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October 19, 2003

**Report**  
**MTA Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Friday and Saturday, October 17-18, 2003**

Philip Mahler, Tom Parsons, Abe Sherf

The 60 member Board met at the Natick Crown Plaza and, led by President Cathy Boudreau, considered the 1 1/2 inch thick pile of agenda items Friday evening and all day Saturday. Phil Mahler and Tom Parsons were in attendance as MTA Directors and Abe Sherf as a member of the Executive Committee.

Some highlights which would be of interest to our MCCC colleagues follow.

**Report of the Auditor FY 2002-2003**  
*Vitale Caturano and Company, P.C.*

On Friday evening, the Board heard a preliminary report on the audit for the last fiscal year. There were no surprises, including the fact that the MTA budget this year will be very very tight (see below).

**Presentation on Employee Survey Results: An Assessment of the Job-Related Attitudes of MTA Employees**

*G. Stephen Taylor, Mississippi State University*

The Board heard a consultant's report on a survey of MTA employees' attitudes towards their job environment and the MTA as an employer. The Board will work with employees on the results of the survey.

**Report of the MTA Retirement Plan Committee**

*Thomas R. Parsons, Chair, MTA Retirement Plan Committee*

The MTA Retirement Plan Committee, chaired by Tom Parsons, reported a return last year of 6.1%, which put the fund in the top 15% of similar funds! Tom presented performance data, and an auditor's report.

**Recommendation of the Executive Committee for the Adoption of the Budgetary Contingency Plan for FY 2003-2004, as Recommended by the Advisory Budget Committee**

The Board adopted a Contingency Budget Plan, which freezes the filling of three field service positions, and consolidates two positions related to the *MTA Today*. With the above-mentioned strategies and many others, a savings of over \$900,000 is realized. This plan is to deal with an expected but previously unanticipated reduction in membership due to the state's budget condition. This plan will be implemented if the membership shortfall occurs, but the spending reinstated to the degree actual membership exceeds the prediction.

## **Recommendations of the Executive Committee Meeting of September 19-20, 2003**

### ***Higher Education Contracts***

The Board adopted the recommendation of the Executive Committee “to make the unfunded higher education contracts the top priority with the MTA and all of its divisions.” It was gratifying to have the unequivocal support of our K-12 colleagues on the Board.

### ***Strategic Direction of MTA***

The Board decided that “the organization must implement an organizing model.” The idea is to focus on motivating our members to appreciate and participate in their union.

## **Briefings on Issues**

### ***Repeal of the Spousal Early Retirement Option for Public Employees***

General Counsel Ann Clarke reported that in the last budget the “spousal early retirement option” was eliminated by the legislature. This allowed the state employee spouse who was less than 55, of a retiring state employee, to retire at the same time as the spouse with benefits calculated as if they were 55. This is being contested.

Apparently this happened in conference committee at the end. The House had adopted this, though only the MTA, of the public employee unions, picked up on it, and succeeded in making sure it was not in the Senate version, with assurances it would not appear in the conference committee budget. However, in conference committee it was put into the final budget.

## **Other**

The MCCC Board requested that the issue of letters to the editor in the *MTA Today* be brought up for discussion. The meeting was exceptionally long and many discussion items were not taken up. We will put this on the agenda for the next meeting.

Submitted by Phil Mahler



If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact any of Abe, Phil, Tom.