

**MSCA Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
March 5, 2021
Virtually using Zoom**

Present: Chenault, Ciano-Boyce, Diakite, Donohue, Eve, George, Hegbloom, Hennessy, Krishnamurthy, Lam, Leone, Mitroka-Batsford, O'Connell, O'Donnell, Pilkenton, Ramsden, Riel, Seceleanu, Smith, Washington, Weeks

Guests: Chris Gullen (Westfield), Roberta James (MTA), Laurie Houle (MTA), Catherine Santiago (MTA)

Approval of the Orders of the Day:

It was moved and seconded to approve the orders of the day. The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes: February 5, 2021:

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2021 MSCA Board Meeting. The motion passed.

Visiting Speakers:

none

Chapter President Reports:

Worcester

Eight faculty applied for the early retirement incentive by March 1st. Additional faculty will be retiring, but announced their retirement plans prior to the cut-off date. Full-time temporary faculty will be covering for those applying for the incentive, it is not known if the same is true for the other retirements.

Fall 2021 will be 50-75% face-to-face teaching. CDC guidelines will be followed. Science labs will have students working independently rather than with a lab partner; faculty are allowed to order additional supplies for this mandate. Course caps have been lowered from 20 to 15.

St. Vincent nurses are expected to strike on Monday. St. Vincent Hospital, along with UMass Medical Center, has been providing COVID-19 vaccinations at WSU.

The Worcester Chapter has written a solidarity statement in support of the St. Vincent nurses.

Some faculty have requested that the chapter move forward on concerns that lie outside the CBA. Discussion followed.

Salem

It was moved and seconded to go into executive session. The motion passed.

It was moved and seconded to come out of executive session. The motion passed.

As a result of the discussion and decisions made in executive session, President O'Donnell will respond to the university's request regarding allowing faculty to furlough during specified weeks in the 2021-2022 academic year.

Westfield

It appears that the Board of Trustees feel shared governance is a threat to upper-level administration. The Board of Trustees continues to be difficult to work with. In addition, there is a lack of faculty/librarian support from the Commissioner of Higher Education and others in higher education administration.

There is currently a search underway for a new university president.

The UEAAC report was not well received by members of the Board of Trustees.

MMA

No report

MCLA

There are three searches underway for upper-level administrators. Graziana Ramsden produced a video interviewing Salem Chapter President Tiffany Chenault and Salem Chapter Director Amy Smith regarding furloughs.

Salem

Thanks to all who attended the recent Board of Trustees meeting. Over 200 members attended.

The university president announced the Vision Plan.

Four faculty members applied for the early retirement incentive by March 1st.

The university president agreed to seek more community input regarding Project Bold.

The Institutional Review Board would like to extend their committee service to 12 months; thus, if something comes up over the summer, the Board could work on the proposal. Discussion followed.

MassArt

There is a new HR Director, Justine Caron.

It is expected that 75% of teaching learning will be in person in the Fall 2021 semester. Some will be hybrid courses. There is a proposal that some staff members will continue to work remotely and their office space will be repurposed.

The MassArt faculty/librarians currently have a good relationship with their Board of Trustees.

The Vice President of Finance has imposed restrictions on how departments may use money.

Framingham

Very concerned about the Fall 2021 schedule as 75% will be face-to-face. The chapter has asked for a delay in when faculty have to commit to a teaching modality.

Due to a health concerns among library staff, an industrial hygiene firm has taken samples from the library to test for hazardous substances. As of right now, nothing has been found.

Seven faculty/librarians applied for the early retirement incentive by the March 1st deadline. The chapter has heard the university may request that the deadline be extended.

Fitchburg

The CFO has been sharing a PowerPoint presentation showing the enrollment drop. The chapter president will continue to communicate these issues to faculty/librarians.

A campus building built in the 1970s is in very bad shape. Three departments are housed in the building. A grievance will be filed.

Bridgewater

There was a 2.6% drop in undergraduate enrollment. The graduate enrollment increased 11%.

The budget was balanced before the federal money was granted. There is a \$10 million surplus. BSU will get an additional \$30 million from the federal government under the proposed federal stimulus bill being debated in the Senate.

The library is now a Library Program Area.

There are nine new hires.

The minimum cap to run classes has been increased. 500 classes have been cancelled.

MSCA Reports

Bargaining Action Leader – Gullen

Leader Gullen provided Board members with a brief overview of his activities.

Organizing and Unity Leader – Seceleanu & Krishnamurthy

The Leaders provided an overview of the work on getting COVID-19 vaccines to higher education. It was noted that the MTA has been mentioning higher education in its campaign.

Day Bargaining – Hegbloom

A member survey has been solidified and will be distributed on Monday. The survey will be open for two weeks.

Chair Hegbloom requested that any bargaining resolutions be sent to her by March 12th.

DGCE Bargaining – Seceleanu

A one year proposal is off the table.

Management mentioned the possibility of a two-year contract. A meeting was held last Thursday regarding the proposals. Silent representatives are needed for the next bargaining meeting, which will be held March 17th.

Grievance - Donohue

The committee continues to make progress on many issues.

Legislative – Riel

Two meetings have been held thus far. An email is being worked on regarding MTA legislative priorities. Committee members from the three chapters with no representation is desired.

Librarians – George

Chair George applauded the Bridgewater Chapter for finally getting a Library Program Area instituted at Bridgewater.

MSCA Officers Reports

President – O'Donnell

Delegate Assembly

It was moved and seconded to approve the Delegate Assembly Delegate Counts as distributed. The motion passed.

It was noted that the results of chapter elections are due to President O'Donnell on April 9th.

MTA Annual

It was moved and seconded to approve the anticipated delegate counts. The motion passed.

Emergency Assistance Fund

A brief overview of this was provided to Board members by Salem Director Smith. A small group of members will continue to work on this concept.

Vice President

MTA Legislative Agenda: MTA has filed 17 pieces of legislation on behalf of our members. A number of these are specific to Higher Education, including a push for increased funding through the Cherish Act, Debt-free College for our students, and an Adjunct Bill that works to secure health care insurance and retirement for our part-time faculty. In addition, MTA has filed a health and safety bill that addresses building safety for members in K-12 and Higher education. Members can encourage their legislators to support these bills by writing a letter.

The Joint Committee on Ways and Means will be holding a virtual public hearing on March 16th at 1 pm on the Education Sector, including Higher Ed.

State Budget Update: Governor Baker's public higher education budget was a statement of contempt for our institutions. It includes level-funding without any adjustment for inflation and eliminates many of the other lines that provide some additional funding to our institutions. This has happened while current revenues are coming in significantly over benchmarks. So, the governor's decision to cut-back line-items and level-fund the rest does not account for need or even follow revenues. Given Baker's budget union members and leadership will be focusing efforts with our legislators to seek better funding and push our legislative agenda. We expect to see the House budget sometime in the second week of April. Senate budget is likely in the second week of May.

Federal Relief: We are moving closer to the Senate passing the 1.9 trillion federal relief bill, 1.3 billion which would be included for state and federal aid. \$39 million would be earmarked for higher ed (in addition to what was passed in January). So, not only is there likely more money coming to our Universities there is also a lot more money coming into the state which we can advocate for coming to higher ed.

Vaccine Campaign: Baker finally agreed to open vaccinations to K-12 educators beginning on March 11th. The fight to have higher educators moved to phase II continues. MSCA members are writing op-eds to get the message out to the public and we are asking members to write to Commissioner Santiago.

University Debt Reveal Day: University debt often sits as an invisible form of debt that undermines our educational mission and puts additional financial burden on our students. There is a nation-wide push to get institutions of higher education to join together to reveal their capital debt on tax day, April 15th. Those seeking to investigate the debt burden on their campus can find help in doing so via this tool kit.

MTA Workshops and Member Opportunities:

- Student Loan Management & Forgiveness Workshop
 - March 8th @ 4:00-5:30, March 10th @ 6:00-7:30, March 15th @ 4:30-6:00
- Yoga Mondays @ 7:00 pm
- Meditation Wednesdays @ 8:00 pm

MTA Benefits: Open enrollment March 29th – May 7th – Disability Insurance, Critical Illness Insurance, and Accident Insurance. Available to all members working 18.5 hours or more/week.

Treasurer

Treasurer Weeks provided Board members with an overview of the monthly expense report. A draft of the 2021-2022 budget was distributed. It was noted the MSCA has experienced a drop of more than 600 members in the last two years.

Secretary – George

The deadline to submit a nomination for the virtual NEA-RA is March 15th. The MSCA has 16 delegate seats this year.

MTA Reports

Consultants – James and Santiago
no report.

Health and Welfare Trust

The Trust had a 78% loss ratio due to members not going to the dentist as often as they had in the past. As a result, our MetLife bills have been reduced from \$550,000 per month to \$500,000 per month.

Board of Directors – Washington and Hegbloom

Information provided in Vice President Hegbloom's update.

Old Business

none.

New Business

none.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy George
MSCA Secretary