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Delegate Assembly Addresses Budget and Bylaws

Setting a record attendance of 157 participants, this year's MCCC Delegate Assembly may have been the most contentious as well.

The meeting's purpose, as the largest and ultimate governing body of the Union, is to pass the annual budget for the next year and to make changes to the Union's Bylaws. But it also can be a forum for Union activists to voice their views.

President Diana Yohe opened the meeting with her report on the past year's activities and accomplishments and on next year's objectives. "Building Bridges, not Walls" was theme of her presentation. She urged members to focus on shared values and interests as the Union faces serious outside threats.

Following the President report, Vice President Jeff Seideman made his report, which focused on political action, one of the principal job duties of the vice president.



This year's Delegate Assembly was the largest in memory with 157 members assembled at the DoubleTree Hotel in Westborough. (Photo by Don Williams)

Awards

Publicly recognizing members who have made significant contributions to the union and its members is another important activity at the DA. This year there were three awards given.

John McColgan, Roxbury Community College chapter president, was presented with the Jonathan Butler Award recognizing outstanding work by a chapter president. He was nominated by Ruth Kiefson, RCC chapter director, who noted how this relatively new member took on the tough job at a campus with a hostile administration. She noted his work in saving and protecting members' jobs and his committed membership on the DCE negotiating team.

Michelle Nash from Springfield Technical Community College was given the John Palmer Award recognizing an adjunct member who has shown dedication to improving conditions for adjuncts. Nominated by STCC chapter director Nick Camerota, Nash was lauded by Camerota for the work she has done in organizing activities to support DCE contract negotiations.

Harry Bowen of North Shore Community College was recognized for his over 40 years of union activism with the Raymond C. Lemieux Award to recognize an individual whose service, leadership, and dedication have contributed significantly to the Massachusetts Community College Council. Bowen was a long-serving full-time faculty member who continued his

activism focusing on adjunct issues after retirement. He was nominated by Sandra Howland, NSCC DCE representative.

Budget

Passing a budget for the next fiscal year is a major function of the DA. Treasurer Phil Mahler presented the budget that was prepared by the Finance Committee and recommended by the Board of Directors.

In going over the major aspects of the budget, Mahler noted increasing expenditures and decreasing revenues. He pointed out that between FY 09-10 and FY 15-16 expenses had increased 17 percent while revenues only went up 12.6 percent. Declining Community College enrollments has caused membership to drop. And with the looming threat of losing Agency Fee, the budgetary objective was to cut expenses.

The Board of Directors had enacted a number of cost reduction policies such as reducing reimbursements for Internet service, conferences and reassigned time. They cut out subscriptions and a paid lobbyist and made the MCCC Fall Conference an every other year event rather than an annual one.

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President Diana Yohe made her opening statements to the Delegate Assembly as Vice President Jeff Seideman (left) and parliamentarian Steve Gorrie look on.

(Photo by Don Williams)

Is Our Union Tolerant of Dissenting Views?

Our union, the MCCC, has historically allowed freedom of expression in this newsletter, including criticism of union policies, strategies or structures. But has our union now abandoned this tolerance of other viewpoints?

I wrote a newsletter article last month about how part of the Board is bringing charges (which I believe are politically

motivated) against the Vice-President and President of the union, charges which seem aimed at removing one or both officers. I stated in that article that I believed these charges were attempting to circumvent union members' right to elect their own leadership. The Board's Executive Committee decided to remove my article after it had already been laid

out in the newsletter proof. Earlier this year, the Board voted to remove an article by the adjunct Vice-President. Thousands of copies of that newsletter had already been printed; they were all scrapped. Hundreds of dollars in printing costs were wasted and the newsletter was reprinted without the Vice-President's article.

Censorship is not healthy for institutions.

A union that quashes dissent is not really a union representing all members. We should be strong enough as a body to allow dissenting voices to be heard. We should be transparent enough as a Board to not object to members knowing what actions the Board is taking.

I hope our union is more tolerant than its recent decisions on this issue.

Please feel free to call or email me if you have any questions or thoughts to share about issues raised in this article.

Sincerely,
Carol Gray, Adjunct/
Part-Time Board Director
carolgray_2000@yahoo.com
413-297-1075 ■

Delegate Assembly . . .

Continued from front page

One cut that most Union members will notice is a change in the newsletter distribution. Instead of mailing eight issues per year, next year one issue per semester will be mailed out. To save approximately \$19,000 in printing and mailing the other six issues will be sent to members via email by chapter presidents.

Even after careful cost cutting, Mahler asked the body to approve the operating budget of \$1,221,813 calling for a slight dues increase. For full-time MCCC members the FY18 MCCC dues rate will go to \$297 per year (a \$12 increase) and a dues rate of \$89 (\$3.50) for DCE and other part-time members.

Members should note that MCCC dues are only 30 percent of total member dues. MTA dues are 51 percent and NEA dues are 19 percent. Those organizations will set their dues at the May 19-20 MTA Annual Meeting and the July 1-5 NEA-Representative Assembly.

No Confidence Votes

The Assembly voted to move "New Business" ahead of the Bylaws on the agenda. Former Middlesex Director Joe Nardoni put two separate motions on the floor calling for a vote of "No Confidence" in Vice President Seideman and President Yohe, and asking them to resign.

A list of particulars with 14 points was presented in the motion against the Vice President and seconded by current Middlesex director and chapter president Carlos Brocato. Six related to the VP's duties as chair of the Strategic Action Committee, the motion charged

that the VP failed to perform a number of duties charged to that committee and for not following Board resolutions related to strategic action.

Other charges related to a vote the Board of Directors took in March censuring the VP for these issues, and the motion further charged that rather than heed the censure, the VP sent emails out to a wide member list criticizing the Board and "Attempted to provoke a fracture in the membership...advocating for the creation of a faction within our union that would put the needs of one group of unit members above all others."

Heated discussion ensued. And after some parliamentary maneuvering, a vote was taken and the results of the resolution of "No Confidence" passed 96 to 58.

Nardoni's second motion directed at President Diana Yohe, seconded by former MCCC secretary Gail Guarino from Cape Cod, centered on two areas: conduct in DCE negotiations and conduct with the MCCC Executive Committee.

In DCE negotiations, it charged that the President as an ex officio member violated a number of procedural norms and engaged in, "a pattern of bullying behavior against multiple team members, including the team chair." This behavior, the charge continued, caused two team secretaries to resign and caused the MTA consultant to seek reassignment to another unit.

Further, Nardoni charged, "That by micromanaging the team to the detriment of negotiations, resulting in, as of April 23, no significant agreements

[had been] reached with management over any issue in DCE bargaining."

As chair of the Executive Committee it was charged that her behavior "undercut the effectiveness of her working relationship with members of that committee." Specifically, Yohe was charged with harassing and bullying MCCC Secretary DeAnna Putnam over issues stemming from DCE negotiations, and included charges of violating MCCC's Whistle Blowers Policy.

Many members rose both to support and oppose the motion including members of the DCE team and Executive Committee. Tensions were high as one delegate opposing the motion was shouted down for intimidating speakers by taking their photographs. When the question was called, it passed by a margin of 80 to 59.

When asked about the motion's impact, parliamentarian and former MTA president Steve Gorrie said that it was advisory only and had no specific action as per MCCC Bylaws.

Bylaws

There were an exceptionally large number of Bylaw proposals, 13, several of which had significant impact. Only one was passed, relating to the membership of the Professional Staff Committee.

The proposed bylaw change with the most impact was one proposed by Treasurer Mahler to eliminate the elected treasurer's position and replace it with an appointed Executive Director/Treasurer position. The rationale for the change was that as the Union has grown, the responsibilities of



The Jon Butler Award for an outstanding chapter president was presented to Roxbury Community College chapter president John McColgan. The award was presented by Alex Asare (right) and MCCC President Diana Yohe. (Photo by Don Williams)



Michelle Nash of Springfield Technical Community College was given the John Palmer Award in recognition of her dedicated work on behalf of adjunct faculty members. She was nominated by chapter director Nick Camerota (left) and presented the award by MCCC President Diana Yohe. (Photo by Don Williams)

managing the office and administering the budget has become too complicated for an elected person with no background in these areas.

Converting the position has been in discussion for a couple of years, but now has been prompted by Mahler's retirement from full-time teaching. The proposal was not rejected, but it was referred to the Executive Committee because the new position needed to be defined and proposed before eliminating the elected position. A motion to adjourn ended discussion. ■



Sandra Howland from North Shore Community College accepted the Raymond C. Lemieux Award for Harry Bowen, who was unable to attend the Delegate Assembly, recognizing his 50 years of MCCC union activism. (Photo by Don Williams)

Without Due Process...

By Diana Yohe, MCCC President

At the MCCC delegate assembly this past weekend, delegates – based on false, unsubstantiated allegations and without any prior notice or due process – voted ‘no confidence’ in me and vice president Jeff Seideman. While this may come as a shock to the rank and file member, it was, unfortunately, not surprising to me. Given how little opportunity members have had to hear from me and how distorted the reports of my words and actions have been, it’s no great surprise that the Delegate Assembly passed a vote (80/59) of ‘no confidence’ in me and asked me to resign. I won’t resign, and I’m convinced that if the members knew what was happening, I would have strong support.

My personal philosophy is to always try to take the high road. When others go low, I try to rise above. My efforts to go high, however, have led to a vote of no confidence in me because of lies, misinformation, intimidation, and outright bullying. I don’t want to go low, but I do think it is time to speak the truth.

And here is the basic truth: The minute I was elected – in fact well before I was elected – a majority faction of the Board of Directors was totally opposed to me and to what I stood for and determined to block everything I attempted to do. This majority faction of the board believes in relying only on board members and chapter presidents, keeping decisions in their own hands, frequently acting in secrecy in executive session, and restricting communications to the members. I believe in relying on the members, incorporating new people, opening up the process, promoting maximum transparency, and sharing information widely. I also believe in term limits.

In 2015, a year before I was elected president, I was peacefully serving as president of the Bristol chapter and as the Bristol representative to the MCCC Board of Directors. I had no thought – zero – of running for president of MCCC. In the spring of 2015 an election was conducted for the two at large part-time/adjunct representatives to the board; the board didn’t like the election results and threw out the

election. They immediately proceeded to a new election, without any due process. I was not a candidate in that election, but I was concerned about – in fact offended by – the board’s action to undermine an election; and I and the Bristol Chapter Executive Committee (consisting of faculty and professional staff – both full-time and part-time/adjunct) filed a formal appeal.

Long story short, our parent union, the MTA, appointed someone to mediate the disagreement and if necessary to serve as

independent outside arbitrator hired by the MTA concluded that the board had “acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner” and that its “determination was neither correct nor was it based on an adequate consideration of relevant facts and circumstances.” The first election results were reinstated.

With this recent ‘no confidence’ vote and the demand to resign, the board wants once again to proceed in secrecy, and to prevent an independent mediator – never mind an arbitrator – from reviewing the

I hope that more members will get involved, that the processes of our union will be opened up to scrutiny by the members, and that new people can get beyond the battles of the past.

an arbitrator to settle the issue. The person appointed quickly decided that mediation would never work, that the board had no intention of compromising, and moved directly to arbitration. I and others who joined the Bristol Chapter appeal made a compelling case that the board was wrong in throwing out the results of the at-large part-time/adjunct election. The

charges against me. Indeed, if the board’s interest was in transparent democratic processes, the MCCC bylaws provide a carefully specified procedure for removing a president from office. The “problem” is that procedure calls for openness, transparency, and a vote of the membership. I’d be glad to have people invoke that procedure, and I’m confident I would



Bristol Community College chapter president Susan McCourt spoke against the motion against President Yohe.

(Photo by Don Williams)



Former Greenfield Community College chapter president and member of the current DCE Bargaining Team, Thom Simmons, spoke in favor of the motion against President Yohe.

(Photo by Don Williams)

win a recall vote. The board wants to ignore the constitution/bylaws, make up its own rules, hold a secret hearing, and remove me from office.

Central to this whole situation have been two factors. First, I’ve tried to stay above the attacks; and no matter how outrageous the behavior of board members, I’ve tried to avoid broadcasting that – assuming that washing dirty linen in public does not build member confidence in the union. Some of this linen is pretty amazing: In February one chapter president notified the provost and campus security that if I came on campus he wanted me “escorted off campus if possible.” In an email to me, this chapter president added “***It is not a veiled threat, and it is meant to intimidate you.***” It’s also meant to keep me from talking to members. (That message, by the way, went to all board members. Only an adjunct board member objected to the bullying behavior. Am I to conclude by the silence of the majority, that board members see such behavior as appropriate?)

Second, the MCCC has operated by the bizarre custom that the president of the MCCC does not have easy ways to communicate directly with members. All messages are supposed to be sent by me to chapter presidents, who are supposed to send them out to members; but some chapter presidents act as “gatekeepers” – deciding which messages members should see – and are delaying or refusing to distribute the messages I send. Instead, the chapter presidents send out messages attacking me.

I’ve tried to open the union up, to involve new members, to be as transparent as possible. I’m going to continue to try to do so. The change will be this: one way or another, I will find a way to communicate with members. I’ll do my best to talk about the positive things that are happening in our union – and there are many – but if I have to do so, I will also talk about what I see as inappropriate behavior by chapter presidents or the board.

Ultimately the decision will be up to the members. I hope that more members will get involved, that the processes of our union will be opened up to scrutiny by the members, and that new people can get beyond the battles of the past. We face so many challenges, have such wonderful members, and together can accomplish so much. Let’s tackle the union’s real issues, and if we have internal disputes, let’s settle them according to the procedures in the bylaws. ■



*Diana Yohe,
MCCC President*

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Write Us

Letters to the Editor

Only submissions by MCCC unit members will be accepted. Letters should be no more than 200 words in length. The author must include name and chapter affiliation, which will be published with the letter. Authors must provide the editor with contact information in the form of either email address, mailing address or telephone number. Letters will be published on a space available basis and may be edited for length and appropriateness. Not all submissions can be published.

Guest Columns

Guest Columns should be no more than 400 words in length. Columns by authors who are not MCCC members may be accepted. The author’s name and affiliation will be published with the column.

Mail to:

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Or email:

Communications@mccc-union.org

Delegate Assembly...

Story on front page



Newly appointed MTA Director of Higher Ed. Suzanne Wall brought greetings to the Delegate Assembly, introducing herself and promoting the Rally for Public Education on May 20.

(Photo by Don Williams)



The joint Salary Grid Committee finished its work on the last phase of the Day Contract with just enough time to bring the plan to the membership for ratification, which needs to be done by June 1. Pictured here at MTA headquarters, from first row left, are Greg Sethares (BrCC Academic VP), Margaret Wong (QCC), Rosemarie Freeland (GCC), Joe LeBlanc (NECC), Claudine Barnes (CCCC), and Courtney Derwinski (MTA). Back row Steve Fabrucci (NECC HR), Bill Daring (QCC HR), Carol Wolf-Fallon (Community College Counsel), John Casey (Community College Counsel), Mike Murray (DHE HR) and Sean Nelson (DHE A&F).

(Photo by Don Williams)



Retired member Frank Leary who co-chairs the MCCC Political Action Committee announced that the PAC raised \$882 at the Delegate Assembly.

(Photo by Don Williams)



MCCC Treasurer Phil Mahler presented the budget that called for a slight dues increase to the Delegate Assembly.

(Photo by Don Williams)

Know Your Day Contract

May 2017

- May 1** President's tenure recommendations and sabbatical notification due (pp. 44 & 27)
- May** **Last Day of classes** Faculty submit college service and student advisement form (p. 57)
- May 21** Tenure decisions due (p. 45)
- May 29** Memorial Day observed
- May 30** Professional staff College service and student advisement forms (p. 59)

June 2017

- June 1** Applications due for Sabbatical Leave beginning January 1 for professional staff or Spring semester for faculty. (p. 27)

Professional staff work beyond the Academic Year.
The dates below do not affect faculty.

- June 1** E8-Summary Evaluation by supervisor due (p. 58).
- June 1** Letter stating preferred work assignment submitted each year to supervisor (p. 50).
- June 1** Develop E-7 Form with supervisor. E-7 Form serves as basis of evaluation for the year. E-7 includes job description items (goals), objectives (if mutually agreed), and activities/methods (Appendix).

July 2017

- July 1** Notification of work assignment due from supervisor (p. 53)
- July 1** Off-Campus Days-3 days off campus for activities outside of those assigned (conferences, catching up on literature in the field, etc.). They may be taken in increments of a half-day or more. The 3 off campus days begin with fiscal year (p. 54).

N.B. Dates may vary depending on the first day of classes. Most of these dates are "last date" standards. In many instances the action can be accomplished before the date indicated. ■



MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

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The MCCC website is the best and most up-to-date source for late breaking developments important to Day and DCE Unit members in addition to being a valuable resource for MCCC contact information, bargaining and legislative updates, contracts, committee assignments, bylaws, local chapter leadership, calendar of meetings and events, and the MCCC News newsletters (current and past).

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