



# American Federation of Government Employees Local 476

*Affiliated with AFL-CIO*

451 7th Street, SW, Suite 3142  
Washington, DC 20410

Ashaki Robinson Johns, PhD  
President  
Regional Vice President, Council 222

Phone: 202-402-3077  
Fax: 202-708-7638  
E-mail: Ashaki.Robinson-Johns@hud.gov

## **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, January 28, 2016

Auditorium C

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

Ashaki called the meeting to order at 12:11pm, a quorum of 25+ members had not been met until 12:18 pm. Ashaki asked if there were any proposed amendments to the November 19, 2015, General Membership Meeting minutes. No amendments were offered. Sandra Wright moved to approve the November 19, 2015 General Membership Meeting minutes. Monique Love seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Monique presented the Treasurer's Report and explained that the amounts listed on the report are what have been expended by the local thus far. Ashaki mentioned that the local spent approximately \$2,000 less than the local brought in thereby preventing the local from having to dip into its savings account. Eddie asked about the \$10,000 that was transferred from the Morgan Stanley account and if the local was going to put transfer the funds back. Monique explained that \$10,000 transfer was used to cover expenses related to the holiday party. Ashaki stated if there is a surplus at the end of the year, the funds will be transferred back to the Morgan Stanley account. Assad moved to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Tony Carraway seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **Old Business**

**Chief Stewards Report** – Acting Chief Steward Antonio (Tony) Carraway stated that the stewards have been addressing some issues regarding telework and performance management. Tony advised employees to be proactive and engage management as soon as possible. Tony also mentioned some victories including pay increases, promotions, performance rating increases, and within grade increases. A member asked about the performance rating evaluations and the intentional delay in holding up employee ratings. Tony stated that stewards are addressing those cases individually and as a group but stated that it's incumbent upon employees to notify the Union of any issues as soon as possible. Christopher McLennon stated that he was tasked with filing grievances on problems associated with the student loan repayment program. Chris stated that management has agreed to award 4 of the 7 employees and a panel will be convened regarding the remaining 3. The panel will consist of a member of the union and management. Ashaki mentioned that this is an important issue because in years past, almost all applicants that applied received an award. However, this year there was an exorbitant amount of denials due to the wording of the new application, thereby violating the collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Basically, the Union believes management was trying to find a way to disqualify employees.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Food Patron Committee Report** –Otis Collins stated that the Administration is very open to reopening the cafeteria. However, one of the issues that the committee is experiencing currently is trying to bring this to a conclusion prior to the end of the Obama Administration. Otis continued that this is critical because to open up the cafeteria, the Department will need approximately \$60,000 for a support staff person to manage the contractor. He stated that in order to accomplish this, the Department must go through the procurement process which can be a bit arduous. Otis also mentioned that the Administration wants to put out a survey to gauge interest from HUD staff in reopening the cafeteria so that they may use the information as justification for reopening the cafeteria. He stated that the survey is an important key in getting the cafeteria opened as soon as possible and has asked all to encourage all HUD employees to participate in filling out the survey. Otis finally stated the survey should be issued within the next month. Eddie mentioned that he thought one of the issues related to creating a separate entrance for the public to enter. Otis mentioned that at this time, it is not a viable option and will hinder and not expedite opening the cafeteria prior to the end of the Administration.

\*\*\*\*\*

**New Core** - Ashaki reminded the members that the Union filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge against the Department and the Department has been directed bargain with the Union to negotiate terms. Ashaki mentioned management has offered to settle and as part of the settlement the Union will begin bargaining in early March. Ashaki asked members to come forward if they have some information to share regarding New Core and its implementation.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **New Business**

**Affinity Group** – Ashaki mentioned that affinity groups are by definition groups formed due to a common area for example, B.I.G., Veterans Affinity Group, etc. Ashaki mentioned that management has been unfairly and unjustly using the affinity groups to circumvent bargaining with the Union. As such, Council 222 brought an ULP against management and has been successful. The Union, with Chris Mclennon representing Local 476, will begin negotiating with management regarding affinity groups. Ashaki asked members to forward any questions to Chris as soon as possible.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Voluntary Leave Bank** – Ashaki explained that the voluntary leave bank will be something new at HUD. Currently, the HUD has a leave donation program where employees that are approved for the program will send out a notification HUD wide informing employees that they are need of annual leave. Unfortunately, the employees that are most successful with receiving leave are those employees that put out way too much information, thereby garnering sympathy for leave. However, the issue with that is that employees are almost forced to give up whatever private issues they are currently going through just to increase the chances of receiving leave. With the new leave bank, employees will donate hours that will go into a pool. A panel will review the application to determine eligibility. Ashaki mentioned that the leave bank will not be in place of the leave donation program but in collaboration with. She mentioned it will be advantageous that will be powerful for all bargaining unit employees, especially those with low leave balances, new employees, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Local Committees** –

Legislative Political Coordinator - Ashaki mentioned that Thaddeus Wincek is the Union's Legislative Political Coordinator (LPC) and he is seeking other members to join the committee. The LPC will organize issues that require Congressional approval but are specifically related to HUD.

Social Engagement – Ashaki nominated Chris Mclennon to chair the social engagement committee. The social engagement committee will be involved in recruitment and social activities, including bowling, dances, etc. Monique nominated Chris as chair, Rodney Rose seconded the motion and the motion passed. A member suggested Union should inform BU employees about HUD's volunteerism policy in order to be involved in some of these committees.

Events - Ashaki asked for a motion to nominate Rodney for the events committee. The committee will be responsible for managing the events such as the We Are One Celebration and the Holiday Celebration. Kirk moved that Rodney chair the Events committee. Cynthia seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Bylaws Committee– Ashaki stated that our local bylaws are outdated since they relate to the National AFGE Constitution that has been changed three times. Ashaki asked for a nomination to make Kirk Mensah chair of the Bylaws update Committee. Monique moved that Kirk chair the Bylaws Update committee. Tony seconded the motion and the motion passed.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Recruitment** – Ashaki mentioned that the local has recruitment incentives for both the recruiter and the new member. The recruiter receives \$50 and the new member receives \$100. She stated the Union will start giving awards for the top recruiter (except for stewards) for the quarter and then also for the year. Ashaki also reiterated that the larger the local, the more influence the Union will have in negotiating with management and Congress. She stated that as you go out and talk to employees, have them get engaged with the Union with any issues that they may be experiencing. Ashaki also stated no matter which group you may belong to (Under 5, BIG, etc.) the Union is the only group where you have a strong voice and the exclusive ability to negotiate on behalf of employees. A member mentioned that a big recruitment effort may be highlighting the accomplishments and Big Wins the Union has had (transit subsidy, flexitime, student loan repayment, etc.).

\*\*\*\*\*

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed. The January 28, 2016 General Membership Meeting was adjourned at 1:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kirk Mensah  
Secretary  
AFGE Local 476