

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**May 15, 2020**

**3460 Lexington Ave N, Shoreview, MN 55126**

**This will be a virtual meeting**

**Goal of the meeting ending no later than 1:00**

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**Minutes**

Roll Call:

Present:

Region 1 Darci Wing; Region 2 Randy Shimpach; Region 3 Shanna Schmitt; Region 5 John Bower; Region 6 Joan Treichel; Region 7 Ellena Schoop ; Region 8 Mark Dreyer; Region 9 Kaitlin Houlihan; Region 10 Jackie Blagsvedt (after roll); Region 11 Jessica Raptis; Region 13 Lois Tucke; Region 14 Ann Adkisson; Region 15 Bryan Kotta; Region 16 Darren Hage; Region 17 Mike Terhune; Region 18 Tim Beske (after roll); Region 19 Jerry Jeffries; Region 20 Angela Christle; Region 21 Sarah Sinderbrand; SW President Chet Jorgenson; SW VP Thu Phan; SW Treasurer Todd Maki; SW Secretary Lynn Butcher; Organizing Council Chair Sarah Evans; Political Council Chair Cathleen Cotter (after roll)

Staff – Lina Jamoul

Absent: Region 4 Amy Braun; Region 12 Open

Guest – Leah Solo

**Adoption of Agenda**

Add: DA Update (Treichel)

**Approved by consensus**

**DA Update**

(Treichel) The DA Planning committee is still pushing forward as if we will be meeting in person; they have been working with the hotel who is following the Governor’s orders for reopening. Not sure what that will look like in September. Working with Lina as well for break out sessions around the strategic plan if we meet in person; Paul and Lina are looking at options in case we need to meet virtually. Larry Souther is offering a go-to meeting training on resolution writing Tuesday, June 9 at 5 p.m. It is in the portal. Resolutions are due July 3.

**Covid-19**

(Jamoul) – Have reached an agreement with MMB for Priority 1 & 2 employees to roll over their vacation hours if they surpass 275; employees will need to request to do so. MMB is working with agencies on the process and the forms that employees will need to use.

COVID leave policy will continue as is and we will get head’s up if that policy changes. MMB has indicated they would like to align the state policy with federal guidelines. We are researching now to see how our policy differs from federal guidelines so we can identify what we like about and want to preserve. We did express the need to continue intermittent use of COVID due to school issues, especially if schools are required to close in the fall or remain closed and have asked for that option to be preserved. MMB has acknowledged that they can see the need. ED Jamoul verified that those on telework who have family members who are high risk will need to use a different leave type (FMLA) to care for those members unless the family member actually has COVID.

Director Schoop asked about folks being told to use flex rather than Covid leave. ED Jamoul clarified that those folks should be using COVID leave when it is appropriate to do so.

State will be continuing telework for those who can do their work from home. For those who cannot do their work at home, they are looking at bringing people back. They’ve got planning groups in the agencies and we’ve asked that those planning groups seek input on how to do that. Keep an eye out and if we notice that the planning groups are not seeking input, we need to invite ourselves to the conversation. Director Schoop suggested reaching out to the continuity coordinators, many of whom are MAPE members.

(Jorgenson) We’ve been updating the COVID page on the website as we get new info. Have to be vigilant – like many other initiatives where they try to do a good thing and HR claws it back.

Redeployment (Jamoul) Data is two weeks old, but we show 70 redeployments across agencies and 1000 reassignments. Director Schoop stated that there were MNIT employees that will be redeployed to MDH to help with procurement.

Temporary Unclassified (Jamoul) On the calls there has been work to ensure that the COVID leave applies to those employees; not a lot of work to make new hires permanent rather than temp unclassified. All UI new hires have been temp unclassified, so we will need to restructure our Temporary Unclassified campaign based on the changing conditions.

**Contract update** (Leah Solo) – we are in the last 60 hours of the legislative session; things are continuing to move and be quite intense. Our contract passed the house. Wednesday night the contract was sort of heard in the Senate in a finance committee. They did a delete all amendment onto a republican bill. They included amendments to our contract that would have frozen pay for the second year, which is ridiculous because they can’t do that – this is not how this works. Great to see a lot of senators and Commissioner Frans make that clear. The Commissioner also made clear how messy this would be and that the contracts do not affect the deficit in a meaningful way: not passing would amount to $58M and does not include healthcare costs that the state would incur. It was interesting to see the Republicans react to that and also interesting that they are wanting to take on frontline workers during a crisis for a very small gain. It is becoming clear that the Republican caucus in the Senate is not united in opposing our contract and are wondering why Gazelka is making a stand on this. This is what is behind the push for members to call their senators. We know that the calls are working and it is making senators uncomfortable to be in a position where they are not supporting workers during an emergency like this. We have had a really good coalition that’s come together in the last few weeks to support the contracts. AFCSME, IFO, MNA, Education Minnesota, Teamsters – all hopping on the phone, sharing lobbying information, coordinated communications and making sure there is mutual accountability to turn out members and get calls into senators. That’s been good and helpful. The call this morning was a good call with some principles and the Governor; he stated unequivocally that he is with us and that this is an attack on the process and that it is a sacred process and he will not stand that attack. He is standing strong and every time they try to put this on the table, he is telling them to take it off. To be very clear, it is possible that the GOP walks away. They make that threat every year, and it is interesting to see them make that threat 60 hours before end of session. If they do that, it is super risky for them to do that. Polling is consistent in the governor SUPER popular right now. Gov has almost all the cards right now – can spend the reserves without GOP and has $1.7 B in federal money for COVID response He can also un-allot if needed. This is the narrative that is shaping up for the next 18 months – do we balance the budget on the backs of workers or do we ask the wealthy to pay their fair share?

If the session ends without ratification, we go back to the old contract. Once the session adjourns, our contracts are dead if they haven’t been ratified, so if they come back for special session, don’t know what legal maneuvers they would need to take to take up the contract. They could extend session rather than adjourn, but that brings unknown problems.

Gov. Walz cannot just approve our contracts. Depending on if the Senate took some sort of vote on our contracts where they passed it with amendments, in the past, MMB has interpreted that as passage of the contract – we’ve seen that with PPL. Weird maneuver that folks are very quietly talking about. (Jorgenson) Premiums are not negotiated, so those rates would not go back and/or SEGIP would fight hard against that. There has been some precedent for contracts to be voted on separately. That has happened before where rural Republicans have voted for some contracts and not others. There are new folks in leadership, and there is a way to pass our contracts without approving the pay increase, but we are not going to tell them how.

(Jamoul) Narrative for recovery: Rebuilding public service, rebuilding trust in government, Commissioner Franz used three of our stories in the letter he wrote to senate republicans. Also working really well is the coalition work that Leah has been doing with other unions.

(Solo) We already did a joint press release on Tuesday morning celebrating the House victory and then turning our attention to the Senate. We will be doing a zoom press conference with the other unions that will highlight the workers on the front lines during this time. Great coalition work – obviously AFSCME and we have the largest contracts in this coalition, but have seen great support from the other contracts. Nurses contract is not in effect yet, so they haven’t seen the increases and they have a lot to lose. It’s been really cool working with them and know that as they are on the front lines, it’s been great standing up with them.

**MAPE Budget** (Maki) have not talked about next year’s budget yet with Paul and the finance workgroup.

**Lawsuit** (Jorgenson) – Organization that represents union members who want to get their dues back as a result of the Janus case; there are lawsuits all around the country where people say if it was unconstitutional, I want my money back. There was a press release announcing a lawsuit, but we have not yet been served. There’s been lawsuits like this all around the country and we’ve just been spared. In all of the lawsuits so far, unions have won. We talked to some of the attorneys from AFSCME International and Teachers International and part of that discussion was that the 8th circuit court of appeals (which MN is in) is very conservative. The strategy is to delay the lawsuit as long as possible to allow cases in other circuits to rule in favor of the unions before an appeal gets to the 8th circuit. This is to avoid having multiple rulings that might prompt a hearing at the SC, which is anti-labor. Dragging it out will cost more, but it is worth it to make sure that the 8th circuit has a say as late as possible. Don’t sit up at night worried, but there are going to be some big checks written. Have not yet checked with Paul to see if our liability insurance will cover some of the costs. Asked if there was something that could be done about the plaintiffs in this case like a counter-suit for costs. International has not discussed that as a strategy, but rather wanted to focus on the fact that unions acted in good faith. Also discussed shunning or running a campaign against those plaintiffs, something that had been discussed during the strike, and there is not good value in shunning our coworkers. The 6th, 7th, and 9th circuit have already ruled favorably for unions. Anti-worker forces will continue to try to get this to the SC. We do not know what the legal fees will be, but they will be expensive. Cost of doing business in the post-Janus world.

Strategic Priorities:

1. Respond to the impact of the pandemic
   1. We have continued twice weekly meetings with the Governor’s office; Commissioner Frans has been there consistently; outcomes of our calls:
      1. Covid Leave
      2. Union Voice in bargaining waivers
      3. Secured employee voice or commitment for employee voice in return to work process
      4. Budget briefings
      5. Agreement for vacation rollover for priority 1 & 2 employees
   2. Agencies most impacted: DOC & DEED
      1. DOC – have been meeting with DOC management weekly; meetings have been collaborative, but have concerns about how the budget will affect members; have secured telework for many members, an appeals process for COVID leave, public reporting on positive cases, Meet & Confer to ensure workers voices are heard, and shift differential
      2. DEED – have gotten more telework agreements. DDS as well. Two of the areas slow to respond to telework. (Bower) Busy and trying to get people paid – big feat to get the self-employed onboard. Call times are still 2-3 hours, kind of behind, but chugging along and doing the best they can. ED Jamoul raised up DEED’s work on UI – some of the best in the country. Director Schoop shared that MNIT worked on infrastructure to improve speed and efficiency.
      3. Director Wing shared that we’re going to see an impact at DLI due to worker’s comp claims coming in. Director Scoop suggested adding MNIT as well, since return to work will add workload to them.
      4. ED Jamoul asked BOD members to contact her if they thought shifting events would translate into the need to focus on any other specific agencies.
   3. Economy & state budget: layoffs; contract passage
      1. Already discussed contract.
      2. 22 members from zoo got notification of layoff; expecting layoffs at MNCorr, but have not gotten anything officially; currently doing research to determine MAPE positions that might be affected.
      3. Did a webinar for stewards on layoff language – our focus is on redeployment language; state workers are needed right now, so we are pushing hard for redeployment of affected workers into those needed positions.
      4. Layoff and recovery task force (Shimpach) Task force has met – 8 members plus John Bower to help as time allows. Generated some broad purposes and goals of the taskforce to begin to develop a public narrative, change public perception away from employees of the public, but as advocates for the public. Director Shimpach will send to the BOD. In order to facilitate brainstorming, rather than taking up board time, we are putting together a separate meeting time where will invite board members along with PC and OC along with some presenters to facilitate. May 28 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
   4. Equipping ourselves to lead remotely – training on facilitating meetings remotely – have gotten feedback that this is something that is needed. Looking to put something on in the next month both on using technology, but also tools and tips for engaging. Meet & Confer chair training will be moving online and will need approval for budget from the BOD for 8 hours lost time for about 50 people. Director Treichel asked if the training might fall under the contract language we negotiated a few years ago. ED Jamoul clarified that this would be hard pitch because it is about building union power, but we might be able to pitch smaller training for all members.
2. Being connected to members in as personal way as possible
   1. Member calls going well; have been using the calls for targeting around contract in specific districts; strongest local so far is 401. VP Phan gave an update on 401; Director Blagsvedt gave an update on 1002 – created a Communication and Action Team to contact members; created a script and held a training; automated sorting of the member lists to sort into division and assign to members of CAT w/in those division. Excited to get the foundation laid to be able to communicate regardless of issue.
3. Continue with work functions that cannot be paused (payroll, elections, grievances, lawsuit)
4. Added mental health supports to bucket as well as education for membership that this downturn is different than others and the response needs to be different as well. OC Chair Evans shared ideas the Organizing Council had for mental health.

**M**(Maki)**SP** to approve$15K from training budget for M&C chair training to cover 8 hours lost time for 50 people. **Approved by consensus.**

Discussion on member drops – are we keeping data; where is the focus, etc. ED Jamoul suggested more in depth discussion for future BOD meeting and decision making.

**Political Council Update** (Cotter) The PC met last Friday; spent a fair amount of time on contract. Working on a contact your legislator toolkit. Gave an update on the layoff webex. Brought up to date on the taskforce and sounds like the goals of the task force and the PC dovetail nicely. Made targeted calls and got really good responses. Lots of energy.

**Board Development Workgroup** (Raptis) Have opening for two members and wanted to know if anyone had interest. Director Christle and Director Adkisson expressed interest. Director Raptis provided detail on the group at Director Blagsvedt’s request. If interested, email Director Raptis. BOD will determine final seat at June BOD meeting and/or decide whether to allow additional members. **M**(Schoop)**SP** to add Angela Christle to the workgroup and maintain one open spot for discussion next month. **Approved by consensus.**

**Board Minutes**

**M**(Kotta)**SP** to amend the minutes of the special BOD meeting on May 1st to reflect that Tabatha was present at the request of the Elections Committee. **M**(Kotta)**SP** to approve the amended minutes from May 1st as well as the minutes for the April 17th and March 20th BOD meetings. **Both motions approved by consensus.**

Member comments: Andy Trcka Local 801 president spoke and asked how to set up a common donation pool to be used for COVID relief; would like to see a pool for locals & a combined charities type program. Andy and Treasurer Maki will work on this and anyone who is interested can email them to be involved.

**Use of state equipment for elections** (Blagsvedt) Director Blagsvedt expressed about the decision from the elections committee regarding use of state equipment for candidate forums. Felt that these forums were not campaigning, but rather voter education. Discussed that we are obligated to know what does or does not violate rules. ED Jamoul stated that this is a governance issue and the BOD can overturn an elections committee decision and clarity can be made through DA.

Treasurer Maki used a point of privilege to express thanks for Chet for his leadership and shared a framed commemoration he will be receiving.

President Jorgenson acknowledged Directors Treichel and Dreyer for their work and contributions to the union. Board members expressed their gratitude for the work of Mark, Joan, and Chet.

**M**(Dreyer)**SP** to adjourn the meeting. **Approved by consensus.**

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

