

United Teachers of Dade
2200 Biscayne Boulevard
Miami, Florida 33137

Council of Building Stewards Meeting
September 17, 2009

Approved Minutes

This regular meeting of the UTD Council of Stewards was called to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. by President Karen Aronowitz. Mr. Steve Goldman led the Pledge of Allegiance. President Aronowitz asked for a moment of silence on behalf of Juan Carlos Rivera, the student killed at Coral Gables Senior High School.

Agenda: It was moved by Esther Garvett and properly seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. After discussion, motion carried.

Minutes: It was moved by Thomas Nunn and properly seconded to adopt the minutes of May 21, 2009 as presented. After discussion, motion carried.

Special Items:

Mr. Stephen Edenbaum, Vice President, Modern Mortgage, addressed the Council of Stewards stating that he has been proving benefits to teachers for the past several years, including the New York Teachers, and UFT, as well as the Fire Fighters Union. Mr. Edenbaum reminded the Council that first-time home buyers can qualify for an \$8000 incentive. If Stewards are interested, they are asked to contact Mr. Edenbaum at Modern Mortgage.

Ms. Phyllis Compton, President of the UTD Retired Teachers Chapter informed the Council of a retirement workshop in January; information will be placed in the Stewards folders. Ms. Compton also reminded Stewards that there is link on the UTD Website for the Retired Teachers Chapter and information on the workshop will be available.

President's Report: Karen Aronowitz

President Aronowitz reminded the Council of Stewards that attendance cards will be distributed before the meeting is adjourned and the cards will then be collected.

Collective Bargaining Update

President Aronowitz stated that the 2-3 days of salary will be repaid October 23rd, with guaranteed tax anticipation notes negotiated by UTD. President Aronowitz reminded the Council of Stewards that because of negotiations by UTD, no present employee can be let go before the repayment. She added that although we are seeing thousands of workers being laid off in the City and County, she has received a commitment from the Superintendent that permanent teachers and permanent full-time clerical personnel will not be laid off this year. President Aronowitz reminded the Council of Stewards that the positions of the clericals paid by the capital side of the budget were in jeopardy – those clerical were slated to be RIF'd following the repayment of the days. However, UTD would not agree to settle other issues until all of our clericals were protected from lay-offs this year.

President Aronowitz next addressed UTD's negotiations for health care; we have managed to hold the line for four years despite rising premiums. She noted that Miami-Dade County has the most expensive insurance in the country. UTD has contacted the research team from AFT to analyze the data that we received from the district. As we negotiate, we will continue to fight to secure 100% employee paid health insurance, and we will continue to fight to contain the costs for dependent coverage.

President Aronowitz stated that there is a great deal of tension in waiting during any negotiation because people want to take action. Despite the frustration, she asked stewards to let members know that strength now is important -- waiting is part of what we need to do as part of negotiations.

IPEGS, FAIR Assessments and Focus Calendars

President Aronowitz announced that we had over 250 Stewards attend the IPEGS training sessions, and make-up sessions will be scheduled for those Stewards who were not able to attend.

President Aronowitz then reviewed the "Teacher Requirements vs. Recommendations" letter which was distributed. This letter contains important information to clarify issues for members, and should be read during the ten minute faculty meeting.

President Aronowitz also thanked the Stewards and members who completed the survey; we will continue to accept the surveys through September 25th, so that we can have the results for the October 3rd Council meeting.

Stewards were asked to write any additional questions on their yellow card and return them at the end of the meeting; a Staff person from UTD will respond to your issues or concerns.

Membership

President Aronowitz announced that we will begin the membership raffles with the November Council of Stewards meetings- cards submitted at the November Council meeting will go into the next Council of Stewards meeting for the raffle.

President Aronowitz acknowledged, Mr. Robert Sluzis, Ms. Cassandra Holmes, and Dr. Smith-Williams of Eneida Hartner Elementary School for bringing new membership cards, and asked them to share their success tips. Mr. Sluzis stated that one of the best ways to get membership is to stay positive and be in constant contact with the Staff in the school and give information. Mr. Sluzis stated that he always reminds his Staff that we need to stand together, and there is strength in numbers.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Fedrick C. Ingram

Update on the UTD Audit

President Aronowitz informed the Council of Stewards that in keeping with best practices, we have changed the auditing firms this year as recommended. The new firm is Bellows and Associates.

Secretary/Treasurer Ingram stated that the firm of Bellows and Associates is conducting the audit, they have had full access to accounts payable, personnel files, and all of our affiliates have been contacted. Secretary/Treasurer Ingram reported that we will have the audit completed and ready for review by the Financial Oversight Committee, Executive Board and Council of Stewards in November.

First Vice President Leichner began his report by saying that United Health Care made three billion dollars in profits and when it came for renewal, it asked for a 28% increase and then after negotiations, they asked for 22%. Mr. Leichner stated that in Miami, United has not been monitoring all of the extra testing and they do not keep track of the costs. The districts proposal of being self-insured will allow us to know what the true cost is and monitor what really is going on. First Vice President Leichner asked Stewards to carefully read the "2009 Health Care FAQ" which is in the Council folders.

Mr. Leichner also stated that we have been informed that the air conditioning in after school care programs is being turned off. If this is going on in your site or you know of a school where this is happening, please contact the organizer immediately so we can bring it to the districts attention.

Question/Answer session followed.

President Aronowitz took this opportunity to reiterate to the Council of Stewards that the District's proposals so far were unacceptable, showed a lack of value for our members, and we are still in bargaining.

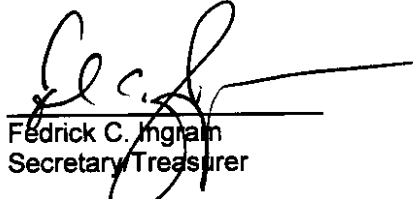
President Aronowitz also stated that she is aware that people are frustrated and getting tired of waiting, but we must continue to remain strong during these difficult times when we are seeing people in the county being laid-off and taking salary cuts. The time to be in the Union is now.

First Vice President Leichner also announced that we worked down the involuntary transfers to 196, and no Stewards were involuntarily transferred.

Adjournment

It was moved by Esther Garvett and properly seconded to adjourn the meeting. After discussion, motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.


Karen Aronowitz
President


Fredrick C. Ingrain
Secretary/Treasurer