



KEAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
An Association of Professors, Professional Staff and Librarians
Local 2187, American Federation of Teachers
Kean University, Union, N.J. 07083
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KFT General Membership Luncheon Meeting
26 March 2003 12:30 pm
University Center 228

I. President's Report

*R. Katz stated that him, M. Wuethrich and Debra Davis from the State Council have been meeting with Human Resources regarding problems, especially those that concern the Professional Staff. He added that two reclassifications were approved and three denied of Professional Staff. He stated that he discussed the need for management training in our contract. The administration must have job descriptions for all Professional Staff by 5/1/03.

*R. Katz announced that there is career development money available for Professional Staff. He encouraged members to apply for it. This is money dedicated by contract for the Professional Staff that cannot be used for something else. If you have expenses already incurred, go to P. Connelly's office to talk to R. De Santo about it. She has asked D. Casale to pass the word about it. The forms are available through that office and must go directly to there.

*R. Katz announced that as of July 1, he would be stepping down from the KFT presidency. Executive Council of the KFT approved this, along with appointment of D. Casale as President, I. Nesoff for Vice President (taking D. Casale's place), and J. Castiglione as Negotiations Chair (taking D. Casale's place) as per Article 6 of the KFT constitution. R. Katz explained that he intended to step down last year, but did not due to the Presidential search, since he wanted the transition in the KFT to be a smooth one. R. Katz noted that D. Casale is dogged. He style will be the voice of the KFT and all members need to participate. Members indicated that R. Katz would be missed.

*R. Katz stated that the annual Kean gala to raise money for students' scholarships would be soon held. As approved by the KFT Executive Council, the KFT has taken out an ad in the program for the gala. This way, there will be a show of support for both the students and the Union. There will also be a luncheon for the recipients of the KFT scholarships on April 24. The KFT Executive Council also approved sponsorship of the upcoming Spanish-Speaking program.

II. Treasurer's Report

*E. Comerford stated that there had been a list of proposals going around that included things like faculty donating pay for a course to the University. At the Communications Council, this was discussed. The bottom line is that any donations must be separated from

any payroll deductions. Some problems with the proposal were tax-related. The IRS may view such a thing as services and not exclude it from salary. We can, however, make a positive contribution without impacting paychecks or asking working for nothing. We do not want to say that we do not need our raises and can give our money back. Yet, faculty can be painted as uncaring. It was suggested that if anyone makes a contribution to the scholarships, it can be specified as such on a personal check. It would be dangerous to tinker with our contractual benefits. The Administration had gone as far as making a form to donate services. Since we don't want to appear uncaring (what would be a P.R. problem), another route can be taken. There is a total of \$400,000 in reserve of the KFT. This fund puts us in a position of strength in our contract. The Administration has said there will be a substantial tuition increase due to the budget deficit.

E. Comerford recommended that some of the KFT reserve be put aside as KFT scholarship endowment fund. To get a good contract, we do need positive P.R. We already give \$10-12,000 in KFT scholarships annually. If we set aside \$50,000 permanently, income earned from the money could be used as scholarships. In succeeding years, we could add \$10,000 a year. This would say in a dramatic and positive way that we care about our students. It would not throw off as much interest as in a bank. Payroll deductions could go through the current fund of 50 cents to a dollar a paycheck. This is not precisely what the Administration is looking for, but it is something we can do that will not jeopardize our contract. Discussion ensued. Right now the KFT gives 12 scholarships at \$1,000 a piece. We can't generate \$12,000 in one year. But we can if 500 people give \$1.00 per paycheck totaling \$1,000 per month. The principal would not be touched by the administration. The money would only go to scholarships. Donations to the Foundation could have whatever characteristics we want. At the Communications Council, student representatives asked why faculty would not want to donate courses. The scholarships don't have much impact on the deficit. The Presidential Scholar and Trustee Scholar funds come from the operational budget. The more money donated to the scholarships, the less money the University has to set aside for scholarships. It was suggested that we give matching funds to the budget that administration or trustees give. But, it was discussed that it is not the business of the Union to help with the operational budget of administration. It is one thing to contribute to our students and another if we contribute to the operational budget. Initially, the position of the administration was to give back time and service, which would be directly tied to our contract. E. Comerford's suggestion separates donations from our contract. E. Comerford said she would do an analysis of what percent of the tuition increase went to fund increases in salaries. She would also be sending a survey around to members to find out what out-of-pocket expenses we have had over the past year. Totaled up, this is a contribution to the University as donations already made. It should be noted that there are ten fewer faculty members this year, but a higher number of administrators (an additional 39). Fifteen upper division administrators got increases of 10% or more last year amounting to \$150,000. The entire travel funds were less than that total, and that is now frozen. With such information we'll have a stronger case for a good contract. In terms of sister institutions, R. Katz indicated that some have frozen hiring, but some increased hiring (30 at MSU this year and 50 last year). MSU claims those that have a budget deficit have mismanaged their money. Kean has already enacted wage freezes for administrators,

even though we don't yet know what the budget will be. What we need is a graded set of contingency plans with input from all constituents so that we can all be part of the decisions about the budget. Last year we sacrificed release time. Yet, there has been an increase in the number of Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents and others in Administration. The Administration must take the pain this time. They need to make clear what they are doing to help out. Criticism needs to be viewed constructively by the Administration. We want real budget figures and honesty about the budget. Some portions of the budget are available on the Kean web site. It was decided that the KFT Executive Council will come up with a proposed statement about scholarship donations and will bring it back to the KFT General meeting for a vote.

It was also discussed at the Presidential communications Council that promotions have been delayed and will be acted upon in May. Twenty-two faculty members have been sent letters about promotion. We're looking at the cost. Interim President Esposito said that as many as "we can" will be promoted. University Relations sent out an e-mail that the budget is frozen. The U.R. is the only office capable of sending e-mails across campus.

III. Master Contract Negotiations Update

*R. Katz explained that the AFT, the Presidents and the State are negotiating contract in the same room. The OER former chief, Ed Evans, is now representing the Presidents in negotiations. Nor Kean representative for the President was at the last meeting. A labor law firm is representing the State. This is different from years past. The last room the State chose for negotiating was too small, so the State agreed to meet elsewhere that is larger. The Union has chosen alternate meeting dates to meet at a hotel off exit 8A of the turnpike. The scheduled meetings are: 5/9, 16, 28, 6/4, 7, 13, 18, 20 and 27. The police have already started negotiating money with the State. 0% is not what the State proposed. Our salary negotiations will take place later on. This time we will see what the budget is and what the State is going to do. We have a number for salary increases in mind but can't state it publicly. The range is 5-8%. We need to protect our health care benefits and to get contract language, especially for Professional Staff and Librarians. Language is being discussed first. The College Presidents have been approached to lobby the State for more money. The presidents of the colleges can't agree. In the past, that worked to our benefit.

*R. Katz indicated that there would be a Presidential Budget Forum this afternoon. Interim President Esposito has said that 50% of salaries are from the bargaining unit. It represents one-third of the budget (\$30-32 million). The actual salary line last year was \$60 million including salaries from our unit, members in other campus unions and administration. E. Comerford said she would look to see what amount our unit constitutes in the budget. The expenses our members incurred without reimbursement and services performed without pay will be teased out as well. The Full-Time faculty pay is higher than adjuncts because service is expected from full-timers. Our contribution to the University would be of a more significant statement with this information. It is expected that at the Budget Forum, the President should tell us how bad the budget crisis will be.

Much to Interim President Esposito's credit, he has tried to keep the campus aware of the budget problems. The administration wants to prepare for the worse. Timetables are important. Probably a lot of budget discussion will occur in June. Fiscal year 2004 might be even more difficult. E. Comerford indicated that in talking to P. Connelly, dollar amounts have been attached to alternatives to meeting the deficit. In flush times we spend, in tight times, we don't.

*It was discussed that it's been said that the President wants to set up faculty assignments as 40% research, 30% teaching and 30% service. The KFT has been debating with the administration for 2 and one-half years to have weighted criteria for a research or service emphasis for faculty. The faculty member would choose the emphasis to take in applications for promotion and tenure. A narrative portfolio will, cause a change to weighted criteria. The KFT proposal has been stalled. There will be a meeting with the Provost on Tuesday on this. Promotional procedures are so patchwork across the State that they must be negotiated locally.

*R. Katz indicated that a three-course teaching load is in the demands for the Master contract.

*The administration has backed off of asking faculty to teach a course for free (as per understanding with P. Connelly at meeting yesterday).

*It should be noted that in California, 65% of the operating budgets are paid to faculty. Our salaries constitute 35%..

*No NJ college/university is laying off Professional Staff. Rowan was going to, but withdrew it. Last year the Governor promised not to lay-off. This year he didn't. He has an election coming up. Personal days for Professional Staff are included in the demands. Secretaries get two. It was discussed that Professional Staff vacation time does not increase with years of seniority. Ours is fixed at 22. Plus, Professional Staff must use comp or vacation days when University is closed during winter break.

*Sector wide, tuition reimbursement is in the demands as well. Currently it varies from institution to institution.

*There is also a clause for parental leave and domestic partner benefits. Currently, the use of sick time for child-care leave is done on a case-by-case basis. Nothing guarantees the right to use sick days. This is a woman's and family issue.

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Linda Bradbury, Secretary to the KFT.