

UUP Oneonta Executive Board Meeting Minutes:  
Thursday, March 14, 2024, 12 PM, Le Cafe

Present

Le Cafe: Shirley Clark, Teresa DeSantis, Rachel Germain, Jeri Anne Jerminario, Penina Kamina, Achim Koeddermann, Chris Sielaff, Bill Simons, Loraine Tyler, Rich Tyler, and Gary Wickham

Zoom: Ron Bishop, Mark Ferrara, Melissa Lavin, Mike McAvoy, Geoffrey O'Shea, Nancy Simons, Matt Unangst, and Ed Wesnofske

I. Acting President's Welcome: Shirley Clark

- A. The Meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM.
- B. Executive Board members were thanked for their service.

II. Acting President's Report: Shirley Clark presented a detailed written report, much of which appears below. In addition, she summarized major points orally:

- A. **21<sup>st</sup> Annual Legislative Forum sponsored by the Catskill Regional Teachers Center - February 8, 2024.** Shirley was invited to attend the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Legislative Forum on February 8, 2024 as Acting Oneonta UUP Chapter President. The event was hosted by Aaron Sorensen from the Catskill Regional Teachers Center. There were many teachers from the region present and Assembly Members Chris Tague and Joseph Angelino. Other Legislators were available via Zoom- in particular Assembly Member Brian Miller and Senator Peter Oberacker.

Most of the conversation revolved around Health Care and Retirees. There are bills in the assembly and senate that would reduce or harm the health care benefits of public employees who worked hard for the benefits and retired. There are also bills that prohibit the diminution of health insurance benefits of public employee retirees and their dependents including reducing the employer's contributions for such insurance. There are state agencies, municipalities, school districts, and public authorities and commissions all affected by these bills.

UUP must remain vigilant and contact our Legislators so our fellow public employees in retirement can rest assured that their benefits remain intact.

Also discussed at length was Tier 6 and how terribly flawed that Tier is for State Employees. We need our legislators to make changes to Tier 6 and have it (as well as Tier 5) mirror Tier 4.

Shirley asked the Legislators if money appropriated to SUNY during the legislative process could be earmarked specifically for distressed SUNY campuses.

Shirley was hoping more Legislators would be in person at this meeting, but Zoom participations reflects the impact of Covid.

- B. **Department Representative Meeting – Membership Development Officers – February 14, 2024.** Oneonta Chapter Membership Development Officers, Rachel Germain and Matthew Unangst had a successful Department Representative Luncheon on February 14, 2024. One of the items brought to our attention was the lack of Union Bulletin Boards in some areas on campus.

At the recent Labor Management Meeting, UUP started the conversation, noting areas that lack these boards and the union is hoping to rectify these situations.

If anyone knows of areas with outdated or no bulletin boards – please contact Rachel Germain at [Rachel.germain@oneonta.edu](mailto:Rachel.germain@oneonta.edu) or Matthew Unangst at [Matthew.Unangst@oneonta.edu](mailto:Matthew.Unangst@oneonta.edu)

- C. **UUP Advocacy Day – March 4-5 Albany.** Shirley attended UUP Advocacy Day March 4-5 in Albany to pursue legislative initiatives for our workplace and communities in Healthcare, Education, Accessibility, Leadership and Sustainability.

This year UUP advocated for \$139 Million to go to the 18 distressed SUNY Campuses to close their budget deficits. These 18 SUNY Campuses include: Albany, Brockport, Buffalo State, Canton, Cobleskill, Cortland, Delhi, ESF, Fredonia, Geneseo, Morrisville, New Paltz, Old Westbury, Oneonta, Oswego, Plattsburgh, Potsdam and Purchase. UUP asked for an additional \$110 Million across all SUNY Campuses to go towards enhancing academic programs and student services.

UUP strongly opposes the closure of SUNY Downstate. We spoke with legislators to urge them to support of the following bills S.6956 (Myrie) and A.7546 (Cunningham), which provides for a sustainability plan for SUNY Downstate. Downstate needs operating support for the hospital while it undergoes capital improvements and well as additional investments for perinatal care and infant morbidity.

Closing SUNY Downstate would devastate the Brooklyn community and effect mainly patients that are low-income, people of color and immigrants. Please fill out a letter of support and send to your legislators now: [United University Professions - Action Network](#).

UUP asked for restoration of \$175 Million for the three SUNY public teaching hospitals to provide coverage of employee fringe benefits and debt service payments.

\$20 Million to protect and expand the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) as well as \$5 Million to support the Pre-Medical Opportunity Program. Establish the Mental Health Education Opportunity Program (MHEOP).

The advocacy group led by Jeri O’Bryan-Losee, from Statewide, met with Senators Joseph Griffo (District 53) and Peter Oberacker (District 51). Stephen Hinkle from SUNY Morrisville and Penina Kamina from SUNY Oneonta were part of our group. The meeting with Senator Griffo was positive on all the asks for SUNY Campuses, except that UUP perceived lack of support from him on SUNY Downstate. Professor Kamina urged the senator to reconsider his position and advocated passionately on behalf of the SUNY Downstate community. Next up was meeting with Senator Peter Oberacker, who reflected a more of a positive outlook for SUNY Downstate. Senator Oberacker is strong in his support for SUNY campuses as he represents 5 in his district. At the end of our meeting with Senator Oberacker, conversation shifted into healthcare, and he was committed to provide our District with accessible quality care.

- D. **New Employee Meet and Greet – Membership Development Officer – March 7, 2024**

Our Oneonta Chapter Membership Development Officer, Rachel Germain, had a successful New Employee Meet and Greet on March 7, 2024, in Craven Lounge, Morris Complex. It was positive to meet individuals face to face and have conversations outside of work workplace activities.

- E. **Joint Labor-Management Health and Housing Survey.** In response to rising concerns about healthcare cost and access, our UUP Oneonta Chapter is continuing its work on a SUNY Oneonta survey on the topic of healthcare and housing access. In a smaller working group, consisting of Bill Simons, Gary Wickham and Shirley, a comprehensive Health and Housing Survey was crafted for presentation to Management at the next Labor-Management Meeting.
- G. **Compensation Committee Report.** On February 27, UUP Oneonta's compensation team, Mark Ferrara, Chris Sielaff and Shirley Clark, met with the Management team, represented by President Cardelle, Dia Carleton and Julie Piscitello. UUP will continue to meet with management this semester to address compensation issues affecting UUP members.
- H. **Upcoming Events.**
  - (i) Performance Programs: Professional Development and Advancement – March 21, 2024, Noon-1pm – Morris Hall – Otsego Grille
  - (ii) Critical Decisions: Retirement & Healthcare Considerations for UUP Members – April 4, 2024, Noon-1pm - Morris Hall – Otsego Grille
  - (iii) May UUP Picnic – May 11, 2024, 11am – 4pm – College Camp
  - (iv) Meeting with Senator Peter Oberacker on May 2, 2024, at 9:30 AM to discuss support for SUNY Oneonta and Higher Education Initiatives. Shirley will attend and invited others to join by contacting her at [clarksa12@gmail.com](mailto:clarksa12@gmail.com).
  - (v) Delegate Assembly -April 12-13, 2024, in Saratoga Springs, NY at the Saratoga Hilton- will include the Acting President and a full Oneonta delegation.

### III. **CWA Assistant – Work Hours**

- A. A motion was made and seconded to increase the hours of UUP Chapter Assistant, Teresa DeSantis 17 to 21 hours per week.
- B. The motion was discussed with notation that this would significantly facilitate the work of organizing and meeting Chapter needs, including updating the database and creating a searchable archive.
- C. The motion passed unanimously.

### IV. Discussion recommendations

- A. Briefer reports would allow more questions, discussions, and deliberations. Distribution of reports prior to the meeting would facilitate this.
- B. UUP meetings during SUNY Oneonta formal student class breaks impedes attendance at UUP meetings for some, a circumstance to keep in mind when scheduling future meetings.
- C. The Chapter should widely distribute Individual Development Award (IDA) guidelines, including submission deadlines.

V. Vice President for Academics Report: Mark Ferrara

A. The report provided the following succinct updates about some of the issues in front of the Vice President for Academics:

- (i) Following up on the status of Full-Time Lecturer 3-year appointment letters; seeking closure on proposed clarifications to Renewal, Promotion and Tenure Agreement;
- (ii) requesting clarification on Part-Time loads and health benefits (3 one-credit courses and a 3-credit course);
- (iii) advancing a proposal for a 3/3 (18-credit hour) load; expressing concern about the proposed changes to the absence policy in light of the rise in student absenteeism;
- (iv) and querying why some Red Dragon co-instructors do not have access to SCS results.

VI. Vice President for Professionals Report: Shirley Clark

A. It was noted that Shirley is currently serving as Acting President, and the position of Acting Vice President for Professionals remains unfilled.

VII. Treasurer's Monthly Report: Rich Tyler

- A. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report.
- B. The Treasurer's Report was discussed.
- C. The Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously.

VIII. Secretary's Minutes of February 8, 2024, Executive Board Meeting: Bill Simons

- A. The minutes of the February 8, 2024, Executive Board Meeting were distributed. The Secretary noted that his report was distributed prior to the meeting with encouragement to read and forward suggested revisions prior to this meeting to expedite use of time. Based on the preceding, the Secretary asked that attendees change "noted" to "note" on II E.
- B. A motion was made and seconded to approved the Secretary's Minutes of the February 8, 2024, Executive Board Meeting with the change noted above.
- C. The Secretary's minutes were discussed.
- D. With the revision cited, the Secretary's minutes were approved unanimously.

IX. Officer for Contingents Report: Gary Wickham

A. A coffee hour focused on Contingents — but open to the Chapter membership — is scheduled for Thursday, April 11th- Milne Library, 3P-4:30P, Room 102A.

X. Health/Safety Officer Report: Ron Bishop

- A. It has been reported that custodians have been instructed not to pick up the contents of waste baskets in offices. Such a practice would potentially impact health.
- B. Please contact UUP Health/Safety Officer if trash is not being picked up in your office.

XI. Upcoming Events Announcements, Officer for Special Events and Retirees; Loraine Tyler

- A. Details concerning future coffees, the traditional end of spring semester Chapter party (with brief meeting), and the Executive Board dinner were discussed.
- B. Postings on the UUP Oneonta website as well as list serve communications will provide reminders and information concerning Chapter events.

XII. There was discussion of whether Chapter President Rob Compton, currently on leave, will be returning as UUP Oneonta President.

XIII. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer Report: Penina Kamina

- A. Spring UUP Oneonta DEI Meeting dates are March 29, 2024 at 12-1PM
- B. The DEI Chair has sent information pertaining to upcoming meetings to the following committee members: John Chiang, Ashley Rincon, and Jaida Sweeney.
- C. SUNY's plan to close SUNY Downstate University Hospital would have far-reaching implications. The teaching hospital's closure would create havoc on health care services in Brooklyn and the wellbeing of the community.
- D. The closing of SUNY Downstate University Hospital would also have serious negative consequences for UUP.
- E. Shuttering Downstate hospital could hinder the development of a diverse health care workforce and affect medical research and innovation.
- F. There is the potential for major public health risks should Downstate close.
- G. UUP is committed to the campaign to save Downstate.

XIV. Due to schedule contingencies, moving the next Ex Bd meeting to Thursday, April 25, at 10 PM, prior to the Noon Chapter meeting, was proposed.

XV. Meeting adjourned 1:29 PM.

Submitted by William Simons *William Simons*, Secretary