

United Teachers of Dade
2200 Biscayne Boulevard
Miami, Florida 33137

Council of Building Stewards Meeting
September 15, 2011

Unapproved Minutes

This regular Council of Building Stewards meeting was called to order by President Karen Aronowitz at approximately 6:00 p.m. President Aronowitz led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence was observed.

Adoption of Agenda: It was moved by Elizabeth Jordan and properly seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Adoption of Minutes: It was moved by Seth Patterson and properly seconded to adopt the minutes of May 19, 2011 as presented. After discussion, motion carried.

President Aronowitz thanked the sponsors and vendors attending the meeting: Liberty Mutual, VALIC, Triple AAA, Enterprise Rent-a-Car, Grand Canyon University, Barry University, Solstice, Family Life, California Casualty, American Income Life, Break-Time Travel and the Florida Marlins.

Special Order of Business:

- ***Sergio Cartas, UTD Steward, Miami Coral Park Senior***

President Aronowitz introduced Mr. Sergio Cartas, UTD Steward, Miami Coral Park Senior. After years of fighting with the district, he was issued a substantial check from the School Board for back pay to correct a violation of the contract.

Mr. Cartas addressed the Council of Steward sharing the history of the case. He reported: two arbitration hearings were held; President Aronowitz met with the Superintendent and the School Board: and finally, on September 2nd, the School Board honored the arbitration and paid him his money. Mr. Cartas stated it has been a long process, but the UTD leadership has been with him all the way in making sure the contract was honored, and that he got his money. Mr. Cartas also acknowledged Ms. Wanda Santos, Mr. Jason Joseph, Mr. Michael Molnar and Mr. Artie Leichner for all of their efforts.

- ***Chris Radney, Executive Board Member, and Chairperson, UTD Constitution & Bylaws Committee***

Mr. Randy explained the proposed changes to the UTD Bylaws to the Council of Stewards in its entirety; these changes will be placed on the UTD website, and the Council will be voting on adoption at the Council of Stewards meeting in October. He encouraged stewards to email him if they have questions at Chrisadney@comcast.net.

President Aronowitz stated that, in accordance with the UTD Bylaws, Stewards have one month to review the language prior to voting which will take place at the next Council meeting scheduled in October.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Fedrick C. Ingram

- ***Financial Management Review (For the Month of July 2011)***

Secretary/Treasurer Ingram highlighted the Financial Management Review to the Council of Stewards and reported membership data through September 6, 2011, to the Council.

- ***Update on the UTD Audit***

Secretary/Treasurer Ingram reported that our accountants, Bellows Associates have conducted their fieldwork. UTD has provided all information requested; original bank statements, deposits, disbursements, and bank reconciliations were also provided along with insurance information, accrual and amortization schedules, employee HR files and our budget.

Mr. Ingram stated that we expect for the audit to be completed in the next several weeks and presented to the Council of Building Stewards in November.

President's Report: Karen Aronowitz

President Aronowitz stated that it is extremely important for the Council of Stewards to hear the report on the financials, especially now that we are involved with the FEA lawsuit regarding the 3% and the unconstitutionality of SB 736. President Aronowitz stated that it takes money to fight these lawsuits and we must continue to urge non-members to join.

President Aronowitz directed the Council of Stewards to an article in their packets; *Republican Thugs – Part 8- New Berlin Edition* and asked them to share this with potential members.

The article outlines what has occurred in the New Berlin school district in Wisconsin and how Governor, Scott Walker was responsible for eliminating collective bargaining for public employees. President Aronowitz highlighted several of the results of this change in the law including: Longer workdays for elementary and secondary schools with no increase in pay; no set pay for overtime; a requirement to substitute during planning periods; dress codes for women requiring skirts below the knee, and banning sweatshirts, jeans, large logos, open shirts; reductions for insurance premiums if spouses attend wellness programs and a requirement for all employees to participate in wellness programs, including biometrics, etc.

- ***FEA Lawsuits***

President Aronowitz reported that FEA has filed lawsuits regarding the 3% contribution of active members which we feel is unconstitutional, and a lawsuit challenging SB 736.

President Aronowitz reminded the Council that UTD affiliated with Florida Education Association (FEA) and she served on their leadership team to move these lawsuits forward, and reminded the Council that the portion of our dues that goes to FEA helps fund these lawsuits.

President Aronowitz reported on the visit by Dennis Van Roekel, President of the National Education Association, who spent the entire day at UTD and schools. School visits were followed by a meeting with the Editorial Board of the Miami Herald, to discuss the FEA lawsuits challenging SB 736 and 3% pension requirement. President Aronowitz also reported that Representative Dwight Bullard will be proposing a bill in the Florida legislature to rescind SB 736. Karen stated that she is optimistic that the lawsuits will prevail.

President Aronowitz reminded the Council of Stewards that the legislative session will begin in January 2012.

- ***Legislative Update***

Mr. Joe Minor and Ms. Karyn Cunningham presented information to the Council on what to expect in the upcoming legislative session and that the FRS Lawsuit trial is scheduled for October 26, 2011. Other information outlined the SB 736 lawsuit and President Obama's American Jobs Act.

Ms. Cunningham explained the September Action Plan to the Council, asking Stewards to hold a unit meeting during the week of September 19th to discuss the America Jobs Act. Ms. Cunningham also advised Stewards that we will be emailing a draft of the Legislative Priorities for 2012, asking Stewards to call a unit meeting to discuss the priorities and get input from members.

A Question/Answer session followed.

Stewards were asked to use their cell phones and their congressional representatives from a list provided at the meeting and urge to vote **yes** for the American Jobs Act.

Ms. Cunningham reported that UTD had attended the Chamber South Education meeting held September 13th which is attended by members of the business community. In attendance at the Chamber were Representative Fressen, Representative Saunders and Representative Bullard. Ms. Cunningham reported that Representative Fressen's were not well received by the audience and Representative Bullard received tremendous applause when he spoke.

- ***Collective Bargaining Update***

President Aronowitz stated that she was very pleased with the individuals who exercised their rights in the Race to the Top ratification vote and reminded Stewards that we still need to bargain RTTT for 2011-2012; we still need to bargain the SIG grant, and DA. President Aronowitz reported that a meeting of the ETO was held at Miami Edison, and she thanked the people that participated.

President Aronowitz reported that we will be negotiating on the SIG grant soon, we must reach agreement by September 30th, or the opportunity for this funding will expire.

President Aronowitz reported that Differentiated Accountability (DA) is subject to negotiations. We have heard from several schools that administrators are saying they have to do this and that because they are a DA schools. Stewards who are experiencing this problem are urged to contact UTD, with any

directives received from the principals. President Aronowitz also recommended that UTD keep a log of conversations with their principal as to what they are being asked to do, and this way UTD can deal with the problems.

In addition to bargaining RTTT for 2011-2012, the SIG Grant, and DA, President Aronowitz reported that we still have to bargaining reopeners, the third year of the UTD contract on salary and health insurance. President Aronowitz also stated that each side has the option to open two contract articles for negotiations. The next collective bargaining session has been scheduled for September 27th.

Questions/Answer session followed.

- ***Membership Raffle Winner***

President Aronowitz announced the winner of the membership raffle, Mr. John Forbes, UTD Steward at Tropical Elementary school.

First Vice President's Report: Artie Leichner

- ***Report from the Field***

Mr. Leichner stated that inclusion co-teaching means two teachers in the room at all times. Stewards who know of violations are asked to email Artie with the name of the school and other pertinent information. Mr. Leichner also reported that the Superintendent will not be doing DROP extensions this year.

Mr. Leichner reported that UTD has filed a Level III grievance regarding Involuntary Transfers since the district is doing this without any rhyme or reason; the grievance was filed yesterday. Mr. Leichner also stated that he is forming a Technology Committee and those that interested are asked to contact Artie by email.

Mr. Leichner stated that several schools have been visited by vendors who are not authorized to do so and reminded the Council that only the vendors approved by UTD can solicit: VALIC, Liberty Mutual, American Fidelity, Creative Benefits and representatives from the NEA Auto Insurance Program. Mr. Leichner also stated that we have been working with the district due to Stewards being improperly surplussed and receiving directives from administrators that are in violation of the contract, etc.

Mr. Leichner reminded Stewards that when going to an urgent care center owned by a hospital, that you pay more, so please try not to utilize those services.

Question/Answer Session followed.

New Business

President Aronowitz asked if there was any new business to be brought up before the assembly, and there was none.

Adjournment

It was moved by Thomas Nunn and properly seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. As always leadership stayed after the meeting to answer questions.

Karen Aronowitz
President

Fedrick C. Ingram
Secretary/Treasurer