# Local 2101 Meeting Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2020

Via WebEx

**Welcome – Liz Pearson, President**

* “If we don’t fight hard enough for the things we stand for, at some point we have to recognize that we don’t really stand for them.” – Paul Wellstone
* Action: Get involved in this year’s elections by volunteering for MAPE-endorsed candidates, donating, making phone calls to other MAPE members to talk about candidates and voting, being an election judge, and of course, voting!
* Contact: More information about these opportunities is available on the MAPE website: <https://mape.org/2020-minnesota-elections/get-involved>. You can also contact Nicole Juan ([njuan@mape.org](mailto:njuan@mape.org)) for details about volunteering for MAPE-endorsed candidates. (Please use your personal email. We cannot do campaign work over state computers or emails.)
  + Join the member-to-member phone bank on Tuesday, October 21
* Time card code for working as election judge- we think it is MSL (for “miscellaneous leave”), but please check with your supervisor to confirm.
* Hope you are taking the time today and this week to watch/participating in Equity Week and Slice of Autumn sessions- equity is vitally important to our work and something we should be considering every day!

**Approval of meeting minutes and agenda – via WebEx poll**

* Last Month’s [Meeting Minutes](file:///X:\MAPE\Local_2101\Common\Monthly%20Business%20Meetings\2020\September\20200908MAPEMinutes.docx) – Approved
* Meeting [Agenda](file:///X:\MAPE\Local_2101\Common\Monthly%20Business%20Meetings\2020\October\October20202101Agenda.docx) – Approved

**MAPE Stewards – Liz Pearson**

* Correction to last month about stewards who are leaving: Yvonne Cain is still a part of MAPE. She has a new work out of class position but still has duties of her old position. With the additional duties she felt that she would not be able to perform steward duties any longer. Thank you for your service and dedication to MAPE, Yvonne!
* Stewards are MAPE members who learn our contract inside and out in order to help fellow MAPE members with contract-related issues. Stewards are people other members can trust with their questions, who can help file grievances, and who will support and advocate for them. It’s an important and fulfilling role!
* Action: Become a steward! The next new steward training is November 13. You can register on the MAPE website: <https://mape.org/events/basic-steward-training-11132020>
* Contact: If you are interested in becoming a steward or have any questions, contact Chief Steward Chris Cachuela ([chris.cachuela@state.mn.us](mailto:chris.cachuela@state.mn.us)) or any of the other stewards. The list of stewards and their contact information are included on the agendas for every meeting.

**Working Parents Employee Resource Group (ERG) – Amber Buckner, ERG Co-Chair**

* Amber ([amber.buckner@state.mn.us](mailto:amber.buckner@state.mn.us)) chairs the Working Parents ERG with Leigh Gamble ([leigh.gamble@state.mn.us](mailto:leigh.gamble@state.mn.us))
* Formed in March 2019. 120 members, with a core group of the faithful 5, and 5-6 who are regulars at meetings. Looking for the faithful 50! Growing by word of mouth. Want to help and support all parents by providing a network to discuss family responsibilities and obligations.
* Highlights:
  + ERG is a voice for parents in collaborating with HR to provide up-to-date policies and clearly communicate what the policies are (FMLA, COVID leave, etc). HR has been responsive and has attended Parents at Work ERG meetings to explain.
  + Financial planners and lactation experts have presented at meetings. Working on getting a pediatric consultant and mental health practitioner.
  + Opportunities for community outreach and support to families in need.
* DHS Adopt a Family initiative starting soon! Supporting two families with holiday needs. Anyone can nominate a family. All info about the family will be private. Will have wish list of the things the family needs. Watch DHS Today for an announcement and more information.
* November meeting is going to be rescheduled. Last meeting of the year is December 10.
* Action: Join the Working Parents ERG!
* Contact: Email co-chairs Amber and Leigh at [dhs.parentsatwork@state.mn.us](mailto:dhs.parentsatwork@state.mn.us) to be added to the distribution list and receive information about the last meetings and events of the year.
* More information about all of the ERGs can be found on [InfoLink](https://dhs.intranet.mn.gov/hr-payroll-benefits/equity-diversity-inclusion/ergs/index.jsp)

**Negotiations listening session recap – Christine Retkwa**

* Last MAPE 101 was a negotiations listening session
* Topics of interest that came up were:
  + Working from home technology
  + Wanting teleworking to continue to be accessible even after COVID
  + Equity for employees and for those we serve
  + Budget priorities and expectations- especially with hiring freeze- can’t fill positions and the effect that has on employees who are here
  + Certain policies in the contract should be mandatory not optional- the things that make work and work/life balance acceptable should not be discretionary. They don’t cost dollars so let’s firm those up this contract
* There will be more listening sessions. Hopefully more members will participate. One-on-one meetings with Christine are an option, too!
* Following listening sessions this fall the Negotiations Committee will be synthesizing member issues. The ball will start to roll fast toward negotiations in the late winter/early spring, leading up to Push Week in June
* Membership will have opportunity to vote on the contract. You do need to be a member to do that.
* Action: Attend a future listening session or set up a one-on-one with Christine if you have ideas related to negotiations and our contract. Step up and speak up! Now is the time to be vocal- to MMB, the Governor’s Office, and the Legislature
* Contact: Negotiations Rep Christine Retkwa ([christine.retkwa@state.mn.us](mailto:christine.retkwa@state.mn.us))

**Meet and Confer update – Sue Hall, State Meet and Confer representative**

* On Monday, October 5, MAPE locals from across the state met virtually with Gov and Lt Gov for about 30 minutes. MAPE leaders shared stories about their frontline experiences responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Peggy Flanagan shared that she lost her brother to COVID
* Members explained their work is needed now more than ever and emphasized the importance of investing in government services, increasing revenue, and keeping services public and not privatized. MAPE Pres asked Gov to champion a way for large corporations to pay their fair share to help with issue of privatization. DCT shared how it’s trying to weather this. Privatization is not a way to cut costs as it merely shifts costs and will take a toll on people working and those receiving services. Members brought up temporary unclassified employee designation and the need to look at this following the action last March. The Gov agreed to meet again in January to revisit this topic and others.
* Whitney Terrill asked Gov to ask Commissioners to engage with Meet & Confer committees as budgets are being drafted so we can work with our agencies’ leadership in a meaningful way.
* Listening sessions are happening at DCT.
* The results from MAPE survey a couple of months ago have been shared with Commissioner, which included many items about how to save money.
* Commissioner is asking other groups, including StART, for input on the budget.
* Report of the Oct 5 meeting can be found on the MAPE website. <https://mape.org/news/mape-members-meet-governor-walz-and-lt-governor-flanagan>
* Salary savings leave has been approved. This is time off without pay, but continue access to health care and accrue sick time and vacation at regular rates. Liz Pearson shared that she is taking advantage of this- one day per pay period. Still expected to get work done though- workload does not lighten. Supervisor gives info to HR, and then there is a code for salary savings leave on time sheet. Not all areas of DHS are allowing this- some areas/positions are categorically ineligible and all are at supervisor’s discretion.
* One request to Gov was to direct commissioners to exhaust optional cost savings options (e.g. salary savings leave, early retirement) prior to implementing cuts- Commissioner Harpstead made clear that she wants to do this.
* Needing to spend more time on these cost-cutting ideas- hope to do that in subsequent meetings.
* Action: Let us know your questions, ideas, issues!
* Contact: Sue ([susan.hall@state.mn.us](mailto:susan.hall@state.mn.us)) or Whitney ([wterrill@mape.org](mailto:wterrill@mape.org)).

**Update from our Organizing Business Agent – Debbie Prokopf**

* Early retirement is sometimes an option that is offered. Has to be brought from agency to MMB to even consider the option. Early retirement is actually kind of expensive in the short run, as people are eligible for severance and things like that. Early retirement was a battle to get and then applied to a narrow number of people. There is a lot of work to make that option available. It is on the radar as a cost savings measure but it’s complex.
* Special session of Legislature. Supplemental funding bills proposed via two different vehicles- House and stand-alone. House bonding bill unlikely- 3/5 majority needed and Rep Daudt’s contingency is not on board. Stand-alone bill includes cuts that are counterproductive and not likely to result in supplemental funding. This is the fifth time this has been taken up
* Election so important with regard to our budget, and our contract. The outcome of the election will really determine both of these things. We need to elect people who support us and our work!
* Statewide survey coming soon through Meet & Confer regarding how COVID related work life is going- teleworking, issues for working parents, safety for people working onsite. Please fill out. Helps Meet & Confer team to know where to keep pressing.
* Negotiations survey will be coming out too in a month or so. Please fill out.
* Do we have ETA on when other cost-saving options might come into play? Unfortunately this is a timeline we really don’t have control over. Commissioner did not exhaust all of those options before privatizing chunks of DCT. Privatization is not the solution to any of these budget challenges. We have other ways and other ideas for trimming costs without putting vulnerable people at risk.
* These possible cost-saving measures are not necessarily tied to our contract- we don’t have to wait for our next contract to negotiate these ideas. We can do MOUs (memorandums of understanding) to effectuate these other possibilities.

**Statewide Organizing Council update – Lauren Siegel**

* Working alongside David Kennedy-Logan- reaching out to temporary unclassified workers in our local at DHS-Andersen to set up a listening session on Oct 22. MMB recently proposed a procedure for reviewing temporary unclassified positions, essentially providing a way to appeal that your positions is labeled inappropriately as temporary unclassified. MAPE has provided feedback on the proposed procedure. There are also opportunities for negotiating protections for temporary unclassified workers into our new contract.
* Please contact Lauren Siegel at [lauren.siegel@state.mn.us](mailto:lauren.siegel@state.mn.us) for more information or how to get involved.

**Lunch Donation – Liz Pearson**

* 136 members voted
* Breaking Free and Alexandra House were the winners and each organization will receive $250.
  + [Breaking](https://breakingfree.net/) Free helps women escape sex trafficking and prostitution through direct services, providing housing, advocacy, intensive education programs, support, and hope to survivors. Breaking Free’s own diversity helps to intentionally provide additional support to serve women of color who are disproportionately represented in the demographics of sex trafficking, prostitution, and sexual exploitation. In 2019, Breaking Free opened the only emergency shelter specifically for victims of sex trafficking and prostitution in Minnesota.
  + [Alexandra](https://www.alexandrahouse.org/) House provides domestic, sexual, and relationship violence services to women, men, youth and families in Minnesota. All services are free-of-charge and include 24-hour emergency shelter, legal advocacy, support groups, housing and supportive services, youth intervention and prevention services, elder abuse services, community education, professional training, and more.
* We have a great list of organizations to choose from for donating in the upcoming months, and we welcome other suggestions! We encourage everyone to vote!

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

* Budget presentation happening at our next meeting in November, and we will vote to approve our 2021 budget in December.
  + Opportunity to weigh in on how we plan to spend our money. For example- do we want to keep donating lunch money?
* Stay safe and vote!!

**Gift card winners!**

* September’s meeting: Earle Phillips, Sandea O’Bryant, Amy Alexander, Gayle Caruso
* This month’s meeting: Regina Acevedo, Hari Lamitarey, Larraine Pierce, Jill Tilbury

## Upcoming meetings

* Next Officers’ meeting: Thursday, October 22, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., via WebEx. Let Liz Pearson know if you would like the invite.
* Next General Meeting: Tuesday, November 10, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., via WebEx. Stay tuned for the invite!