

# Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2022 Zoom

## Meeting agenda – via WebEx poll

* Approved

## Lunch Donation – Liz Pearson

**Two charities are chosen. The Metro Deaf School and the Damiano Center will each receive $250.**

* **Metro Deaf School -** Educates students who are Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing; <https://www.mdsmn.org/>
* **Damiano Center** - Exists to permanently close the achievement gap and end generational poverty in North Minneapolis: <https://northsideachievement.org/>

## Welcome New Members – Alexis Stafford, Membership Secretary

* Welcome to our new MAPE members: Amy Marty, Andrea Abel, Jai Verma, Houa Yang, Emily Reimer, Christine Chen, Jennifer Olson, Alyssa Breen, Katherine Eifrig, Yeeleng Vue, Jennifer Bonbrake, Catherine Tuione, Michele Henifin, Chad Hoag, Merritt Oberg, and David Freeman!
* Join Alexis at one of our First Friday lunchtime meetings. First Fridays are an informal space for folks that are new or newer to DHS and hang out during the lunch hour once a month from 12:00-1:00. It provides an opportunity to have conversations, discuss MAPE membership, employment at DHS, and meet new people. If you would like to help and talk to new hires one on one, reach out to Alexis and she can give you information on how to do it.
* If you would like to attend the First Friday meetings, reach out to Alexis and she will put you on the list. You don’t have to be new to DHS to join. If you have any questions you can contact her at [Alexis.Stafford@state.mn.us](mailto:Alexis.Stafford@state.mn.us)

## 2021 Financial Audit – Liz Pearson on behalf of Brandin Barren

* Thank you Brandin Barren, Camille Miller, William DuChene and Abbie Franklin for help with conducting our annual financial audit!
* Our financial audit is an annual commitment for about 1 hour. Please reach out to Brandin if you are interested in helping next year: [brandin.barren@state.mn.us](mailto:brandin.barren@state.mn.us)

## MAPE Stewards – Liz Pearson on behalf of Dylan Adams

* Welcome new stewards to 2101: Ilya Garelik and Cassie Stewart!
* Basic steward training is June 10th
* Advanced Steward Training is August 12th
* We are always looking for new stewards. Email Dylan at [Dylan.Adams@state.mn.us](mailto:Dylan.Adams@state.mn.us) if you are interested in being a steward.

## Political Council and MAPE Political Action Council (PAC) - Nicole Juan

* The Political council met last Friday and talked through feedback from lobby week. Right now the legislature is on break but we are still waiting for the Senate to move on our contract and are monitoring that closely. Depending on how that goes, we may have a rally to help push the contract.
* The MAPE Political Action Council (PAC) held 2 listening sessions last month. The PAC met with Governor Walz and had a screening. We asked tough questions and Governor Walz said we will have more support for contract negotiations next time around. He said he will attend the opening session of our contract negotiations to hear both sides and be more informed on the bargaining process. He will also ask that agencies include student loan reimbursement for their budgets next time around. Check the [PAC website](https://mape.org/committees/mape-pac) for updated endorsements. [njuan@mape.org](mailto:njuan@mape.org)

## Organizing Council – Liz Pearson on behalf of Lauren Siegel

* The postponed membership recruitment planning retreat is rescheduled for Friday, June 10. This is an opportunity for people to come together to talk about how we recruit new MAPE members. While the event is focused on membership secretaries, each local is encourages to send their executive team. Local 2101 would like to send at least 5-10 people to this event. It will be held at the MAPE headquarters in Shoreview. There will be an option for online attendance and you will be paid for your time.
* We are looking for people who would like to present information about MAPE at the New Employee Orientations. This is a monthly commitment of 30 minutes. You don’t have to be an expert to participate and can always follow up on questions you can’t answer later. Lauren will host an info session about presenting at NEOs at **noon on Wednesday, April 27**. ([lauren.siegel@state.mn.us](mailto:lauren.siegel@state.mn.us))

## Contract Planning and Negotiations – Christine Retkwa

* Thank you to Nicole for her work with the legislature. Christine is currently our negotiations committee representative and is also our nominee for the next contract cycle. The House has passed the contract and now we are waiting on the Senate. Feel free to contact your senator and push them vote on getting the contract completed. Once our contract is passed, we will be pulling together plans for the next contract negotiation cycle.

## Update from our Regional Director – Vanessa Vogl

* Our next board meeting is on Friday April 15th. At our March meeting, the board voted to donate $10,000 to the Minneapolis teachers strike fund using money from our coalition building budget.
* The board has reviewed the near final strategic plan and approved plan. They are hoping for a recap on Friday and will have something to show membership in the next month or two. If you have questions reach out to Vanessa on email, teams or her MAPE email [vvogl@mape.org](mailto:vvogl@mape.org)

## Meet and Confer – Meron Negussie

* Quarterly Meet and Confer with HR for DHS will be starting soon. We are still trying to get a meeting with management for June. Current concerns we want to address include:
  + Pay equity and following up on outstanding pay equity reviews
  + The respectful workplace policy review on how it is affecting our members. There is a concern of misuse of the policy by management.
  + An update on tuition reimbursement and loan repayment program. Currently there is no solid policy around that. We have people who want to submit tuition reimbursement and are not getting any response. Management does not seem to know what is going on with this since we have significant staff turnover in HR. MN-IT may now be granted this option – depending on the agency they are associated with. Although it is in the contract as an option for DHS, generally it has only been granted for those in DCT. More access to this benefit is something we are pushing for.
* We are still looking for more people from DHS to be a part of Meet and Confer. We have two seats and two alternatives that are still open. Contact Meron Negussie if you are interested: [mnegussie@mape.org](mailto:mnegussie@mape.org)
* Member question: What about scholarships for college application scholarships?
  + Response: MAPE central offers scholarships and has information on our [website](https://mape.org/scholarships).
* Member question: Is there info on new HR director Kamaria Kassim-Grigsby?
  + Response: The DHS announcement seemed to present her in a way that makes her sound like she will be a better person to work with and is competent. Meet and confer has not had a chance to meet with HR yet and will hopefully have updates in July. Head of HR just started in the last month.
* Member questions: Didn't she come from Dept of Commerce? Do we have any info from Dept of Commerce union?
  + Response: Nicole Juan has met with her a few times and she seems very open to building good relationships and working together.

## Member Concerns and Other Announcements – Liz Pearson

* Matt Berg has chosen not to run again for Vice President and we wish to thank him for his service as interim Treasurer and Vice President. Thanks Matt!
* Nominations closed March 17 for the MAPE spring elections. Voting will be held online May 16-26. **You must be a** [dues paying member](https://mape.org/join-mape) **no later than May 2, 2022 to vote.**
* **A Candidate forum for statewide nominees will be held May 10 from 11:30 am -12:30 pm.** This is the same day as our monthly meeting so we will move the business of our meeting to the second half so people can attend the candidate forum.
  + **We will have our normal business meeting from 12:00-1:00. From 12:00-12:30, it will be informal conversation. From 12:30-1:00, we will have our general agenda.**
* We are gathering stories from DHS and MNIT at DHS employees who have run into situations where they have exhausted their leave after the Covid leave policy ended July 1, 2021. **Please send your personal experience via email to Liz Pearson (**[Elizabeth.pearson@state.mn.us](mailto:Elizabeth.pearson@state.mn.us)**) no later than April 15.**
  + If this has affected you, please share your experience. We need another solution for COVID leave because COVID is still impacting people in different ways but those with children, people working in DCT, and people with disabilities are getting the brunt of it. We have already reached out to the Employees with Disabilities ERG for stories.
  + County staff still have COVID leave so we are hoping to use this as a bargaining chip.
* Member question: As far as covid leave -- is it helpful to donate more leave in self-service? Are those folks eligible to use those donations at all?
  + Response: Vacation donation is not for people having to stay home because of COVID, it is only for people with a terminal diagnosis or medical situation. Unfortunately, people having to quarantine with children because of COVID does not fall under the requirements for vacation donation.
* Update from Christopher Smith: A rent control group asked MAPE for some funding. They are currently working on a strategy to work with suburban cities such as Brooklyn Center and Hopkins and hopefully have them go through the rent control process. They want to work with progressive small businesses as the Minneapolis city council is creating a work group to talk about rent control. The work group will have the Minneapolis city council members and city staff along with two seats for real-estate developers, two landlords, and two renters. They are hoping to try and to break up business and corporate power.
* Member question: About the vacation accrual credit, is it just your previous company that qualifies for this or should we be submitting additional proof of employment from other companies that may meet the criteria? The way I read the contract seems to indicate it is just your most recent employer, but I don't want to miss out on additional credit if I misread the policy.
  + Response: It is the most recent company you worked with. If you were working in a similar job you can submit a request to have that time at a previous employer contribute towards your new job so you can accrue vacation time at a higher rate, rather than at the bottom as a brand new hire. Vacation credit information is included in our agenda.
  + Additional Response via chat: There must be evidence to establish that the employee was employed by another public sector employer, tribal government, or by a private sector employer in a position directly related to the employee’s current State position within four (4) years of the date the State hired the employee.
* Member question: Has anyone heard any information about further return to office plans? Especially on MNIT side?
  + Response: MNIT’s telework policy is MMB’s policy, so your supervisor should know what the policy is. You should have a conversation with your supervisor to explain where you would like to continue to work. If you would like to stay working remotely, you need to communicate that. You should be very clear about where you want to continue to work. There was an announcement from MNIT @DHS/MNsure for staff to return to the office on May 18 or 19 for an all staff meeting but that is not required. The current messaging is still that if you are working from home and it works for you, you can continue to do so.
* Member question: Does MAPE differentiate between employees hired with a hybrid schedule or hired remotely and reimbursement for travel expenses/mileage?
  + Response: If you are expected to travel that would be a part of your job description. Currently there is no differentiation between hybrid or remote workers in the contract for how travel expenses are reimbursed. If you are working at home and have to come in for the office for a meeting, that is on your time and you would not be reimbursed.
* Member question: I am being told that key fobs are expiring (using VPN) and we are being required to use our personal cell phones - is that something that can be required? Why should we have to use personal phone cell phone? What if our phone dies or breaks?
  + Response: We will research this and discuss it at our next meeting.
* At our monthly meetings we draw four member’s names for $20 gift cards. This month’s winners are: **Chris Berg, Jodi Cushman-Purcell, Dennis London, and Bruce Anderson**

## Upcoming meetings

* Next Officers’ meeting: May 5, 12:30-1:00 pm, via Teams. Contact [Liz Pearson](mailto:elizabeth.pearson@state.mn.us) if you would like the invite.
* Next General Meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 2022, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., via Zoom.