

CSEA SEIU Local 2001
Paraprofessional Council Meeting
January 23, 2010

In attendance: George Camarco, Diane Campbell, Linda Kazmierski, Sherrill Landon,
Jennifer Nelson, Janette Smith, Bill Walkauskas, Kathy Weston,

McCusker Scholarship Chair: Don Gladding

Union Staff: George Gould, David McCluskey, Danny Medress, Susan Nelson,
Matt O'Connor

Minutes taken by: Kathy Weston (in absence of Secretary)

Minutes of November 21, 2009 meeting:

Treasurer, Janette Smith pointed out an error in the treasury balance on the November meeting minutes. Minutes read a balance of \$13,109.71.

Motion by George Camarco to approve new balance of \$13,109.76. Seconded by Linda Kazmierski. President Bill Walkauskas called for vote. All approved.

Motion by George Camarco to approve minutes of November 21, 2009 meeting. Seconded by Linda Kazmierski. All approved.

Treasurer's Report: Janette Smith

- Small expenditures: see Treasurer balance sheet
- New Balance \$12,360.28
- Bill called for a motion to accept Treasurer's Report. Motion made by George. Seconded by Linda.
- Janette comprised flyer to inform local chapters of their Chapter rebate funds and the procedures in place for accessing the money.

President's Report: Bill Walkauskas

- The State Council Meeting will be 9 am Wednesday, January 27, 2010.
- Future goals for ParaCouncil:
 - Meeting the needs of Chapters
 - Assist chapters in setting up By-laws. Council has an approved format that chapters may use to develop a set for their chapter.
 - Develop better communication with Chapters, which to date are 40.
 - Grievance training for chapters

Bill introduced Don Gladding, McCusker Scholarship Chair

Don spoke about the McCusker Scholarship and how it benefits children of current members and retirees. From the \$54,000 that was donated last year, 54 (\$1,000) scholarships were awarded. The program is trying to bring in additional monies through fund-raising. Don thanked the ParaCouncil for its past support.

Linda made a motion that the ParaCouncil make a donation of \$1,000 to the McCusker Scholarship. Motion was seconded by George. Bill called for vote. All approved.

- Bill discussed the importance of our chapters to be aware of current Connecticut Labor Law. He requested the purchase of the Connecticut Labor Laws for ParaCouncil chapters. A motion was made by George to purchase 3 copies for now and address purchasing additional copies if needed. Chapters will be notified that copies are available to borrow. Motion was seconded by Linda. Bill called for a vote. All approved.
- Bill mentioned the possibility of moving the location of quarterly meeting to other regions of state as a way to better connect with members

Plan for Biennial meeting;

- Saturday, May 15, 2010, 1:00 – 3:00PM, Catered lunch, door prizes
- Janette will format flyers for local chapters emphasizing the importance of the meeting as it will include elections.
- Decision to focus on ParaCouncil goals and how to implement.
- Stronger together.
- George will explore incentives for attendees.
- Bill will work with Matt for sending out postcards to all members re:meeting
- Responses for attendance will be sent to Janette. She will submit numbers to caterer accordingly.
- ParaExecutive Board will make follow-up calls to all Chapter Presidents in April
- Agenda will be posted on website.
- Bill Walkauskas suggested that nominations for biennial elections come from the floor. Kathy Weston made motion for Open Forum nominations. Seconded Jennifer Nelson. Bill called for vote, all in favor, motion passed
- Members must be notified of upcoming elections one month prior to said elections.

CSEA Executive Council Reps.’ Report: George Camarco, Janette Smith, Bill Walkauskas, Linda Kazmierski

- In accordance with CSEA SEIU Local 2001’s By-Laws, the Municipal Division has met and developed a structure and bylaws for the Division and Council 760. The Municipal Division will consist of the ParaCouncil and Council 760.
- We are working on legislation to give paraprofessionals coverage in the State’s Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

Sue Nelson (staff rep.) has been asked to work with the ParaCouncil in implementing its goals, working on communications with chapters, and working on a para survey. Bill and Janette will work with her formatting the survey. Susan will utilize the data to encourage paras to become more involved with the union and council membership. By resourcing with each other, members would gain a common ground within townships regarding such topics as wages, health care, negotiations, and the misconception of our positions as “mom jobs”. The ParaCouncil will be using the information to gain a better idea of concerns, needs, and a general outlook from chapters.

- The Para Executive Board is also collating information for Chapter Resource binders. The binders will include information on but not limited to laws, trainings, websites with orientations and professional development, Chapter's by-laws and contract. Bill would like to see a sharing and collaboration of information amongst paras, by using the website and/or newsletter.

Staff Representative, George Gould enthusiastically spoke about the potential of the ParaCouncil in paving the way for much needed changes facing paraprofessionals. He stated that there are many resources available to the ParaCouncil within our union. One suggestion was to elicit the support of retirees in townships who are having negotiation problems and find strength in numbers.... Hold the Line start with change DREAM.

Chapter Connections:

Cheshire Chapter was represented by 3 members who spoke of new officers in their Executive Board. Jennifer Nelson, President of Mansfield chapter stated that they will be going into negotiations next year. Linda spoke of little changes in Plainville. Bill spoke for ACES, contract approved for 2 years, but will be going back because townships pay on an individual basis for some students and will need to consider new groups which were recently added to membership bringing their membership to approximately 250.

Political Action:

Dan and Matt (communications rep.) requested that members who were present to remain after the meeting to phone members in our Monroe chapter to encourage them to stay with CSEA SEIU Local 2001 and not join UPSEU. They spoke again of strength in numbers. Slogan suggested for increased participation: "Have the union meet YOUR needs." Get in on the cutting before YOU get cut!"