MAPE Executive Team – Emergency meeting

JULY 14, 2020, 5:30 – 6:30 PM

VIRTUAL

MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 5:30 pm.

Present: Statewide President Megan Dayton, Statewide Vice President Thu Phan, Statewide Treasurer Todd Maki, Statewide Secretary Lynn Butcher, Organizing Council Chair Sarah Evans, Political Council Chair Cathleen Cotter

Staff: Executive Director Lina Jamoul

Guests: Region 13 Director Lois Tucke, Region 11 Director Jessica Raptis, Leah Solo

Situational Update (Jamoul) On July 1, a number of MAPE representatives had a Meet & Confer with DOC Commissioner Schnell and the purpose was to inform them that MAPE have input into decision making into layoffs; they told us they would get back to us the following week. On Monday, July 6, they contacted us and let us know they were laying off 48 people, 19 MAPE and an additional 12 at-risk. Letters went out Wednesday.

Friday, MAPE convened with managers and those affected; saw the letter to the board from Angie that the response was inadequate.

Monday, had meeting with all the people who were impacted to go over the contract language and contractual rights. Today was meeting with DOC leaders and MAPE decided to do some things; checked with the OC and PC and these actions are in line with their work: press work, get the message out and shed light on the layoffs with the view to get the supplemental budget that is up this week, with understanding that if the supplemental doesn’t go through, it will be worse. Did texting over the weekend.

MAPE have seen three long-term and respected leaders drop their membership this week; all were very respected by both members and management and it is a big loss. MAPE are really hoping people at the DOC stick together and sticks with MAPE. MAPE had two more drops from DOC today and also two people stop their PAC contributions: one DOC leader and one board member. Trying to get a meeting with management to ask them specific questions about individual decisions they made around the layoffs. MAPE also filed a class action grievance. Heard back from management that they will not engage on anything until the grievance is resolved. Asked others who had spoken with DOC members to share their context.

* Some members are unhappy with the fact that MAPE to a position on a social issue and do not see themselves reflected in MAPE’s direction.
* Some members may not have sufficient information about how decisions are made or why, and helping them to understand that context may be helpful in restoring solidarity.
* The Bob Kroll statement is the issue for some members, particularly the call to open up the bargaining table to the public: They are concerned that it will open the door to public input into their contract.
* Some members have a perception that MAPE has not been there for them and that they have had to push their problems forward for action, but have not gotten resolution; this can be a burden in areas where people are doing too much, and member leaders experience burnout.
* Some members need to hear from the Board that their issue have been discussed and the Board supports them.
* Disappointment did not start recently and we are experiencing disappointment that is layered: some members felt unsupported after Joseph Gomm’s murder; some felt MAPE did not act quickly or aggressively enough in submitting an equity request after AFSCME got an increase; some were hurt by the Bob Kroll statement, and some are disappointed in MAPE’s response to the current layoffs. Combined, these four issues represent a membership discouraged with what they perceive as MAPE’s lack of power; they feel with the number of members MAPE has and MAPE’s financials, MAPE should have more power and should use it.
* It took DOC case managers eight weeks to get telework, and it was pulled back after only four weeks; in facilities with outbreaks, case managers have gotten additional duties because other staff are centralized and not directly managed by the wardens.
* The DOC does not have a Meet & Confer chair.
* The DOC Commissioner has spoken poorly of the DOC publicly and has disregarded DOC policy when it suits him; all labor feel due process is not respected by his administration.
* The DOC Commissioner has not engaged staff in decision making: both MAPE and his own managerial staff; some managers, including wardens, have been left out of decision making and feel as frustrated as staff.

Possible approaches to responding to the current crisis (All)

* Recognize that DOC is unique in its needs due to the nature of the work and risk to the members who work there at all levels and restructure staff support to ensure dedicated staff.
* Help members understand strategic decisions, including when determining whether to file a grievance or attempt to resolve a different way; each decision is evaluated against the goal and how best to attain it.
* Hold listening sessions with all DOC or DOC leaders to begin to rebuild trust and come to agreement on expectations.
* Recognize that Commissioner Schnell’s administration does not seek the same partnership we do and change our approach.

Plan for next two days around supplemental budget (Dayton, Jamoul, All)

* A press release will go out today and a communication to all members will go out tomorrow asking them to contact their legislators in support of the DOC and DCT supplemental budget
* Staff and both councils will be making member calls encouraging members in targeted districts to contact their legislators with a focus on the Senate.
* Reach out to every member who is laid off or at risk and walk them through their options; pair up elected leaders with staff to provide additional support
* Address member disappointment with a both/and strategy:
  + Broad public statement supporting DOC and acknowledging the difficult work and working conditions;
  + Make calls to members who have dropped or at risk for dropping

Plan for after session (Solo)

* Strategically reset expectations with the Administration after session using what we’ve learned:
  + We’ve seen movement after a small meeting followed by a public accountability action
  + We cannot go too public or too negative too quickly or they will get defensive and withdraw.

Bringing this to the Board (Dayton, All)

* Provide the same situational update to the Board
* Finish the discussion around the Bob Kroll statement and then share the proposed process for statements
* Invite Leah to provide guidance on a statement from the Board
* Gain commitment from the Board to make member calls this weekend.