff to go through their job descriptions, erase what they aren't doing, add what they are doing, and send that info to Rhonda. We really need to review and edit these. Get this info in by May 15th.

Senators' Reports

Michelle Hanna: There was a meeting on 04/13. A lot of members are thinking of leaving teaching in the next three years. What can we do to recruit more teachers? Michelle suggested no more PD required for licenses. Someone else said that districts can pay for our license renewal.

Carrie Snyder: All senators voted on an updated Local 604 Constitution. Alan Scott has an article in the newsletter about IFT leadership training. Another article is in there about physical altercations.

When you are retired, members are still eligible for their Accidental Death and Dismembership Insurance. Always update the Local if the beneficiary changes.

Carrie handed out a packet with info about the AFT Local 604 run-off vice president election, Covid bill details, and FY 23 budget and other legislative measures.

Both the IFT and AFT conventions are coming, and a number of union leadership are attending. Carrie suggested that we tell our members, who can attend too.

Henry Johnson spoke about the reasons why teachers and staff gave regarding why they wanted to leave the profession, saying that discipline in the classroom is a major problem, needing to get parents involved, and the need for mental

health days (staff feel torn between taking necessary time off and the desire to be with their students). Districts are looking to Central and South America to recruit bilingual educators, but we have great potential recruits right in the area.

Judy Durham: Racial equity was discussed and what districts are doing or not doing about it. Our district needs to have more of these discussions. The district started it in the past, then gave up on it.

Gerry Mestek: Dan Montgomery said that unions might take more responsibility for PD.

Michelle Taylor made suggestions for how our professional development can be made in a way that is more effective, smarter and not harder. The PD on 04/13 at the middle/elementary was good. We need to move away from the old tired videos, we need to have rich discussions, thinking outside of the box. She suggested that we share this with our BOE.

Buildings Concerns (20 minutes)

- High School

Melinda Thomas spoke about three issues.

-Book Drive

It is time again for the book drive. Melinda would like help.

-Recruitment

It would be great if we as a district created a list of what benefits we have provided our members. This could be data we could use so people can know what concrete benefits we provide.

-Elections

We have people running at all levels. We should rotate when elections take place for Executive Board members because if a lot of new candidates get voted in, it could wreak havoc on our leadership's ability to function.

- Middle

Cowherd is doing Saturday tutoring. And the communication from administration has been very poor. Interview Committees have been used by Dr. Norrell to play major parts in hiring administrators like principals. H.R. used to reach out to members, but now the union reps are running it, putting it together, etc. Jan K said that this is problematic. It was shelved for continued discussion for later.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. Jessica Fisher, Henry Johnson - Approved. Pass: all, Nays: 0, Abstains: 0.

