



santa rosa junior college
All Faculty Association

*AFA is working for you.
The strength of faculty working together.*

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

October 25, 2023

(Approved by the Executive Council on November 8, 2023)

Executive Councilors present (noted by *):

* Sean Martin, <i>presiding</i>	* Wayne Downey	* Venona Orr	* Ivan Tircuit
Ashley Arnold	* Brenda Flyswithawks	* Jessy Paisley	Carlos Valencia
Marc Bojanowski	* Steven Kessler	* Salvador Rico	* Michelle van Aalst
* Bita Bookman	* Dawn Lukas	* Emily Schmidt	Patsy Young
* Anne Donegan	* Siobhan McGregor-Gordon	* Christie Soldate	

Negotiators/Appointed Positions present: Mark Ferguson

Staff members present: Stephanie Simons

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. in PC 641, on the Petaluma campus and via Zoom conferencing.

CLOSED SESSION REPORTS

1. **Negotiations Report**. This report and discussion were conducted in Closed Session.
2. **Conciliation/Grievance Report**. This report and discussion were conducted in Closed Session.
3. **Cabinet Report**. This report and discussion were conducted in Closed Session.

Closed Session adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

Open Session reconvened at 4:04 p.m.

MEMBER CONCERNS

1. **Commensurate pay for associate faculty**. A member asked if funding could be made available to pay associate faculty members to serve on District-wide committees, and for developing new curriculum. The member stated that associate faculty feel disenfranchised because having meaningful involvement requires working for free.
2. **Strengthen faculty voice at SRJC**. A member expressed concern about the recent dissonance between the two voices of the SRJC faculty bodies. They requested the two voices, Academic Senate and AFA, work together toward the common goal of strengthening the voice of faculty at SRJC. The member extended thanks to the Executive Council for representing all faculty at all sites by holding the Council meeting on the Petaluma Campus.

MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the October 11, 2023 Executive Council meeting (15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions). (Approved minutes are posted at <http://www.afa-srjc.org/minutes.shtml>).

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. FACCC Contract Membership Referendum

Sean explained that AFA is considering joining FACCC as a contract member. This requires the Executive Council to draft and send a referendum to the membership requesting their permission to join. At the October 11 meeting, the draft contract was shared with the Council. The AFA Cabinet suggested some

changes to the contract, which were shared with FACCC administrators, who accepted the changes. The Council was asked to discuss the contract, and decide if the Council will accept the contract as written.

- The contract with FACCC will begin after the referendum is approved by both the Executive Council and the membership.
- There will be a virtual townhall with FACCC representatives on February 1, 2024, if the referendum is approved by the Executive Council.
- The referendum, if approved by the Executive Council, will be presented to the membership on February 2, 2024.
- The item was opened to questions and comments.
- Questions & Comments
 - Q: Can you clarify the previous relationship AFA had with FACCC?
 - ⇒ A: AFA was previously a member of FACCC. AFA had some differences with FACCC leadership, in particular, board member representation. AFA's previous membership with FACCC allowed any faculty member in this district, regardless of union membership, to run for and be elected to the FACCC Board of Governors. The cost of AFA's membership in FACCC exceeded the available budget. The new membership category has each individual member of AFA paying dues directly to FACCC via payroll deduction. AFA will also receive additional benefits, including paid conference attendance.
 - ⇒ A: Contract faculty who are current FACCC members pay \$25 per month, so the cost to AFA members is a discounted rate.
 - ⇒ A: Full-time faculty and associate faculty FACCC dues will go down with the AFA contract membership. FACCC annual dues will be \$189 for full-time faculty (10 monthly installments of \$18.90), and \$63 for part-time faculty teaching at least 33% (installments made monthly only when working). Those teaching less than 33% will receive the benefits of membership without paying dues. AFA members will continue to pay regular dues to AFA for union membership.
 - Q: How would the board member be appointed by AFA?
 - ⇒ A: The Executive Council will vote on who to appoint, and that appointment would be open to any member of AFA.
 - Q: The cancellation clause has a very small window for the opt-out period. Can that be expanded?
 - ⇒ A: This is the same language for all contract members of FACCC. The last provision of the contract allows us to mutually change any part of the contract. This is the one provision we changed when we last canceled our membership. FACCC was very responsive, and collaborative during that process. FACCC is run by faculty at various Districts, and we have a very collegial working relationship. We can ask for that change, but it may not be feasible since it is common to all other contract membership agreements.
 - Q: The contract states we're entitled to an annual presentation or training. What type of training would be provided?
 - ⇒ A: We can ask FACCC to support us in trainings on CalSTRS, for example. FACCC is one of the key faculty advocates at CalSTRS. We support candidates for their board. We can ask FACCC to discuss legislative issues, steward small group visits in Sacramento with our legislative leaders, or FACCC can coordinate a local forum between legislative leaders and the faculty as a whole.
 - Q: Does FACCC represent faculty rights or 10 plus 1?
 - ⇒ A: FACCC represents faculty. The FACCC board includes both union leaders and Academic Senate leaders from across the state. FACCC often works collaboratively with unions, local Academic Senates, and the ASCCC. All faculty are eligible to be members of FACCC. It is the only organization that represents all community college faculty in California. AFA answers only to our faculty, versus other larger unions that represent many educational groups. Joining FACCC is a way to increase FACCC's influence (by expanding membership) and also expands AFA's representation at the state level. Joining FACCC doubles our advocacy at the legislative level, when combined with our legislative advocacy at CCCI. Our dues may help to create more representation from FACCC through the hiring of more advocate voices. If all community college faculty joined FACCC, faculty could have a stronger voice against the corporate interests impacting education today.
 - Q: Is this contract much improved from our original contract?
 - ⇒ A: Yes, it is much improved, and it contains the additional benefits of being able to appoint a representative, and solicit trainings and informational meetings from FACCC, in addition to financial incentives to attend meetings.
 - C: This is an improved contract with many benefits. Can we move forward with this today?

- A motion was made and seconded to move this Item to an Action Item (15 in favor).

2. AFA Branding: Logo Revision, Product Budget

- Sean explained that the AFA office staff designed several different logos for the Council to review as a part of the effort to revise AFA branding for marketing purposes. He reported that since there is a small surplus in the budget, there is an opportunity to request from the Council an allotment to create promotional materials. Sean reported that the Cabinet is recommending the Council support an initial investment of \$5000 for the promotional item package.
- Questions & Comments
 - The Councilors suggested t-shirts, hats, pens, buttons (big and small), stickers, and bumper stickers be considered for the promotional material package.
 - ⇒ A: A survey will be sent to the Executive Council to finalize a logo and promotional material package.
 - C: A Councilor requested that inventory be maintained at the AFA office for membership events, giveaways, and sales/fundraising beyond the initial giveaway period.
 - C: A Councilor commented that they would prefer the money be spent on redesigning the AFA website.
 - ⇒ A: Yes, that is an area of concern. The office staff is also working on redesigning the website, and the cost of that is included in the office staff payroll budget.
- A motion was made and seconded to move this Item to an Action Item (15 in favor).

COUNCIL PRESENTATION

1. Report on Member Concerns (Sean Martin, AFA President)

Sean presented a report detailing how Member Concerns made during the past year have been addressed. AFA receives dozens of concerns every month, and most are addressed as they are received. This presentation addressed only those brought to Executive Council meetings spanning the time period of Oct 2022 - Sept 2023. There were 38 member concerns in total.

- Zoom broadcast of Executive Council open session. Eight concerns requested AFA offer the Open Session on Zoom. Following the pandemic, it was uncertain if that practice would continue. AFA did choose to continue to offer open sessions on Zoom, and that will be continued for the foreseeable future at the discretion of the EC.
- Dental plan administrator. (8/31/22). In 2022, the District changed the dental plan billing service from Arrow to Redwood Health Services. There was a customer service issue with Redwood Health Services during the transition period. AFA spoke with the Fringe Benefits Committee at that time. Since then, no further complaints have been received, so the matter is considered closed. If there are more concerns, please bring them to the attention of an AFA Councilor.
- Anti-union sentiment at SRJC. (9/14/22). This is an ongoing issue for every union. In response, AFA has encouraged all appointees to district committees to address the sentiments with facts of what AFA does for the faculty. AFA created department liaisons to directly communicate with the faculty. AFA reinstated the practice of sending regular messages addressing what AFA is doing for the members.
- Parking fee for faculty. (9/14/22). Faculty are required to pay for parking, which is encoded in Article 19. At the discretion of the Executive Council, it could be asked in Closed Session that the Negotiations team open the article for negotiation. If the district was uninterested in a mutual opening of the article then we could use one of AFA's unilateral openers.
 - C: A member commented that faculty members should consider alternative transportation instead of purchasing parking passes. Parking spaces are not free. The college spends a lot of money to make those spaces. Parking is not a free resource and is not sustainable. The member would rather have the money spent on parking spaces go to fixing the Emeritus building and supporting students.
 - C: A member commented that they fully support the argument of sustainability, but countered that many associate faculty work at two or more institutions in one day, and it would not be possible to bike between the locations. They stated that until public transportation is available this continues to be an issue, and one that disproportionately affects associate faculty. It was suggested that parking should be made free, at least, to associate faculty.

- C: A member commented they would rather see AFA pay a lobbyist to work with the city to improve the bus routes between campuses, than purchase marketing materials. They feel their solution would be sustainable, while also helping associate faculty and students.
- Comments were not further addressed because the presentation was not open to discussion.
- Opportunities to support NBJwJ. (9/14/22). With AFA's financial support of North Bay Jobs with Justice (NBJwJ), AFA is asked and expected to participate in NBJwJ actions. All members of AFA also are encouraged to support NBJwJ actions. Steven Kessler has attended most of these meetings and will continue to make members aware of any actions in which AFA is invited to participate.
- AB 1856. (9/14/22). This bill allowed associate faculty to work up to 85%. AFA supported the bill along with CCCI and FACCC, however the bill was vetoed by the Governor.
- Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration. (10/12/22). A member offered an expression of gratitude for the negotiation of Indigenous People's Day and the Native American Center Coordinator position. AFA has and will continue to negotiate such positions.
- Clarification of the T.A. ratification. (10/12/22). A concern was voiced that it is unclear when voting on the Tentative Agreement (T.A.), that members are also voting on all of the MOUs leading up to the T.A. Sean explained that this is the normal process and purpose of the T.A. AFA negotiates with the District throughout the year, and these negotiated items become temporary contract language in the form of an MOU. They are integrated into the contract permanently after ratification of the T.A. AFA has made an initial step in providing clarification with the introduction of the T.A. infographic, and will endeavor to clearly communicate the elements of the T.A. in the future.
- C: The member that voiced the initial concern commented to provide clarification of their concern. They stated that there are two other pieces to their concern: (1) the way MOUs are presented on the ballot is difficult to understand, and (2) the member wants to vote individually on each MOU. Can AFA consider splitting them up?
- The comment was not further addressed because the presentation was not open for discussion.
- COVID-19. (Various dates). Sean summarized that there were many concerns about the evolving conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Those concerns continue, as COVID-19 is still present in the community. AFA will continue to work with the District to clarify what faculty can do to support students and ensure their personal safety.
- Hazard pay for faculty. (10/12/22). This was requested when faculty, mostly associate faculty, were working on campus during the pandemic. AFA was not successful in negotiating hazard pay with the District, but AFA did negotiate additional pay for the work of converting classes from in-person to online and back again.

There were many other member concerns to address, but the presentation was paused due to time constraints. Sean will continue to report on these items at a future meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

1. FACCC Contract Membership Referendum

- This item was moved from a Discussion Item.
- A motion was made and seconded stating that the Executive Council approves this contract, as written, and that the contract will be embedded as a portion of the referendum forwarded to the AFA membership in February which will request the membership vote to become a contract member of FACCC.
- The Council voted to approve the motion as stated (15 in favor).

2. AFA Branding: Logo Revision, Product Budget

- This item was moved from a Discussion Item.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve spending \$5000 on a promotional product package.
- A call was made for final discussion. There being none, a vote of the Council was conducted.
- The Council voted to approve a budget of \$5000 for promotional products (15 in favor).

OTHER REPORTS

1. President's Report. Sean presented a shortened narrative of his report.

Sean reported that Dr. Garcia invited Sean to discuss union concerns pertaining to shared governance. This is the first time AFA has been given this consideration, for which he is grateful. In the meeting, Sean was reassured by Dr. Garcia's commitment to process.

Of great interest to faculty is the nexus between the scope of bargaining, free speech, and bypassing in shared governance and other bodies on campus. AFA supports the free speech of faculty. AFA respects the work of faculty in shared governance and in the Academic Senate. But, all speech is subject to considerations of time, place and manner, limiting the context in which particular views on topics within the purview of the exclusive bargaining agent (i.e. AFA) can be presented. This idea does not repress one's free speech, but demands that such speech occur within a context that excludes non-faculty participation. Collaboration on, or discussion of, matters within the mandatory scope of representation with, or in the presence of District representatives, undermines all unit members' right to have these matters addressed by their elected exclusive bargaining agent in negotiations with the District. Shared governance bodies and open sessions of meetings at the college are not appropriate places to discuss matters within the mandatory scope of representation. AFA is willing to identify ways to support the appropriate expression of opinion on matters that fall within the scope of representation.

2. Treasurer's Report. This report was postponed due to time constraints.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Stephanie Simons.