



KEAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
An Association of Professors, Professional Staff and Librarians
Local 2187, American Federation of Teachers
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KFT General Membership Luncheon Meeting
17 March 2004 1:30 pm
University Center, Room 228

I. Social Committee Report

*Because N. Rodriguez had to leave for another meeting, the Social Committee report was moved to number I. on the agenda.

*A KFT end-of-the-year party will be held on 4/28/04 in the Cougar's Den.

*At the end of May/early June, there will be a KFT family picnic off campus.

II. President's Report

*D. Casale reported that Dr. Vinton Thompson was interviewed for a second time for the Provost position. The Board will probably make its announcement as to their choice for Provost at the meeting on 5/10/04.

*There was a meeting of D. Casale, J. Castiglione, P. Connelly and T. Lisa re: joint administration of the new contract. The Administration is interested in administering the new contract, which has a lot of new language, appropriately. Copies of the new contract will be mailed out shortly. For new, members are to use the old contract and the changes listed in the September 2003 AFT VOICE.

*D. Casale announced that there will be a KFT Professional Staff luncheon meeting on 4/7/04 in UC 337 A & B from 12-2. P. Connelly, T. Lisa, S. Young and B. Hoerner are scheduled to attend. The NL clause of the contract will be discussed for future local negotiations.

*D. Casale indicated that there will be a KFT Faculty luncheon meeting on 4/21/04 re: changes in the contract. More details will be forthcoming.

*D. Casale stated that he was told that President Farahi visited department meetings today and indicated that if faculty does not attend

commencement, they will be docked a sick day. The State Council has stated that “past practice” does not allow for this.

*D. Casale indicated that it is very important for members to come forward with violations of the contract so that the KFT can step into work against rumor.

*Re: the KFT election-D. Casale thanked J. Erickson for chairing the Election Committee and acting as liaison with the American Arbitration Association. A handout with the certified results of the election was distributed. New Officers will take seat 7/1/04. There was a 67% turnout (310 out of 464 members) to vote in the election. D. Casale stated he was pleased and humbled by the results. This vote speaks of the collective will of the body. He hopes to move in a new and more forceful direction. Members voted for unity principles. The results will be read as a mandate that members are pleased with the direction of the KFT in the last 9 months. D. Casale indicated that the KFT would work more aggressively to pursue our ends.

*Re: PERC Ruling-A handout of a signed agreement between Kean University and the State Council. On 3/11/04 D. Davis went to the PERC office for a preliminary hearing about the ULP filed due to the cap on overloads placed by the Administration on faculty, as listed in the 6/11/03 memo sent to D. Casale by P. Connelly. This is a violation of the Master Contract. The agreement signed by the Administration states that they will meet with the Union to consult about changes to the faculty advising, faculty office hours, faculty teaching large classes, reduction/elimination of released time, and restriction of overload assignments that were listed in P. Connelly’s letter. There is a two-month window for the Administration to consult with the KFT. The first meeting is scheduled for 3/29/04. The Administration’s attempt to thwart the contract has been stopped. Although the ULP was withdrawn by the KFT, Article 12.5b still allows for these items to be negotiated. This is a victory for the KFT and its members. This shows how strong the contract is. The Chairs refused to concede and the contract had to be respected. It shows that if we keep to the principles, it is an effective strategy. It shows power, strength and integrity. We need to come up with a comprehensive position regarding these thorny issues and must negotiate in good faith, as well. Continued vigilance of the contract is recommended.

*D. Casale dispelled the rumor that Chairs are now out-of-unit during discussion. Although this was brought by the State to the Master Contract negotiating table, it was taken off. Thirty-five e-mails were received re: these and other proposals. Sub-Committees would be formed (so members can volunteer) re: the Administration’s five proposals. Four focus groups will also be formed, one from each college, with

representatives from various constituency groups, so that there is broad representation.

*Re: Strategic Planning-The AFT Higher Education Program and Policy Council Strategic Plan was handed out. The AFT is interested in long-term strategizing. There was a KFT retreat in January when ideas were forwarded. The AFT principles and initiatives dovetail with those of the KFT:

- Strengthening advocacy and political support and action
- Expanded the Union and its activism
- Protecting faculty and professional control of teaching and research
- Counteract the academic staffing crisis (e.g., the adjunct to faculty ratio)
- Building bargaining capacity.

There needs to be an organizational structure by which to carry out these priorities. On 4/7/04 the KFT Executive Council will meet to focus on the structure of the KFT. There are 4 primary goals of the KFT:

- Professional Staff need to be targeted to increase the membership. It was at 90% and is now in the mid-eighties. There will be 30 new faculty in the Fall. If our membership totals 500, we may add another delegate to the State Council. A student affiliation will be pursued and perhaps Graduate Students will be organized.
- Increase membership services such as continuation of the junior faculty retreat, implementation of workshops for retention and promotion application, reinstatement of the Mentoring program, making HR forms available.
- As political action, the KFT will send out information about the national election, have a legislative breakfast in early April, join the Union County Labor Council, have a voter registration drive, lobby for appointment of a Board member. The KFT has the largest COPE account in the State.
- Kean needs budget accountability. The budget is flush. \$1.9 billion was given to higher education and 75% of the salary transfer is coming from the State. This should free up \$300-\$400,000. The 13 promotions denied last year should be restored, as the letter sent to faculty indicated this was due to a fiscal crisis. The Kean budget should be accounted for in an open and responsible way before its enacted. The Board of Trustees votes on it in private session. Only tuition is voted on by the Board in public. There is a bill being

proposed calling for accountability of the Boards. The KFT will look at what the Board and Administration is required to do by law. We can build public pressure for transparency. The Administration always cites fiscal restraints for lack of program support, promotions for Librarians and Professional Staff and range adjustments for faculty. In the last 3-4 years there has been a commitment to capital projects instead. Petitions, political pressure and grievances were discussed as ways to apply pressure on the Board to make the budget vote public. Trenton only provides information not tied to tuition. P. Connelly is to attend a Faculty Senate meeting at the end of March to talk about the budget. Anyone can attend that meeting. The Kean web site has categories of money required to be listed for Trenton, but these are tied to cost centers. The cost center categories are not divulged on the web site. An annual audit after-the-fact shows how the money was spent, but the audit done in 8/03 was presented at a Board meeting only in 12/03.

III. Local Negotiations

*J. Castiglione indicated that the Professional Staff meeting on 4/7/004 will focus its first half on a discussion with P. Connelly and T. Lisa about administration of the Master Contract. The second half will focus on developing a bargaining position about NL and comp time. He thanked C. Brown, C. Damiao, T. Sensor and L. Bradbury for their help regarding the Professional Staff issues. He indicated that some people think they are full members and are only agency members. If anyone isn't sure, they should contact N. Hall.

*Chair compensation should be commensurate with the extra work required in large departments. William Paterson University has successfully negotiated increased compensation for Chairs of larger departments. S. Salmond, B. Cirasa and C. Kelly and others have volunteered for a committee to look into this matter. J. Castiglione hopes to meet with all the Chairs in the next several weeks.

*J. Castiglione indicated that P. Connelly had previously agreed to have a consultation's report on the library available for the new Provost and a highly regarded consultant was identified. Now he is saying that he wants to wait until the new Provost is in place. Thanks were given to S. Horbatt for her hard work in helping to draft the Librarians Promotion letter of agreement.

*J. Castiglione stated that F. Glazer and M. Halper had volunteered to shape a 9+3 teaching load letter of agreement for local negotiations. Montclair State University has had one for some time (with the last 3 credits reserved for teaching, research or service) and Rowan University is negotiating one now with released time.

*In regards to the five proposals in P. Connelly's letter last summer, there is no evidence that there is a need for additional faculty office hours and the use of technology for communication with students during off hours needs to be considered. Perhaps faculty interested in compensation for advising could provide additional hours.

IV. Treasurer's Report

*E. Comerford indicated that a vote for approval by the General membership has allowed for a KFT Scholarship Endowment Fund to be established.

*E. Comerford stated that although the State Council and AFT have increased the dues due to them (which amounts to 60% of the dues the KFT collects), the KFT has not increased its dues. The KFT is the only local Union that does not charge 1% (some even charge as much as 3%) of employee salaries for dues. In the last 3 years, the KFT has not added to the reserves. This past year the interest from the CDs had to be dipped into. Additionally, with retirements of faculty with higher salaries, a smaller amount is being collected in dues. The interest rates on the CDs that were retired have decreased (for those that had to be replaced). The outside auditor cautioned against givebacks due to the possibility that it could lead to an inability to meet expenses. This year, the interest rates on the CDs will probably not cover the gap. The agency members that only pay 85% are benefiting from the changes in salary in the Master Contract.

*E. Comerford indicated that at the AFT conference, locals were told that they must have annual audits and/or financial reviews of their budgets. The KFT does that already.

*It was indicated that the KFT is looking to affiliate with AAUP. We have asked the AFT to review the KEAN University audits.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Bradbury, Secretary to the KFT.