



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 Meeting

Monday, November 2, 2020

3:30 pm – 4:30pm

Zoom USA Meeting ID#836 4424 0332

I. President's Report

- Social Justice Committee

President Castiglione called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance. Pres. Castiglione introduced S. McKenzie, KFT Representative, serving on the CNJSCL Statewide Social Justice Committee. S. McKenzie introduced/shared a copy of the Social Justice Committee's "Mission Statement", explaining the different charges/functions of Social Justice Committee. Committee was formed to help support each individual local when issues arise.

S. McKenzie also reported several faculty had signed up to volunteer on the KFT Social Justice Committee. S. McKenzie asked if anyone was interested in joining or participating on the committee to send an email to her and cc the KFT office. S. McKenzie reported that the first Social Justice Committee was scheduled for November.

- KFT Member Carey Brown's candidacy for PERS Trustee

President Castiglione welcomed and introduced C. Brown, KFT Exec Member as the candidate running for PERS Trustee position. C. Brown has been at Kean University in the Public Administration Department for almost 3 years. C. Brown has held several jobs for CWA and was a union activist while in there. Ultimately C. Brown got so involved and led to his being elected to the BOT for PERS for three years, was re-elected for another 3 year term and is running again at the end of his six year term, ending July 2021, for another 3 years when elected.

Pres. Castiglione stated as far as he knows C. Brown is the 1st AFT member to serve on the Board of Trustees for PERS. Pres. Castiglione says about 10% of the KFT membership are in the PERS and requested that they sign the petition being circulated for C. Brown as a candidate. Pres. Castiglione is urging everyone to put out the word to friends, family members or anyone who is a member of PERS even if member is retired are eligible to vote.

C. Brown, candidate for BOT Trustee, PERS spoke of the duties of a PERS trustee. The first and foremost duty is the fiduciary of funds, meaning that the board does not allow

anyone to try to pilfer or damage the fund and its integrity. The Board of Trustees must make sure the funds stays intact which is done by working closely with the “State Investment Commission” in making sure that funds are not squandered so that when state workers retire they get what they have invested into the retirement system. C. Brown is of the opinion that the team currently in place are state worker oriented and not for the management. In other words, they have the interest of the state worker at heart. C. Brown commented he does not personally know the other candidates who are running. C. Brown pledges his commitment is real and his dedication to his public workers is firm. A total of 500 signatures are needed before to be nominated. If he is the only candidate to get the 500 signatures there would be no need for an election.

Pres. Castiglione commented that several people had already registered and signed up during the meeting. Pres. Castiglione also stated that if a decision was made for an election he would report back and voting would take place sometime in February or March 2021.

- Telecommuting & furloughs

Pres. Castiglione stated the University would be fully remote for the first 4 weeks of Spring 2021 semester. After that a combination of face to face and remote. He stated it was about the same as the Fall 2020 semester wherein 20% of classes will be remote and only a select few would be face to face. Faculty must make the decision to go remote based on their personal needs. Pres. Castiglione referred anyone interested to go back to the email sent to faculty during the summer or to go to Kean HR website and fill out the form and submit with selection for Spring 2021. Any faculty members who are interested in switching from telecommuting to in person or vice versa would need fill out a new form expressing the change and submit to Kean HR. Currently waiting for formal instruction as to how the latter would be handled. KFT is aware of some faculty wishing to switch telecommuting or face to face.

Pres. Castiglione stated University has the right to schedule future furlough as they deem. The agreement reached between the Union and University during the Summer called for 12 furlough days: 5 during the summer, 5 during Christmas, 1 furlough, the day after Thanksgiving and another on Presidents Day. For those who were already furloughed the first 5 days there will be an additional 5 days to come. Originally, they were scheduled to be taken during Christmas time, but have been possibly delayed for implementation due to the expiration of the “Cares Act”. University seems open to postponement until outcome of a new Cares Act by the outcome of the new President & government sometime in January 2021.

Pres. Castiglione reminded everyone again that implementation of the remaining furlough days are the prerogative of University Management. Furlough for day after Thanksgiving is confirmed. Negotiations are ongoing for an alternative solution for other furloughs.

Pres. Castiglione also reported on rollover vacation days for Prof. Staff and Lecturers who were not able to take any vacation time due to the current pandemic. Anyone who was not able to take any vacation time please forward an email to the KFT office with information so we can add to the list already in place. Pres. Castiglione believes the university will be flexible in working with all affected so that they can carry vacation time to next calendar year.

Reclassification of Prof Staff is currently in the works in trying to streamline the reclassification process. The University is making sure the New Director, for the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is looking over the process to make sure it is fairly applied. Pres. Castiglione is hopeful that by the Spring semester the pace of processing Prof. Staff classification picks up with more movement than in the last several years.

President Castiglione thanked D. Joiner, VP KFT and also the membership chair for the excellent work being accomplished thus far. KFT is currently trying to rebuild its membership due to loss of faculty through retirements, etc.

F. Argote-Freyre commented on furloughs for upper management/administration. Administration stated that that was not open for negotiations. Although he stated that University was working on an early retirement package for upper management and administration. It seemed to be an indication which could be construed as an effort for cost savings. He would report back at a later time with any update.

II. November 3rd Election Update

Pres. Castiglione urged membership to get involved with “the Get the Vote Out” movement. He posted several links for participation in the chat including www.AFTVotes.org.

III. Local Negotiations” Report – F. Argote-Freyre

- **Sick Time/Certification form replacing faculty time sheets**

The faculty time sheets have been eliminated. In their place, is a simple certification form. Purpose of certification form is to replace the old SARS report and is only being used to track sick time for calculating payment of time not used at retirement. Form will ask for information on how much sick time was used if any during the month.

- **Lecturers Negotiations**

The KFT is working on creating a Lecturers Committee to guide the development of a comprehensive proposal for a new Lecturers Letter of Agreement. Issues to be addressed include: multi-year contracts, 10-month positions, duties, reappointment procedures, promotional process, reduced teaching load, etc.

- **Diversity Fellows Program**

F. Argote-Freyre is optimistic about the Diversity Fellows Program that was agreed upon back in September. The idea is to get more diversity on the faculty as it has been a challenge in the past across Higher Ed and the country. F. Argote-Freyre reported that part of the process was to recruit within the University. Proposal was on the table for the University to consider the new equity program, with a 3-3 load as opposed to the 4-4 load in place. F. Argote-Freyre suggested current Lecturers should apply for the Fellowship Program as they are eligible to apply if they have the proper qualifications. Also, Mentors will be needed for each department when recruits are in place. Also, looking for opportunities where research can be appreciated and encouraged at the University.

F. Argote-Freyre stated that Pres. Repollet has expressed an interest in Kean University becoming an R2 Research Institute but in order to begin the process faculty must be freed up for research. F. Argote-Freyre stated that a proposal was in the works. F. Argote-Freyre concluded that negotiations were quite different than the previous administration and was optimistic on future negotiations at this time.

- **WKU peer-review compensation**

As announced recently, we have signed a Letter of Agreement providing for compensation of 0.375 Teaching Credit Hours (TCH) for faculty who conduct peer observations and other time-intensive work for the evaluation of the retention portfolios of WKU faculty from their respective departments. The LOA stipulates that faculty cannot be forced to do this work and extends the deadline for completion of the work to October 16, 2020. This LOA is a major victory for faculty, some of whom had been forced to do hours and hours of work for free in past years.

IV. Questions & Concerns

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns in the time remaining at today's meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

WFV, KFT Secretary