

AFA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

September 14, 2011

(Approved by the Executive Council on September 28, 2011)

Executive Councilors present (noted by *):

*Warren Ruud, <i>presiding</i>	*Cheryl Dunn	*Sean Martin	*Julie Thompson
*Paulette Bell	*Brenda Flyswithawks	Dan Munton	
Lara Branen-Ahumada	*Karen Frindell Teuscher	*Mary Pierce	<i>(Three vacant</i>
*Paula Burks	*Andre Larue	Audrey Spall	<i>adjunct seats)</i>
Dianne Davis	*Reneé Lo Pilato	*Mike Starkey	

Officers/Negotiators present: Ann Herbst, Jack Wegman
Staff present: Judith Bernstein, Candy Shell

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m. in the Senate Chambers, Room #4638 in the Bertolini Building, on the Santa Rosa campus.

MEMBER CONCERNS

None.

MINUTES

There being no corrections or additions, the Council accepted the minutes from the August 31, 2011 Executive Council special meeting as submitted. (Approved minutes are posted at www.santarosa.edu/afa/minutes.shtml.)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. [CCCI](#) & [CalSTRS Board](#) Contributions. Warren Ruud briefly reminded the Council about a topic initially discussed at the [8/31/11 meeting](#) and further clarified in an email he sent to Councilors regarding the possibility of AFA making two contributions: (1) to the campaign of [Sharon Hendricks](#), who is running for the community college seat on the [CalSTRS Board](#), and (2) to [CCCI](#) to pay for the services of a half-time lobbyist for one year. AFA endorsed Ms. Hendricks' campaign in August, as did other CCCI member faculty associations. FACCC and CFT have also endorsed the Hendricks campaign. In a conference call with the candidate, CCCI agreed to contribute \$3,900 to her campaign, and those faculty association representatives participating in the call agreed to consider further contributions from their own associations. Warren said that the Cabinet's recommendation to the Council is that a total of \$8,000 be set aside for both contributions, and that the \$8,000 be split between these two contributions, with up to \$7,000 going to fund the CCCI lobbyist and the balance of the \$8,000 going to the Hendricks' campaign.
 - [CalSTRS Board](#). According to the Hendricks campaign, the maximum legal limit for a chargeable donation to the campaign is \$3,900. Warren commented that the other candidate for the CalSTRS Board has been endorsed by CTA, and that CTA is interested in filling the seat on the CalSTRS Board with someone who would primarily serve the

interests of K-12 faculty, CTA's primary base, instead of community college faculty. If the CTA candidate wins, community college faculty members risk losing a voice dedicated to their distinct interests. Warren noted that the outgoing incumbent, Carolyn Widener, served in the seat for approximately 20 years and never ran opposed in her bids for reelection.

- CCCI Lobbyist. Warren mentioned that CCCI is hiring the half-time lobbyist as a one-year pilot position, and AFA's commitment would be for one year only; however, there is a possibility that this position could become an ongoing CCCI expense. A CCCI lobbyist will give independent community college faculty unions another voice in Sacramento, in addition to FACCC, and will also present advocacy workshops on a regional basis to CCCI member colleges. Warren added that a \$7,000 contribution is modest, relative to the size of the donations that other CCCI member colleges are making.

Warren asked Councilors for their input regarding the contributions. He also asked that the Council consider granting him the authorization to adjust the two different amounts that were recommended by the Cabinet by \$500 to \$1,000 in either direction, should he receive an indication from Rich Hansen that additional funds are needed in one place more than the other. Warren also said that, consistent with the consensus of the Council, AFA would inform the membership after the contributions had been made, rather than requesting their input beforehand. In response to a Councilor's suggestion, Warren agreed to follow up with CCCI President Rich Hansen and ask that CCCI provide a written acknowledgment of the contribution that would include a description of the ways in which the funds will help CCCI better represent community college faculty in Sacramento. Following the discussion, by unanimous voice vote, the Council approved a motion made by Brenda Flyswithawks and seconded by Karen Frindell Teuscher to move this item to action.

2. [FACCC](#) Contract Membership.

- AFA/FACCC Co-Sponsored Budget Forum on September 29th. Warren Ruud informed the Council that FACCC has arranged for 7th District [Assemblymember and Assistant Majority Leader Michael Allen](#) to address the faculty and answer questions at a two-hour forum that is scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday, September 29th. In response to FACCC's request for a list of topics that AFA would like Assemblymember Allen to address, Warren suggested the following: (1) The budget and education in California: how it applies to Sonoma County and, more specifically, to SRJC; and (2) What is an effective way for faculty to advocate for our concerns? Warren noted that the forum would serve two purposes. It would focus on the problem that the faculty has to start owning, and it would begin to demonstrate what FACCC could do for SRJC (e.g., FACCC brought a legislator to our campus and they are in constant communication with legislators.) Warren asked for the Council's feedback about the topics. It was suggested that the forum would provide a good opportunity to educate the faculty about how the budget affects them, but it also segues into how faculty can advocate for community colleges at the state level, which ties into FACCC contract membership. Warren suggested that it would be preferable to have the discussion about the pros and cons of FACCC contact membership at another time, rather than putting Assemblymember Allen into the position of making a sales pitch for FACCC. Several Councilors suggested the following additional topics for the forum: (1) What are the specific issues involved in the budget process that affect how community colleges are funded (i.e., Prop 98, and the nuts and bolts of how the system works)? (2) What are the political and economic obstacles that legislators are facing in trying to fight cutbacks in education funding? (3) How does Assemblymember Allen see the attack on pensions in Wisconsin making its way west? (4) How would Assemblymember Allen interpret the data in the District's budget charts (e.g., Tier 1 and Tier 2)? What do legislators in Sacramento think about this set of data?

Warren also suggested that AFA consult with FACCC about the possibility of inviting students to attend the forum. Councilors briefly discussed the idea, and some expressed concerns about how the inclusion of students might change Assemblymember Allen's

message, pointing out that the focus of the forum needs to be on helping faculty. It was suggested that faculty members be encouraged to ask questions and that the Council agree in advance on some prepared questions. Paula Burks offered and agreed to prepare and submit a Flex proposal to Staff Development so that faculty attending the forum may earn Flex credit.

- FACCC Contract Membership. Warren recommended the AFA membership vote on FACCC contract membership this semester—rather than waiting until the spring when there may be potentially challenging budget issues to deal with—and prior to Thanksgiving, since the combination of final exams and the holidays makes the few weeks after Thanksgiving too busy for faculty. He presented a framework for a campaign of education about FACCC, including a draft calendar of events, culminating with a one-week, online balloting period that would run from November 14 to November 21, 2011. The next Council meeting is on September 28th, the budget forum is scheduled for September 29th, and an AFA General Meeting could be held on either October 12th or October 26th. (Both October dates are already scheduled for Council meetings.) Warren recommended that Rich Hansen (CCCI President, [Foothill-DeAnza Faculty Association](#) President, and FACCC Treasurer), be invited to answer faculty questions about FACCC at the General Meeting. The opening of the campaign could begin as early as next week, by sending emails to existing FACCC members and building a support list based on the responses, followed by an email to all faculty members on September 22. Warren noted that, within the next month, FACCC's Director of Governmental Relations, Andrea York, would like to present a workshop specifically geared towards adjunct faculty and focus on EDD unemployment insurance benefits and retirement, in addition to other issues of concern to adjunct faculty. Another workshop could focus on general retirement and pension issues. FACCC has offered to present three or four workshops for SRJC faculty during this time period, but that number could vary depending upon the Council's interest. Following this explanation of how a campaign might proceed, Warren asked the Council for their feedback. The Council engaged in an extensive discussion, and individual Councilors expressed the following viewpoints:
 - It might be premature at this point in time to engage in a campaign for contract membership. It might be preferable to engage in a campaign to increase individual FACCC memberships, rather than asking the membership to vote on contract membership.
 - For many faculty members, it's not a matter of the amount of an increase, it's a matter that there IS an increase.
 - Before the Council takes a vote on the matter, AFA should sponsor an open, public forum where faculty members have the ability to ask questions and provide input. After the forum, the Council should discuss the matter further.
 - In voting for contract membership, Councilors would be voting for all of their colleagues to join. Even if individual Councilors were convinced that they themselves should join FACCC, it's possible they wouldn't be convinced to impose that decision on others. Could there be an additional option on the ballot to vote for individual membership, rather than only yes or no on contract membership?
 - In the face of declining revenue for AFA, which looks like it could continue over the next few years, would the Council be asking the membership to increase the dues? That issue is a concern.

Warren responded that the sense of the Council in previous discussions was that increasing the dues was not an issue they wanted to move forward on. He suggested that money would start coming back to community colleges eventually and, as a result, AFA's revenue will increase, as it is tied to payroll. Also, as payroll goes back up, AFA won't need to spend as much, because many of AFA's expenses are tied to responses to the budget crisis—it is all due to the same problems that are causing

AFA's revenue to decrease. Warren said that he believes that AFA's budget issues are not reflective of a structural problem and that there is a good chance that AFA will be able to make it through without increasing dues. Should it become necessary, however, an increase in AFA dues plus FACCC contract membership dues would still be much less than any other community college faculty union dues in California, many of which are set at twice as much as AFA's current rate (0.55%), with many as high as 1.4%.

- The questions about what FACCC does should be answered by independent sources.
- If FACCC were to say that the situation for community college faculty would be worse if FACCC wasn't in existence, how does one measure that assertion?
- If FACCC had 9,000 members 20 years ago and they still have 9,000 members, what does that say about them?
- The faculty should vote on this issue. The Council should make sure that it has researched all possible sides so that faculty members are voting with the maximum amount of information possible.
- I would like to know how much FACCC's professional staff is paid.
- While I understand that sometimes things lose momentum when we don't take action, we don't necessarily do our best work when we are hasty. Maybe the Council doesn't need to move so quickly. We've been elected to consider issues carefully before sending anything to the membership. The last time the Council considered whether to forward something to the membership, we had a very long discussion. We could use the fall to educate ourselves and then come back in the spring to vote.
- It might be preferable to approach the issue of FACCC contract membership in terms of something the Council believes has the potential of serving the faculty's advocacy needs and wishes to explore with its membership. AFA could invite the faculty to be co-participants and then proceed based on information from FACCC and the membership.
- FACCC is our lobbying organization that speaks for us in Sacramento. Contract membership is something we could do to strengthen that organization. If we're convinced that larger membership numbers will give us more weight in Sacramento, it might be a compelling argument to deliver those numbers to FACCC.
- FACCC was invited to address the Council about why we would want to support the idea of contract membership; however, when I left that meeting I was not persuaded. What kind of case is FACCC going to make for adjunct faculty who have had their wages reduced or gotten laid off?
- We don't have many options for advocacy in Sacramento beyond FACCC and CCCI. FACCC does a good job in many ways, but they do need to address our questions and convince the membership.
- FACCC lobbyists are very skilled at speaking to legislators one-on-one, arguing specific legal points in order to get more money into the community college system.
- It would be helpful if FACCC could forward an electronic document that is succinct and data driven and that includes a bulleted list of their accomplishments (e.g., here is what we can do for adjunct and regular faculty, this is what we did last year).
- FACCC's Website includes pages that detail the legislation they have supported and defeated. It would be beneficial for Councilors who are not familiar with FACCC to spend some time looking at their Website, and sign up for their weekly email.
- SRJC faculty members are not involved politically (e.g., faculty were not active in the Prop 92 campaign nor in elections for seats on the Board of Trustees).

- If FACCC could figure out a way to help SRJC faculty become more politically active at the local and state level, that might be a persuasive argument for contract membership.
- Would there be a way to invite FACCC to talk to the membership without AFA taking a position on whether the faculty should vote for contract membership? I fully support them coming to talk, but I'm not a fan of making the decision. Let them come, let them make their case, and let people ask questions.

In response, Warren said it would be preferable not to forward the issue to the membership without an endorsement from the Council.

- Although people have differences of opinion about the effectiveness of FACCC, we all agree that we need a voice in Sacramento, and FACCC is the only game in town, outside of being a part of CTA or CFT. Being a bigger part of FACCC in contract membership gives us more leverage and allows them to represent us more effectively.
- I'd like to ask Michael Allen if he's ever had a pitch from FACCC and how it went.
- It is a fundamental principle that SRJC faculty members are benefiting from a lobbying organization that we're not supporting equally—we're a free rider—and that is a principle position worth advocating for.
- In the presentation to the Council, FACCC said that contract member colleges can ask FACCC for help with particular projects. We could expect a closer relationship and help organizing something. It would be worth the Council's time to have a conversation about what we would want FACCC to help us with.

In response, Warren provided a specific example: the Santa Monica College (SMC) Faculty Association had concerns about its district not meeting the 50 percent law ([Ed Code §84362](#), which requires that community colleges spend no less than 50% of their general fund on instruction), but it had no means of doing an audit. FACCC forced an audit of SMC and ten other schools, which revealed that they were all out of compliance. The end result was that SMC faculty received a great deal more money into their payroll. FACCC pursued this audit because SMC was a contract member. Warren also mentioned that contract members all have the opportunity to fill a seat on the FACCC Board of Governors.

- I'm interested in measurable outcomes—doing your best and failing at it is not something I want to support. I understand that the FACCC staff works 24/7, but it is important to me to know what the nature of the service that they are offering to us is. How will I know that they are meeting certain benchmarks? I don't know what they do. I want specific information.
- How would SRJC pull out of a contract member relationship? (Warren clarified that contract membership would be renewed over a fixed period of time.)
- FACCC will continue to represent SRJC faculty whether we become contract members or not. It's not that difficult of a job to become better educated about what they do.
- I've been a FACCC member for a long time. I don't follow everything they do, nor do I want to follow it—I want them to do it. Fundamentally, I believe that contract membership is a good move. The big obstacle is, can FACCC convince our faculty that it's a good thing to do. Faculty members are fed up with putting out money and with a lot of things that they have no control over. This is one thing they can control. If we became contract members, everyone's FACCC dues would go down, and the proportion that adjunct faculty members pay would be the proportion they work. In the end, faculty members would support contract membership if they were convinced that this was a good thing.
- We all agree that we need a voice in Sacramento, and that that voice is stronger if FACCC can point to more people. It behooves us to educate ourselves, particularly because the information is available. At the same time, FACCC has to be convincing.

I want to support FACCC, I want there to be a strong voice representing our interests in Sacramento. Whether or not we should have a contract relationship with FACCC, I'm not sure.

Warren noted that the Council was not ready to take any action on the matter. He suggested that further discussion wait until the Council meeting on September 28th, at which time he would invite Rich Hansen; Dennis Frisch, President of the FACCC Board of Governors and regular faculty at Santa Monica College; or Andrea York, FACCC Director of Governmental Relations, to address the Council.

3. Agenda for Fall Retreat. Warren briefed the Council about the agenda for the fall retreat, which will be held at an off-campus location on September 24th from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The agenda will include two main topics: long-term planning and goals for the organization, and negotiations issues for 2011-12. The AFA Budget Advisory Team has planned a 90-minute presentation for the negotiations segment.

ACTION ITEMS

1. CCCI & CalSTRS Board Contributions. Following discussion (see Discussion Item #1), by unanimous voice vote, the Council approved a motion made by Brenda Flyswithawks and seconded by Cheryl Dunn that the total amount of AFA's contributions for the [CCCI lobbyist](#) and the [Sharon Hendricks campaign](#) for the community college seat on the [CalSTRS Board](#) be limited to \$8,000. By unanimous voice vote, the Council approved a second motion made by Brenda Flyswithawks, which was seconded by Paula Burks, that the \$8,000 contribution would be split as follows: \$7,000 for the CCCI lobbyist and \$1,000 for the Hendricks campaign, with the caveat that Warren Ruud be given the authority, based on feedback he receives from CCCI President Rich Hansen, to increase the Hendricks campaign contribution by as much as \$500 (to a maximum of \$1,500) or to lower it by as much as \$1,000 (to \$0), with a corresponding adjustment to the contribution to the CCCI lobbyist (as low as \$6,500 or as high as \$8,000).

MAIN REPORTS

1. Conciliation/Grievance Report. This report and subsequent discussion were conducted in closed session.
2. Negotiations Report. This report and subsequent discussion were conducted in closed session.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Judith Bernstein.