

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**UUP Albany Chapter**  
**August 21, 2014**

**Attendees:** B. Benjamin, E. Briere, J. Collins, J. Gendron, M. Grosshandler, J. Harton, T. Hoey, M. Knee, D. LaFond, G. Landsman, C. Merbler, G. Petry, M. Seidel, R. Vives, B. Weaver, L. Wilder, L. Wittner and guest Katherine Latal.

**I. Minutes**

Minutes from the 7/17/14 meeting were moved by T. Hoey, seconded by L Wittner and approved unanimously less 3 abstentions.

**II. Review Labor Management Notes**

The committee discussed the importance of attending and providing feedback to the provost search firm at its forum 8/29/14. Important topics include: the U's academic mission should be in the forefront of all, the need for affordable, accessible higher ed, faculty control of the curriculum, the faculty role in determining course content and its delivery, online ed concerns. The search firm is finding appropriate candidates for our institution, but won't pick them, just provide recommendations.

**III. Officers' Reports** (more detailed written reports were provided prior to the meeting)

President: B. Benjamin reminded members of his email regarding upcoming events, a local Labor Day picnic, a statewide Labor Day parade in NYC, a march 9/21/14 in connection with a UN climate summit. Those attending should contact B. Benjamin for more information and to get UUP gear.

UUP has the opportunity to cosponsor a 9/16/14 lecture in the PAC main theater by lecturer and noted environmental advocate, Bill McKibbin. T. Hoey so moved, L. Wittner seconded and all were in favor of the co-sponsorship. B. Benjamin will confirm with Mary Ellen Mallia. Faculty should be encouraged to bring their classes.

Statewide is encouraging members to become more politically active in campaigns. If interested in volunteering, contact B. Benjamin via non-UAlbany email. In the past the chapter has worked with NYPIRG on voter registration and poll-watching in cooperation with the personnel office to assist students. The chapter may also be interested in facilitating Rock the Vote campaign. Since the NYPIRG chapter is no longer on campus, B. Benjamin will check to see who from that organization might provide assistance. Union dues cannot go to political activity (including paying legislative aides to help UUP, setting up meetings for outreach, media contact, fliers, acting on FOIL legislation, etc), but VOTE COPE donations can. Cards were distributed for those interested. UUP and NYSUT stand between us and anti-union legislation.

There have been some concern with Article 33 cases at UAlbany in recent years, two in the last year. B. Benjamin has asked the Academic Concerns Committee to consider the possibility of proposing the creation of a campus ombudsperson position specifically to work with tenure cases. This should be someone who can solve problems at the lowest level, is not

biased, is not in the line of review on the case and in whom the campus president has confidence. Seven years of work plus decades of education go into this process and the results impact career. The review process must be fair. If members have examples from other institutions, they should share these with B. Benjamin.

VP for Professionals: T. Hoey requested funding for the Professional Concerns Committee to offer a workshop on evaluation training with M. Seidel. C. Merbler so moved, G. Petry seconded and all approved.

It was proposed that UUP offer a monthly film series on matters of interest to our chapter and our members. L. Wittner and colleagues who teach in related areas (Political Science, Public Policy, Philosophy, Journalism, etc.) could facilitate discussions following the films. Besides UAlbany, we could invite Albany Law and other area schools' students and faculty and the public into the discussions. To assist in advertising, website trailers could be used as well as posting on the U's calendar and emails introducing films and providing some relevant thought material. The US Senate is voting on whether corporations should have the rights of a citizen to make large candidate contributions, effectively using their significant financial resources to affect legislation. It was suggested UUP co-sponsor with departments. B. Weaver moved to support a monthly film series (monetary support as needed for an appropriately equipped room and light refreshments), J. Collins seconded, and all approved. Film recommendations should be sent to T. Hoey.

T. Hoey recently attended a Leadership Institute and recommends it to others. He also went to a convention in May with AFL/CIO, UUP and NYSUT where 1000+ delegates determined candidate endorsements. Philippe Abraham is now an at large member of the NYSUT Board of Directors (2 new higher ed representatives were recently added).

VP for Academics: B. Trachtenberg's report was provided prior to the meeting. B. Benjamin reiterated the importance of participating in the provost search forum 8/29/14.

VP for Contingents: R. Vives thanked all for the recognition of M. Simpson at the last meeting. R. Vives moved that UUP provide \$200 for a homecoming tailgate (contingent on discussion with R. See regarding allocating funds properly), L. Wittner seconded, and all were in favor. There was a suggestion that the UPP banner be posted higher this year.

#### **IV. New Business**

- a) Chapter Election Guidelines: Kate Latal, chair of the Elections Committee, was charged with creating a proposal for how the chapter handles elections and provided that for constructive feedback to take back to the committee. They will provide a final document for discussion and vote at the September meeting. Elections take place in spring on a two-year cycle. Chapter election procedures are governed by a broader set of election policies and procedures established by UUP in compliance with state and federal labor law. These chapter procedures are a way for us to set up a timeline to encourage maximum participation, and to ensure timeliness and fairness to all candidates who choose to stand for election. The proposal suggests that an Elections Committee will serve as the principal source of information about elections throughout the process so that candidates

need not work through officers. The committee would like to get more people involved. We should all consider how best to recruit new activists, making certain that everyone understands that they can stand in the election. Using the spring general members meeting as the candidates' forum was discussed. Additional suggestions should go to K. Latal.

- b) "Tone" of Chapter Engagement with Management: Administration suggested UUP's "tone" is, at times, antagonistic. This may stem in part from a frustration over repeated requests for items that do not get resolved in Labor Management meetings, or management answers that seem dismissive. B. Benjamin asked that we take the issue seriously, and asked for feedback on ways in which our tone might become more collaborative. He suggested that we might work on tone, but without compromising our principles, and without relinquishing our role of providing a critical voice to represent the concerns of employees where needed. UUP recognizes and is encouraged by the fact that this administration is interested in collaboration. Administration seems to value events, ceremonies, campus clean-up and commencement. To boost attendance here, members suggested we add such events to the UUP newsletter. Members also suggested UUP members wear UUP gear to show how many in the union support the U at these events and clarify how many from UUP regularly request for funds from the legislature on behalf of the U. The newsletter can thank administration when it does something that we applaud. It was also noted, however, that there is an inherent antagonism between labor and management that cannot be ignored. We should strive to be polite, and cooperative, but we should not compromise our beliefs.
- c) The chapter briefly reviewed the projected calendar.
- d) Fall DA sign-up information is needed. Kelly will send out meeting dates for EC and LM meetings.
- e) E. Briere and E Warnke chair the Membership Committee and plan to get department reps working early, bulletin board materials and information about the General Members Meeting 9/4 out, etc.
- f) Contingents and Women's Committees surveys should be out early this semester.
- g) UUP committee membership is a 2 year term and can roll from the past year. Committees are encouraged to add new members. Email B. Benjamin about changes in committee membership.
- h) **UUP payment for Kelly's annual parking pass was moved by J. Harton, seconded by T. Hoey and approved by all.**

Meeting adjourned 2:00pm.

Minutes submitted by J Harton.