



American Federation of Government Employees Local 476

Affiliated with AFL-CIO

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Auditorium C

The following members of the Executive Board were present: Ashaki Robinson Johns (President), Eddie Eitches (1st Vice President), Will Taylor (2nd Vice President), and Monique Love (Treasurer). Kirk Mensah (Secretary) was absent.

Ashaki called the meeting to order at 12:09pm, a quorum of 25+ members was met. Ashaki asked if there were any proposed amendments to the November 2014 General Membership Meeting minutes. No amendments were offered. Ashaki stated that the January 2015 General Membership Meeting minutes should be amended to reflect the absence of Eddie Eitches, 1st VP. There was a motion to approve the November 2014 minutes; the motion was seconded and passed. There was a motion to approve the amended January 2015 minutes; the motion was seconded and passed.

Monique presented the Treasurer's Report and discussed cash on hand. Eddie pointed out that the Morgan Stanley account includes \$28,000 that can be easily liquidated in case of emergency. There was a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report; the motion was seconded and passed.

New Business

Eddie talked about the Emerging Professionals Program which aims to move support staff employees to a professional series. Funding of EPP is an issue and demand was low. The EPP was designed to include a rotation, which has no monetary cost. A survey will be conducted to learn more about the experiences of former participants, and what potential participants would like to gain from the program.

Eddie talked about the Clearinghouse Program, there was a high demand. The Union is hoping to resurrect the program to make it easier for employees to move laterally.

Eddie talked about HUD Fitness Center negotiations. There was a Switchboard item about the Fitness Center and HUD rejected the Union's proposal for a 3-hour time span during the day for employees to use. It seems to be easier for employees to have flexible use of the Fitness Center if they have a manager who uses the Fitness Center. Many managers visit the Fitness Center at times other than the core lunch hours, and many of them spend more than an hour per visit.

There were no income differentials for Fitness Center memberships until the Union negotiated. The Union would like to make membership free but the Fitness Center Board of Directors rejected that idea. Free memberships were offered in 2007 as a pilot for one year. HUD's position is that no other non-law enforcement agency offers free gym memberships. The possibility of free memberships is not under discussion now. The Union is negotiating and there's a possibility that 3 free months might be offered to new members. The best target to increase income is employees who don't currently exercise. The Board says they can't meet expenses and new members don't cost anything.

Ashaki talked about a proposed change to the Council 222 Constitution. Local 476 is one of 37 locals in Council 222. The amendment would alter the voting process with a greater emphasis on member strength rather than delegate strength. This amendment would disenfranchise our delegates and Ashaki is opposed to the amendment. We will vote on this issue at the next general membership meeting, the 4th Thursday in May.

There is nothing new to report from the Food Patrons Committee, except that the Secretary has expressed his concern about the lack of healthy food options in the Weaver Building.

Reorganizations

There has been no Article 5 notice for the FHEO reorganization. It will focus on Headquarters, making reporting relationships similar to the Field.

The national reorganization for Admin took February 24-27th. Ashaki is working with Pat Hoban Moore because the original plan for the Privacy Office didn't make sense.

New Core – Project managers in Treasury have presented a preliminary plan this project. The Union has not been given notice. April 15 is the next meeting on New Core. There will be CFO buyouts for affected employees. Right now, we have no firm idea of who will be affected and who will be eligible for a buyout.

The Union is still involved with pre-decisional discussions regarding some of the financial functions (paying invoices and grants, etc.); WebTA and travel already moved to Treasury.

New Business

If you haven't been given your performance evaluation for 2014, and/or if you haven't been given your 2015 performance plan, tell a union steward. Managers can't reasonably blame delays on InCompass. There are very limited reasons under the contract for not giving employees timely evaluations. The time frame was extended to December but now is too late. This is a serious violation of Supplement 125.

The Union needs to select a new venue for the Spring celebration because Phillips has closed. The Union is considering selecting a caterer and holding the party outside. The Skyline Hotel was not an affordable option. A member suggested a cookout at the Fort McNair Officer's Club. The decisions will be made by the employees who volunteered to be part of a committee. The most important factor is to make it accessible to Union members.

Steward Fareed Abdullah made some points about performance evaluations. The Chief Performance Officer, Joe Smith, supports the idea that managers need to be trained regarding the performance process. Employees need to focus on documenting their performance and their accomplishments so they can be held accountable for their own ratings. Joe Smith is willing to assist individual employees with performance concerns before they engage the EEO or grievance process.

Sonia LeRiche volunteered that she was successful in her arbitration that addressed the issue of managers arbitrarily lowering office ratings from Outstanding or Highly Successful to Fully Successful to fulfill a quota.

Employees are reminded to look closely at their mid-year progress reviews. Some employees ignore the mid-year and end up on a PIP that could've been avoided. A manager must issue a PIP at least 30 days before the end of the performance year.

There are some best practices for performance planning meetings. If a meeting is conducted with more than one employee, the group should all be the same grade and the same position. There should be very specific expectations, and different standards, for different grades. A performance planning meeting should allow for an actual conversation about performance and about measurement standards. It goes without saying that managers may not engage in any form of retaliation through the performance evaluation process.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed. The March 2015 General Membership Meeting was adjourned at 1:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Krems
Senior Steward
AFGE Local 476