

TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY
2521 Riva Road, Suite L-7, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

MINUTES - Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, November 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the President, Nicole Disney-Bates, by Virtual Meeting, at 5:05 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Barnes, Cordoba, Graham, Kerlavage, Kempler, Korona, Liakos, McHarg, Raimond, Roth, Turk and Zotti.

Also present were Debbie Lanham, Amanda Menas and Mark Mench.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Elizabeth Ruddy, seconded by Jessica Roth, to adopt the Agenda. The motion was approved.

Kristina Korona stated that she thought we were supposed to be talking about the Standing Rules. She also stated that she thought it was part of the Discussion Meeting last week.

President Disney-Bates stated that we do not have to talk about the Standing Rules because they are approved from session to session. We are not amending them. We are keeping them the same as long as they stand.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kristina Korona stated that she would like to amend the Friday, August 12, 2022, Special Board of Director's Meeting Minutes. It states that "Kristina Korona stated that she will survey the members." It should read, "Kristina Korona stated that she would like to have the members surveyed."

It was moved by Kristina Korona, seconded by Geoff Turk, to approve the amended Minutes of the August 12, 2022 meeting and the Minutes of the October 6, 2022 meeting. The motion was approved with 11-Yes.

It was moved by Diane Barnes, seconded by Geoff Turk, to approve the Minutes of the August 29, 2022 meeting. The motion was approved with 10-Yes.

FINANCIAL REPORT

It was moved by Kristina Korona, seconded by Heather Kerlavage, to approve the Financial Reports for September 2022 and October 2022. The motion was approved with 11-Yes.

UNISERV UPDATE

Mark Mench stated that they have been to many schools. The issues the Uniservs are seeing a lot of is coverage, MOU's as far as who gets paid for what, Brightspace complaints, student behavior, violence and safety in their schools. Mark Mench stated that we also have a few wins.

POLITICAL ACTION

Mark Mench reported that there are forty-seven shifts for handing out Apple Ballots on Election Day. Please sign up for a shift. On Tuesday, we need to fill our shifts. If you would like to walk for candidates, Julie Hummer and Steuart Pittman have a canvas on Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

Kristina Korona asked when people talk about stress, is the county working with that person and not revoking their certification or are they being tough?

Mark Mench stated that you need to have the right documentation. You must have a note from the doctor stating that you are no longer capable of doing the job for which you were hired. Mark Mench stated that the recommendation is to take FMLA, Sick Leave Bank, or a paid leave of absence if you have been around for a while. TAAAC will present the options.

Karina Zotti stated that she is monitoring the Annapolis area and there are a lot of schools without Representatives. What needs to happen to approve this? Is there anything that can help?

Mark Mench stated that it is something that TAAAC looks for. We ask the buildings that do not have them to see if anyone would be willing to be a Representative. The job as building representatives can be as small or large as you want it. At the minimum, the building representative is transferring information, and has someone go to the Representative Assembly or it is watched from home.

Mark Mench responded to a question in the chat. If a teacher resigns to go to another job that does not require certification, does the Board of Education have any recourse against them?

Mark Mench stated that COMAR allows the Board of Education to withhold your summer pay. All year when you teach, they take a piece of your paycheck and put into the bank and give it back to you over the summer and the Board of Education collects the interest.

REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mark Mench stated that the mission of the UniServ Staff and Amanda Menas is to carry out the members' mission. Mark Mench stated that the things presented are to be considered. The problem that was presented was how do we recruit and retain building representatives, and how do we increase attendance and engagement at Representative Assemblies? We were asked to examine this issue and come up with possible solutions. These suggestions are not for the Board of Directors because in any organization you have different levels of people. The target is for the building representatives to take back from the Representative Assembly something that they can use in their buildings. There are elements in our Representative Assembly meetings that do not appeal to our target people. Here are ideas to be considered to help with the problem:

1. A full meal;
2. Doing more of the meeting in email form and make the actual meeting itself more interactive and shorter. Figure out a way to prune the agenda;
3. A virtual meeting or in-person meeting, but not a hybrid meeting;
4. A consistent schedule;
5. Have consent agenda items;
6. Super Representative program where any building representative that attends 8 of 10 meetings and holds a 10-Minute Meeting, have their local dues paid. Their picture would be put up for a year in the TAAAC office and a reception to thank them for their service;
7. Micro training at the Representative Assembly;
8. Small group share outs.

Jorge Cordoba has proposed to the Board many times to provide food and not cheese and crackers. Friends in LA hold meetings at another location other than a school and provides a meal, beer and wine.

Kristina Korona stated that she likes a lot of the suggestions. There is a major reservation about telling people we are going to pay their dues. As a union, you pay your dues because you are a member. We already give people stipends.

The suggestion was brought up about childcare.

Kristina Korona stated that there was a survey that asked about meals, different locations and would childcare make a difference. Why not ask the building representatives themselves?

Elizabeth Ruddy asked how to go about changing the format of the Representative Assembly?

President Disney-Bates pulled up the survey and reviewed. The survey can be sent out tomorrow.

It was moved by Jessica Roth, seconded by Diane Barnes, to send the survey out to the building representatives. The motion was approved with 12-Yes.

President Disney-Bates stated that the survey will go out by email and on the official Facebook page. We will have to decide as a group whether to put out on Bruised Apples. If we find out that people are only interacting with TAAAC on Bruised Apples, then we need to find a way to move them over.

Kristina Korona suggested that as union leaders we have to make these phone calls. If there are Representatives that are not responding, the whole thing about organizing is the one-on-one conversations. When people do not respond, it is an opportunity for us to talk to that person.

Review Agenda - President Disney-Bates reported that she sent out a draft of the Representative Assembly Agenda. We do not have to approve the Standing Rules from one session to the next. The rules stay the way they are unless they are amended. Based on the survey, we may have to amend them. The Standing Rules will be removed from the agenda.

10-Minute Meeting - Amanda Menas reported on the draft of the 10-Minute Meeting. The first slide is whatever date is decided by this body for the Budget Hearings. Next would be about the survey. Next would be about the elections along with the deadlines. Finally, there will be any committee updates.

New Business Items - President Disney-Bates shared the New Business Item submitted by Russell Leone. It reads as the following:

NBI: TAAAC Leadership will task the appropriate groups to update all internal and public facing publications including but not limited to policy, website, social media, newsletters, to include the adoption of gender-neutral language. TAAAC leadership will include gender neutral language in all future messaging.

Rationale: Recently, the Representative Assembly adopted a Bylaw change for the entire document to include gender neutral language. This must be extended to all TAAAC communications both internal and external to reflect our value of inclusivity. All TAAAC members must be represented in the language we use. This includes our gender non-conforming colleagues.

It was moved by Elizabeth Ruddy, seconded by Jorge Cordoba, to support this NBI. The motion was approved.

It was moved by Jessica Roth, seconded by Melissa McHarg, to call the questions. The motion was approved.

The motion was approved to support the NBI on gender neutral.

President Disney-Bates shared the next NBI submitted by Kristina Korona. The NBI was ruled out-of-order. This would be a Bargaining Team decision because otherwise it would be the Board getting involved in negotiations. It is divisive concerning to the point that it could be something that tears apart our association.

NBI: TAAAC will not support “creative solutions” to the special educator shortage that would create substantive divides within our bargaining unit. Solutions to the special educator shortage should first address the larger issues that affect all members in order to ensure that AACPS is working to recruit and retain all educators by providing at least comparable-if not better-salaries and working conditions as neighboring counties. Solutions then can focus on what can be done to provide special educators with better working conditions to be able to accomplish tasks unique to their position such as being able to complete federally required paperwork during their workdays. Similarly, TAAAC should also look for ways to improve working conditions for other segments of our membership who have unique working conditions related to their particular positions as well.

Rationale: The teacher shortage extends far beyond special education. The special education shortage may be worse in some other staffing areas, but it is in fact only one facet of the larger educator shortage that is the result of years of low salaries, unreasonable workload demands, disrespect, and the devaluing of the work that educators do on a daily basis. These issues affect our entire membership so the solutions should focus on our entire membership as well. The BOE has focused primarily on the shortage with special education not because it is the only area with prolonged vacancies but because of the legal issues that could arise without having the proper staffing in this particular area. We need to resist any proposed union busting solutions that substantively divide up our membership. Solutions that deal with position-specific issues such as the workload related to federally mandated paperwork should also be pursued since they would improve working conditions while still maintaining cohesion among our membership.

ACTION ITEMS

Board of Education Meeting Attendance - President Disney-Bates stated that Representatives decided that they would like to attend either a budget hearing or a Board of Education meeting. There are a couple different meeting options.

Amanda Menas reported that the Budget Hearing will be January 24, 2023, at Old Mill High School. November 16, 2022 is the first Board of Education meeting and December 13, 2022 is the second meeting where Dr. Bedell will be sharing the budget. The first of his listening sessions on his listening tour is on November 28, 2022.

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President Disney-Bates reported that on November 14, 2022, the topic will be on Blueprint. November 16, 2022 is their monthly meeting. November 28, 2022 is a listening session. December 12, 2022 will be a public hearing workshop. December 14, 2022 is their monthly meeting. January 24, 2023 is a public hearing on the budget.

Amanda Menas stated that November 28, 2022, is the one at Annapolis High School. However, between November 28, 2022 and January 11, 2023, there are sessions at every single high school and then two additional sessions. There are two public hearings that are specific about the budget. The January 24, 2023 is the one that we have targeted in the past.

It was moved by Elizabeth Ruddy, seconded by Kristina Korona, to attend the Budget Hearing on January 24, 2023, at Old Mill High School. The motion was approved.

Overall Climate Survey (AACPS Wide) - President Disney-Bates shared the Climate Survey for the county.

It was suggested to add to the survey the question "How many years in AACPS?"

It was moved by Heather Kerlavage, seconded by Melissa McHarg, to approve to send the survey out to the membership. The motion was approved.

Contract Action Team - Amanda Menas reported that the Contract Action Team was one of the things put out on the Bargaining Survey. This is a way to support our Bargaining Team and our Negotiations Committee. This will build up our capacity and relationship with AACPS.

It was moved by Heather Kerlavage, seconded by Melissa McHarg, to approve a Contract Action Team. The motion was approved.

FINANCES

Bill.com - President Disney-Bates stated that we are figuring out some issues with Bill.com.

President Disney-Bates reported that résumés were received for the Contract Specialist, and we have reached out to those people based on times the Executive Team has given. We will be doing preliminary interviews and from there you will receive the names. Whoever wants to be involved with the interviews, we will discuss what that will look like.

NEW BUSINESS

Kristina Korona wanted to move something as a different solution to the earlier NBI discussed in the meeting that was ruled out of order that will get to the same point but in a different way.

It was moved by Kristina Korona, seconded by Jorge Cordoba, that we have a forum by November 17, 2022, for members to suggest, discuss and give input regarding solutions to the educator retention and recruitment issues. Suggestions from the forum will be shared with the Board of Directors, the Representative Assembly and the Bargaining Team for possible action.

It was moved by Heather Kerlavage, seconded by Marissa Raimond, to make a friendly amendment that this is attached to the survey. The survey is sent out to everyone and then a forum to attack the results of the survey. Kristina Korona accepted the friendly amendment. The motion was approved.

It was moved by Kristina Korona to amend the motion to have the meeting by the end of November.

It was moved by Melissa McHarg, seconded by Diane Barnes, to amend the motion to hold the forum by the end of January 2023.

It was moved by Elizabeth Ruddy, seconded by Karina Zotti, to make a friendly amendment to suggest the date by December 16, 2022. The motion was approved.

All in favor of holding a forum. The motion was approved.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Approved:



Maureen Liakos, Secretary Treasurer



Nicole Disney-Bates, President

Minutes approved BOD meeting December 7, 2022

(Date)