# Local 2101 Meeting Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2021

Via WebEx

**Welcome – Liz Pearson, President**

* + We are going to have a special guest at our next meeting in June! [Peter Rachleff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Rachleff), labor historian and co-Executive Director of the East Side Freedom Library, is going to be speaking about the role of race and gender in labor history, and how we can learn and move forward from that history with a more inclusive labor movement. Spread the word- we’re hoping for a great turnout!

**Lunch Donation – Liz Pearson**

* This winners of the lunch donation survey this month were the National Alliance for Mental Health (NAMI) and Appetite for Change MN. We will split the $500 equally between the two organizations. Thank you everyone for taking the time to participate in our survey.
	+ [NAMI](https://www.nami.org/Home) provides advocacy, education, support and public awareness so that all individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives.
	+ Through youth and workforce development programs, social enterprises, and policy initiatives, [Appetite for Change MN](https://appetiteforchangemn.org/) builds community capacity in North Minneapolis to engage with the food system in a fresh and sustainable way.

**Meeting agenda – via WebEx poll**

* Approved

**MAPE Stewards – Dylan Adams, Head Steward**

* Become a steward! Especially interested in BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and others of marginalized backgrounds. If you believe in our contract and want to advocate for your fellow employees and MAPE members, consider being a steward!
* July 9 is the next Basic Steward training, which is all day. You get reimbursed by MAPE to attend. It’s accessible, easy, and useful!
* If you have questions, or want to learn more or shadow a steward, please contact Dylan!
* At the end of all of our meeting agendas, all of the stewards are listed with contact info (as well as all of our officers)
* Action: Become a steward! Attend the July 9 Basic Steward training. More info and registration for the training is here: <https://mape.org/events/basic-steward-training-apr-2021>.
* Contact: Dylan Adams (dylan.adams@state.mn.us) or any other steward or local officer.

**Update from our Negotiations Representative – Christine Retkwa**

* Do you care about the issues that MAPE is lifting up in contract negotiations? Then sign this petition! It says that we care, and that we want respect, and a respectful workplace that cares about our skills and abilities.
	+ Action: Sign the Negotiations Petition in support of our bargaining platform!
	+ Contact: The petition is available [here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGyVbhTI2MPlDHcRH3CUic5zcNgLo6-oxPZI7KPs4xNy_ZDA/viewform?form=MY01SV&OCID=MY01SV). Contact Christine (christine.retkwa@state.mn.us) with any concerns or questions.
* Christine joined state service a year and a half ago. She does not have experience from the past, but the negotiations dynamic this go around seems the same as the past and possibly even worse- more rigidity and less collaboration. Sarah Sinderbrand (who was negotiations rep for her local at DEED) provided some insight: early in the process it usually feels very frustrating- MMB tends to shoot everything down and not believe us. There’s usually not a lot of movement until Push Week in June and even then it’s challenging.
* Today is 5th day of negotiations- MAPE Negotiations Committee and MMB have been meeting about every other week since early April and will likely go through mid-June. About 150-non-Negotiations-Committee MAPE members attended yesterday.
* UPDATE since the meeting: MMB has filed for mediation, which means bargaining will no longer be open to general membership. They stated that our pacing is the problem. Assumedly that means that they wanted us to accept more of their damaging proposals. Or maybe it is that they didn’t want MAPE members to hear their words and our rebuttal directly. The Negotiations team will continue to communicate bargaining progress and related information by other means.
	+ Action: Since general membership can no longer attend the bargaining sessions- [sign the petition](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGyVbhTI2MPlDHcRH3CUic5zcNgLo6-oxPZI7KPs4xNy_ZDA/viewform?form=MY01SV&OCID=MY01SV)!
	+ Contact: More information and updates are available on the [MAPE website](https://mape.org/bargaining).
* Proposals generally:
	+ MAPE brought forth 30 heartfelt proposals that we believe focused on doing well to honor our members' hard work and that would increase our ability to thrive in the workplace and home, and make the State a more competitive employer.
	+ 143 proposals from MMB- an unusually high number and have taken a lot of time to go through. Many are small, like changing the title of a section in the contract. This is a waste of time and tax payer dollars.
	+ We have now agreed to about 35 of MMB’s proposals with a Tentative Agreement (tentative meaning it is pending the all-MAPE-employee contract vote after negotiations end).
	+ We are saying no to 91 of the MMB proposals- they are union-busting, like reducing access of stewards to meetings (in their discussion with us, they called stewards a barrier to communication). Also, they proposed to remove all hard-won letters attached to our current contract, such as student loan reimbursement.
* Equity:
	+ MMB responded to our equity proposal by spending 10 minutes listing out all the listening and training sessions that the state is doing at the various state agencies. MAPE members want more than listening sessions and book clubs. We want language in our contract that states the importance of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and includes processes such as reviewing policies with an equity lens and adding expectations of accountability.
	+ MMB declined to put our proposed words into the contract, stating that it is because it would only be in MAPE’s contract and would not be in the other union contracts (AFSCME and MNA) and they want “uniformity.”
	+ After agreeing that both sides have stated the same equity goals, MAPE asked MMB: What is holding you back from accepting adding our proposal in the preamble? What is your aversion to a joint labor-management committee working on these efforts?
* Telework:
	+ MMB is refusing our language on telework- they do not want to agree to any specifics because they want “flexibility” (which is ironic given they want “uniformity” with regard to equity).
* Temporary Unclassified:
	+ We asked for MAPE specific data on racial and ethnic percentages of those affected, because MAPE believes there is a disproportionately high percentage of BIPOC people amongst this category of employees that has fewer rights than permanent staff. Yesterday MMB advised that they cannot break it down by bargaining unit. There is definitely a possibility in the data to do this – which leads us to conclude that the numbers wouldn’t look good for the State, so they are saying they “can’t.” MAPE will be looking further into this.
	+ April 22 action- letters sent to Governor Walz about TU employees- disappointingly, the Governor is not going to influence the bargaining table. A representative from his office said- “we respect the sanctity of the bargaining table.” But MMB has not agreed to ANY of our proposals- we encourage you to keep contacting the Governor about this! Through the contract negotiations the Governor is not showing himself to be a good ally to the union- and MAPE was instrumental in getting him elected.
* Connect 700 program:
	+ Here is some good news- MAPE agreed to some MMB proposals regarding benefits for those in Connect 700 program which provides support to folks with disabilities to become and remain State employees.
* However, overall the way MMB is reacting to our proposals is not good. It’s not good for us, and it’s not good for Minnesota. It shows that they do not truly value equity or have respect for the people we serve. We deserve better!! Our team is frustrated – and we are resolute. We ask that you stand with us to support your rights and our union’s rights to improve working conditions so we can better serve Minnesota.
* Action: Talk to your coworkers, contact Christine with your thoughts, take action when the Negotiations Team needs you to! Attend the bargaining sessions. And [SIGN THE PETITION!](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGyVbhTI2MPlDHcRH3CUic5zcNgLo6-oxPZI7KPs4xNy_ZDA/viewform?form=MY01SV&OCID=MY01SV) It will give us leverage. If you want to be included on the list of those getting reminders and summaries about Actions to help our view of the contract become a reality, please contact Christine. Ask your co-workers, what do they think about management’s attempts to take away our rights as a union?
* Contact: Negotiations Rep Christine Retkwa (christine.retkwa@state.mn.us).
* Thank you Christine for all your hard work! We appreciate your time and effort, and especially the extra challenges when we’re all remote.
* This is your contract! It’s about the important themes mentioned AND getting a raise and keeping health care costs affordable. Use your voice by signing the petition!
* Q- Yes, MMB is our state Human Resources. And people from DHS HR are on the same side of the bargaining table with MMB.

**Update from our Political Organizing Council – Liz Pearson on behalf of Nicole Juan**

* 2.8 billion dollars of federal aid was authorized for MN.
* State budget is supposed to be voted on this month by the legislature
* Important that DHS does not get its budget cut. The majority of DHS dollars go to aiding Minnesotans!
* Contact your representative to remind them of the importance of our work.

**Update from our Statewide Organizing Council – Liz Pearson on behalf of Lauren Siegel**

* The Statewide Organizing Council is continuing its efforts around membership recruitment! Stay tuned for more info. Contact Lauren Siegel (lauren.siegel@state.mn.us) with questions or if you want to get more involved with membership recruitment efforts or MAPE generally!

**Update from our Regional Director – Sarah Sinderbrand**

* The next regular Board meeting Friday, May 21, and it will be Sarah’s last meeting! Sarah’s term in up in a matter of weeks, but she is still always available- reach out at any time (sarah.sinderbrand@state.mn.us)! Thank you Sarah for your service and representation!
* The Board has had several closed sessions to deal with personnel issues. This is frustrating because we have a lot of other work to do.
* We need to stay engaged in this Negotiations effort- we deserve better, people! A sappy video ain’t gonna cut it. Sign the petition- we need to show our power!
	+ Action: Sign the Petition!
	+ Contact: The petition is available [here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGyVbhTI2MPlDHcRH3CUic5zcNgLo6-oxPZI7KPs4xNy_ZDA/viewform?form=MY01SV&OCID=MY01SV). If you have any questions about it or have other thoughts about negotiations, contact Christine.
* Vanessa is running unopposed for the Regional Director position and is the presumptive winner- which means we are looking for someone who would be interim Secretary until we elect someone permanently to the position.
	+ Action: Step up to be interim Secretary for our local! Consider running permanently for the position!
	+ Contact: Vanessa Vogl (vanessa.vogl@state.mn.us) or any of the other officers

**Meet and Confer Update – Whitney Terrill, Meet and Confer Chair**

* The tone at DHS head table is consistent with the tone at the Negotiations table.
* Caitlin Reed and Debbie Prokopf are our MAPE Business Agents involved with Meet and Confer.
* Focus on DCT:
	+ Management is being regressive- going from 14 days to 7 days for notification of DCT employees being let go.
	+ DCT asked for a protected amount of time to complete paperwork- management didn’t agree to it.
	+ MOU from 1988 for specific group of employees- none are around anymore- that will be pulled from the contract.
	+ Tuition reimbursement has been extended until 2023- yay!
* Whitney has been the speaker of our Meet & Confer since November. Recent events have been challenging for her with regard to her position- she shared details at the meeting.
* Action:
	+ What can we do as a local to support Whitney during this time? Contact the MAPE Board of Directors to make sure that MAPE bylaws are followed and that there is transparency in the process. Whitney asks that you please contact her if you have questions about the details of her situation.
	+ General Meet & Confer- if you have any workplace issues that you’d like to see addressed, please reach out to Whitney or any of the other DHS Meet and Confer committee members!
* Contact: Whitney Terrill (whitney.n.terrill@state.mn.us)

**Member Concerns and Other Announcements – Liz Pearson**

* Hoping everyone had a nice and rejuvenating Mothers’ Day.
* Today is Minnesota Statehood Day (1858)- which isn’t necessarily a cause to celebrate, but let’s now work together make this state the state that we want it to be!
* Local 2101 membership rate is 81%, which is great but can always be better! Please join if you haven’t yet: <https://mape.org/join-mape>.
* Racism has no place in our union! And this is all the more reason to join the union- to help make it better and so that your voice is heard.
* You must be a member in order to vote in the MAPE Elections, which are happening now. You have until May 27 to submit your ballot. You should have received an email with your electronic ballot- if you didn’t, contact SWelect@mape.org.
* You must also be a member to vote on the contract!
* SIGN THE [NEGOTIATIONS PETITION!](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGyVbhTI2MPlDHcRH3CUic5zcNgLo6-oxPZI7KPs4xNy_ZDA/viewform?form=MY01SV&OCID=MY01SV)

**Gift card winners!**

* At our monthly meetings we draw four names for $20 gift cards
* April’s meeting: Laurie Henschell, Carrie Krueger, Hari Lamitarey, Libby Rossett-Brown
* This month’s meeting: April Beachem, Bethany Brickle, Paige Harker, Nancy Schultz

## Upcoming meetings

* Next Officers’ meeting: Thursday, May 20, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., via WebEx. Let Liz Pearson know if you would like the invite.
* Next General Meeting: Tuesday, June 8, 2021, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., via WebEx. Stay tuned for the invite!