



American Federation of Government Employees

Local 476

Affiliated with AFL-CIO

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

September 28, 2017

Brooke Mondale Auditorium

The following members of the Executive Board were present: Kirk Mensah (Secretary), Monique Love (Treasurer), and Ashaki Robinson Johns (President). The positions of 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents are currently vacant.

Kirk Mensah (Secretary) called the meeting to order at 12:10pm. A quorum of 25+ members was not reached for today's business as such, both the July Minutes and the Treasurer's Report were not approved. Kirk welcomed new members and regular members.

Audit Committee – Ashaki stated that Local 476 has not had an audit in the past three year's and with elections coming up, an audit is required. She stated that the local needs at least three people on the committee to go through four years of financials. She stated that it will be cheaper for the local to do it in house as opposed to contracting out accounting services. Cynthia Carter volunteered to be on the committee. Two other members also volunteered but failed to give their information to Monique Local 476's treasurer.

Steward's Report – Chief Stewardess - Cynthia Carter welcomed members and brief members on two specific issues that are coming up within the local. That is, the Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) and absent without leave (AWOL). Cynthia also reminded members about Local 476's Holiday party. Cynthia stated that the Holiday party is scheduled for December 15, 2017 from 9pm – 1am at the Camelot in Upper Marlboro which was the same location as last year. Cynthia continued that member tickets are free and guest tickets are \$40 each. Members may begin picking up tickets on November 13 – December 11.

Cynthia moved on to the SLRPS and the Department's recent denial of applications. She stated that some of the denials have merit and some do not. For example, denying applications for omitting the guarantor's address and not including page 1 of the two-page agreement. Cynthia stated those applications that have been denied without merit will be addressed through the grievance process. She asked employees to come to the union office if they have any other issues not mentioned regarding the SLRP. Cynthia then addressed AWOL. Cynthia stated that the union has been receiving numerous cases involving AWOL and although, per OPM, AWOL is not itself a disciplinary action, it can be used as a basis for disciplinary action. She reminded employees to be mindful of the leave process and follow it. That is, notifying managers no later than 1 hour

after core hours begin which is by 10:30 am. Further, Cynthia advised that employees may be found to be AWOL if they are at work but absent from their duty station.

Ashaki briefly spoke on local issues, namely First Vice-President Eddie Eitches' absence from general membership meetings. Ashaki stated that charges were filed against Eddie due to inappropriate behavior. AFGC District 14 preferred the charges against Eddie including:

- Engaging in conduct unbecoming of a union member,
- Negligence, incompetence or insubordination in performance of official duties or refusal to perform duties as assigned, and
- Making known the business of any affiliate of the Federation to management officials.

Ashaki stated there was a trial on June 26, 2017 before an independent arbitrator. The arbitrator recommended and the AFGC National President Cox upheld including barring Eddie from holding elective office for life and barring Eddie from membership in any local for four years. Ashaki stated that if members are looking for more specific details to email her directly.

Council 222 Convention – Kirk stated that Council's convention was held from August 6 -11, 2017 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where the Council were voted for new officers. The new officers included Holly Salamido, President, Ashaki Executive Vice President, Kirk Treasurer, and Lorraine Chambers, Secretary.

Local 476 Election Committee – Kirk informed the members that elections will be held in November for all executive board positions and delegates and positions carry three-year terms. The positions include President, First Vice-President, Second-Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. In addition, 3 delegate and 3 alternate delegate positions will be up for election. The election committee must be comprised of at least three people and the committee currently has two, Devan Hamilton and Evelyn Smith-Florence. Kirk informed the members that the local contracts with a contractor to conduct the election and the committee is there to ensure the contractor is abiding by the rules in the by-laws. Kirk asked for at least one more volunteer to serve on the election committee. Elizabeth Cochran volunteered to be the third member of the election committee.

Update on HUD wide Union Issues

Mentoring and Coaching Negotiations – Kirk informed members that the Council completed negotiations for the Mentoring and Coaching program. The team included Ashaki as Chief Negotiator, Kirk, Sylloris Lampkin from Atlanta, and Tracy Vargas from Oklahoma. The supplemental included employee safeguards such as:

- All employees will be eligible to become a mentor or coach provided they meet the selection criteria,
- Any employee that requests a mentor or coach shall receive one,
- Mentor and Coaching sessions will be confidential,
- Participation may be used to fulfill EPESS requirements, and

- No adverse impact regarding telework, reasonable accommodations, AWS, leave, etc.

A question was asked regarding training and time allotted. Kirk informed the member that employees will be allowed training hours to meet with their mentor or coach.

Kirk asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made to adjourn the September 28, 2017 meeting at 12:47 p.m. The motion was seconded and the meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kirk Mensah
Secretary
AFGE Local 476