

United Teachers of Dade
2200 Biscayne Boulevard
Miami, Florida 33137

Council of Building Stewards Meeting
October 18, 2007

Unapproved Minutes

This regular meeting of the UTD Council of Stewards was called to order by President Aronowitz at approximately 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Aronowitz.

Adoption of Agenda: It was moved and properly seconded by Jack Hunter to adopt the Agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Adoption of Minutes: It was moved and properly seconded by Ingrid Robledo to adopt the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Agenda

President's Report

President Aronowitz announced that we will have a special item on the agenda at each Council of Building Stewards meeting in order for us to participate in legislative issues affecting all Unions and Union members. President Aronowitz acknowledged Maggie Palmer, Christine Brownslow and Thomas Nunn for their participation in the Florida AFL-CIO convention. President Aronowitz also informed that Fedrick C. Ingram is now a member of the Florida AFL-CIO Executive Board.

Coalition of Immokalee Workers

President Aronowitz introduced Mr. Leonel Perez, Coalition of Immokalee Workers and Mr. Marc Rodriguez, Student Farm Worker Alliance to the Council of Building Stewards.

Mr. Perez addressed the Council of Building Stewards (with the help of Mr. Rodriguez translating) stating that workers have been making the same salary for the past 30-years; each bucket they pick of tomatoes weighs 32 pounds, and they only get paid 45 cents for each bucket. Mr. Perez stated that on average, tomato pickers make about \$10,000 a year, and at this rate workers have to pick 25 tons of tomatoes just to earn the minimum wage in a typical 10-hour day. Mr. Perez stated that they addressing the Council of Building Stewards, in order to get support and invite union members to participate in the March to the Burger King Headquarters on November 30th. Mr. Perez stated that Burger King has publicly rejected the coalition demands to work together and address the human rights crisis in its tomato supply chain.

It was moved by Christine Brownslow and seconded by Peter Hill to support the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIC) in their struggle for better wages and to also participate in the Fair Food Campaign. Motion carried.

President Aronowitz thanked the UTD members who signed up and waited for hours to speak at the School Board Meeting which was held yesterday, October 17th: Albert Stellmach, Marilyn Bellamy, Shawn Beightol and Rory Robinson.

Teacher Requirements vs. Recommendations

President Aronowitz requested that Stewards read the letter which is in their Council folder, regarding teacher requirements vs. recommendations at a faculty meeting. President Aronowitz reported that next week we will have a survey on the UTD Web site for members addressing these issues. President Aronowitz expects the problems to be resolved, but if our objectives are not met, we will be addressing the issue at the November School Board meeting. President Aronowitz stated the UTD leadership feels strongly on two issues: Academic freedom and the value of teachers as the professional decision makers in their classrooms.

Question/Answer session followed

Legislative Update –Hold Education Harmless

President Aronowitz reported that there is a Budget shortfall, and asked Stewards to take part in the “E-activity” and E-mail the Governor, and the Dade legislative delegation asking them to hold education harmless. President Aronowitz stated that it is very important that every one participate in our message including parents, and community groups.

Question/Answer session followed

Fernando Egea, Carol Haney and David Moss elected to Steward Financial Oversight Committee

Mr. Jack Hunter, member, Internal Functions Committee explained the voting/ballot information regarding the election process for the Steward FOC committee. Mr. Hunter asked the four candidates to address the Council: Carol Haney, David Moss, Fernando Egea and Patty Rutker.

After all of the ballots were counted by members of the Internal Functions committee the results were announced: Dr. Fernando Egea, Mr. David Moss and Ms. Carol Haney were elected to serve on the Steward Financial Oversight Committee.

Secretary/Treasurer’s Report: Fedrick C. Ingram

Secretary/Treasurer Ingram thanked the applicants of the Steward Financial Oversight Committee, on their willingness to volunteer their time, and effort.

UTD Audit Update

Secretary/Treasurer Ingram reported that our audit is going well. The auditors (Rick Covert, of Morrison, Brown, Argiz and Farra, LLP) have had full access to all pertinent records, and all reports. Mr. Ingram stated that the target date for the conclusion of the Audit is in November, at which time the auditors will do a presentation to the Steward Financial Oversight Committee, Executive Board and the Council of Building Stewards.

Mr. Ingram reiterated to the Council of Building Stewards that no financial management reports can be done, until the auditors conclude the audit.

Questions/Answer session followed

Update on UTD Back Lot Property

Secretary/Treasurer Ingram reported that UTD has taken steps to reacquire the back lot property. Lawyers for UTD and AFT have filed papers against two corporations currently in possession of the back lot. UTD President Karen Aronowitz insisted that if payment deadlines were missed, steps for repossession would be immediately triggered or the developer would have to make an immediate payment of \$11 million which includes interest owed. When the September payment was not made, attorneys acting on behalf of the Union took immediate action to reacquire the property and return the title to United Teachers of Dade.

Secretary/Treasurer Ingram informed the Council of Building Stewards, that once the property is retitled, UTD will assume all costs of the property including taxes and insurance.

First Vice President's Report: Artie Leichner

Update from the Field

First Vice President Leichner reported on his school visitations indicating that he has learned from colleagues that sometimes they are being observed ten times. Mr. Leichner reported that he has scheduled a meeting with M-DCPS officials regarding this situation and the issue regarding testing and assessments.

Beatriz Jorva, Holmes Braddock Senior High School

Mr. Leichner reported of the extensive mildew problems he encountered when he visited Holmes Braddock Senior, which was making a lot of the faculty sick.

Ms. Jorva addressed the Council of Building Stewards, stating that the visit by Artie had a tremendous impact on the faculty. As a result, the problem was immediately reported to M-DCPS, and she used this opportunity as a recruiting tool for membership.

Question/Answer Session

UTD Adopts Resolution from Fine Arts Teachers

Mr. Albert Stellmach read to the Council of Building Stewards the resolution of the Fine Arts Teachers, which highlights problems faced by the fine art teachers.

It was moved by Albert Stellmach and seconded by Esther Garvett to adopt the resolution. After questions were answered it was moved by Peter Hill and properly seconded to call the question on Adoption of Resolution from Fine Arts Teachers. The question was called, and the motion to adopt the Fine Arts Teacher resolution carried.

Adjournment

It was moved by Valarie Johnson and properly seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Karen Aronowitz
President

Fedrick C. Ingram
Secretary/Treasurer