

DETROIT FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

General Membership Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2022

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by President Terrence Martin @4:32 p.m.

2. Roll Call of Officers

3. Approval of Minutes

M1: Michelle Broughton(Fresh) made a motion to accept the February 2022 General Membership Meeting Minutes with any necessary corrections. **MOTION PASSED.**

4. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Michelle Broughton read the February 2022 financial report.

5. Elections Committee Report

Stacy Jackson gave report.

- The April 2022-March 2024. Nominations close today at the conclusion of this meeting.
- There will be no nominations accepted for the vacant Executive Board seat.=
- The Elections Committee has received nominations so far from the following members: Nicole Conaway, Devette Brown, A. Chika Ngozi, Nastassia Szpaichler, Mignon Pierce, Melzita Davis, Alaina Larsen.
- Calendar and nominations forms can be found on the DFT website.
- Ballots will be mailed out next month after the April meeting.
- Only Members attending the April 14th meeting will receive a ballot.

6. PAC Report

Marcus Walton gave the report. Give 5 Campaign – 5 minutes of service and give \$5 to PAC. Spring Fling Kickoff will be on March 29th. Stand up and speak out for those who stand up and speak up for us! Please be part of this endeavor! If you have any questions, please contact Walton, Robin Jennings, or Michelle Broughton for more details.

7. Organizing Report

Report given by Yolanda King.

- February report is 31 new and recommits to DFT.
- Ask 2 people from your building and try to get them to attend the meeting.
- Tuesday, March 15 from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.
- Lois Lofton-Doniver from AFT Michigan will present.
- Elections for Building Reps will begin in May.

M2: Vida Bonacci (Fresh) made a **Procedural Motion:**

I move that a member be limited to 2 minutes to ask a question following the president's and the vice president's report and that no be given a second chance to speak until all members have had a chance to speak the first time. **MOTION PASSED**

8. President's Report

- Mask Mandate** – You may have seen or heard revisiting the mask mandate by the Superintendent. There have been a number of districts and counties that have relaxed their mandates, but understand and know that ours does not expire until June 30th. There will be no optional agreements that will change that. COVID is still here. The numbers are a lot better, but it is imperative that we continue to be vigilant. Things can get better, but they can also get worse. We want to prepare to ensure that there are no spikes. Vaccine mandate proposal was submitted to the District, and we will share the results with the Membership when the information is available.
- National/State Conventions** – State convention is May 21st, at the Huntington Center and the National Convention is July 13-19 in Boston, MA. Both conventions will be face to face. They will not be hybrid. COVID mitigation strategies will be in place. To attend any meetings, COVID tests must be taken each day.
- Dues Increase** – It has been some time since we have had a dues increase. There are a number of things that we want to solidify and have in place for our members. We need a secretary! The Organizing Fellows program needs to be expanded. It is a value to have them to help support the work that members do in buildings each and every day. We have solicited assistance from Nationals to assist with a campaign for the increase because we feel that it is necessary.

9. Executive Vice President's Report

- Work Rule Violations** – There was a PowerPoint presentation to remind Members about work rules.
- Administrative Leave**

Q & A

- Mary Brockman (Marquette) – People who work the lunch duty in their classroom have not been paid. What is the process? *LW-L: Have you reached out to the Principal to see if it had been submitted? This begins at the building level. If they have been submitted, please submit the names to the Union. Be sure to ask the payroll secretary, as well.*
- Maria Davis (Charles Wright) – is it 5 consecutive days to be absent, or 4 days? *TM: It's 4 days and they return on the 5th day. This is in the contract.*
- Kendra White (Virtual School) – We are teaching elementary. There are only 4 preps. We are being told to teach an SEL curriculum, but I have not been trained. I teach ELA. Is it appropriate for me or anyone else to teach a different subject that I don't feel comfortable teaching something out of my field. Teachers are still being put in rooms together and it is difficult to hear and also very distracting. *TM: We are setting up a meeting with the District in regards to Virtual School about things that need to stop, immediately. The facility that you are in is not conducive for what you do. These concerns need to be addressed right away.*
- Erica Muhammad (Munger) – Legality of having ASD students placed into an elective classroom at once. *LW-L: Are there aides assigned to the classroom? They should follow them to any electives.*
- Steve Conn (Western) – I am very concerned about the lifting of any mask mandates. I think there is a very good reason to suspect that the Superintendent will make moves to change this. Where will the Union stand? *TM: We have been consistent and will follow the science. Our LOA's have been for the entire year. When other counties lifted their mandates, I received e-mails from our members asking when ours would be lifted. There is a mandate in place for the entire year. We will listen to the members and will look to the CDC.*
- Gavin Buckley (Henry Ford HS) – I was excited to hear the Organizing funding and the increase. How can we make the argument to our Membership that this will help us? I am in favor of the increase if we can make it clear as to what the benefits will be. *LW-L: Members need to keep in mind that we have down numerous things to assist with saving money. DFT has downsized the office, we are working with a skeleton crew, and have not increased our dues – even eating the costs of increases from AFT Michigan and National. Billhighway has an additional \$50,000 a year charge assessed to DFT for members using debit and credit cards – again, a cost that Members have not been assessed. We are looking at an additional \$2.00 per pay period, or \$44*

more a year, bringing the total for the year to \$943.14 for full dues paying members.

- Tracey Traylor - Where do the work rule violations come from? *LW-L: The School Board sets policy. The District is the employer, so they set these rules. Accommodations, vary with every case. PERA law says that there are 4 prohibited areas of bargaining - **evaluation, discipline, placement/transfer and termination.***
- Queen Watkins (J.E. Clark Preparatory) Is there a resolution about the pay issue for after school for the Academic Interventionists? *LW-L: AI's are not eligible for the Teacher rate – and many teachers did not receive the rate increase for after-school programs, either.*
- Jassmyne Ali (Academy of the Americas SSW) – Is there a date set for ancillary staff members to receive the Blended Pay? *LW-L: We still have not gotten a date for this as of yet. We will let you know as soon as we know. Many people still have not received the survey for this. There were hundreds of people who did not get paid.*
- Venise Borum (Cass Tech) – We have not received the pay raise promised in Quarter 1 for credit recovery. We have been told that we are waiting on a code. I am disappointed that our Union did not reach out with a response to us. This is unacceptable and hurtful that Dr. Vitti responded, and not our Union, and you are asking for a raise. *LW-L: The message was sent to several of us today, and there was a response from this office. KW: I relayed a message and made the calls and asked questions. The original date with Vitti, there still is no date. I will respond tomorrow. Since it hit my lap at the end of February, I have been addressing the issue.*
- Felicia Benson (Cass Tech) – After numerous attempts to call the President, I called Karin Whittler. She called me back and responded immediately. That is not the protocol. There should be the respect of a response. I thank Ms. Whittler for her response and professionalism.
- Lisa Card (Central HS/Executive Board Member) – I want to provide clarity in regards to the dues increase. It is important that we be involved and come to meetings when we can. It is important to spread/provide accurate information. Kudos to VP Wilson-Lumpkins for the presentation on Work Rules. Sometimes people think that they are not being represented, and I think it is a good idea that you start a chapter of those who are like-minded or have the same duties.
- Jason Posey(Organizer/Executive Board Member) – You are the Union. The staff is reduced, so we have to prioritize who and what issues to deal with first. There are 4,500 members, with a quarter of those members, not dues-paying. This administration, along with Ivy Bailey's has done a great job in dealing with our issues.

- Sharon Nesbitt (King HS) – I also have not been paid with Edgenuity. *LW-L: There are so many outstanding issues that need to be addressed with the District. I am starting to feel like the District is at a standstill. Please give us a week so that we can get some information on some of these outstanding issues. KW: Many of the people and departments asking about the programs, they aren't sure what Dr. Vitti meant with his e-mail to them.*
- Rachelle Greene – There is a member who got COVID from the school. How much time do members get off, and who gets the message about this? *LW-L: This is a process. We would rather resolve it, than go through the grievance procedure, if possible.*

10. New Business

a. **LGBTQ Chapter** – Sarah Niemi gave a report about AFT's desire to organize a chapter with K-12 interest. They want to build solidarity, addressing professionalism and other issues. If you have questions, contact Erin Lavin via e-mail - elavin@aftmichigan.org .

b. **Resolution (1)** – See resolution attached.

*LW-L: If you would like to move forward with the Amendment, it must be ruled out of order because it is inappropriate and injurious to the local. She agreed prior to this meeting, to go with the Resolution as is, and she has appealed the chair. We cannot grieve those 4 areas. To put those into a resolution will be harmful to the Local. **Discussion followed.***

- Motion ruled out of order by EVP Wilson-Lumpkins because Sister Conaway attempted to amend the language, as any other language would make DFT legally liable and would be injurious to the Union.
- Sister Conaway accepted the recommendation of Marshall Widick, DFT Attorney, prior to the meeting, however attempted to amend the motion while reading the written motion.
- Sister Conaway appealed the decision of the chair.
- Parliamentarian – A conversation held before the start of the meeting deemed that the adoption of this amendment or motion would be harmful to the organization. The Amendment is out of order. She has appealed the decision of the chair, but it can't be appealed because there must be 2 opinions that can be refuted, which in this case, it cannot.

M3: Nicole Conaway (Summer) made a motion to accept the resolution as written. **MOTION PASSED.**

M4: Nicole Conaway (Conn) – made a motion to oppose school closings:

Whereas our schools are the heart and soul of our community and neighborhoods; and school closures cause irreversible harm to our students and our community.

Therefore, be it resolved that The DFT opposes the closing of any school building currently attending my students including so-called phase outs, relocations.

Discussion followed.

M5: Jason Posey (Brantley-Philips) moved to table discussion on the motion on the resolution of the school closures. *Discussion followed.*

- Chair called on Parliamentarian for clarity.
- Parliamentarian ruled that the motion to table would have to be voted on, which would then determine the next steps.

MOTION PASSED

- March 21st is the next District meeting about the building plans from 6:00 – 8:00.

11. Good of the Order

Elections Committee Report

Chair called for any other nominations from the floor. Chair read an e-mail from Sister Nicole Conaway that stated that she wished to nominate Darlissa Johnson, Racquel Parsons, Stephen Conn and Nicole Stuckey.

- Sister Conaway was called upon to make her nominations during the meeting.
- There is no response from Sister Conaway.
- No nominations were made from the floor.
- Nominations are now closed.

12. Adjournment

M6: Rodney Fresh (Broughton) made a motion to adjourn. **MOTION PASSED**

Meeting Adjourned @7:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elena Brantley-Phillips, DFT Recording Secretary