



Help us build a strong Adjunct Faculty Organization and a Better College

Adjunct Faculty Organization News

HFCC-AFO
AFT, AFL-CIO
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Super Majority of HFCC Adjuncts Approve First Contract

A dream that began two and a half years ago became a reality on Monday evening May 18 when the Henry Ford Community College Board of Trustees voted unanimously to accept the contract a Board-appointed team had negotiated with the HFCC Adjunct Faculty Organization. A week earlier (on Monday, May 11), the AFO Elections Committee certified that an overwhelming majority of AFO members had agreed with the AFO Executive Board's strong recommendation that the tentative agreement be ratified. Out of 269 ballots received prior to the noon May 11 deadline, 259 (98%) were "yes" votes against only five "no" votes. (Five ballots were rejected by the Elections Committee for technical reasons.) Most provisions of the two-year agreement will go into effect at the beginning of the Summer term.

Over the next few weeks, bargaining committee chair Tom Anderson and his team will continue to work with the administration side to put the contract into a publishable format. That will be followed by a signing ceremony and the document will then be posted on the AFO website (HFCC-AFO.org). Hard copies of



Elections Committee members Lisa Weltman, Renee Givens, and Pete Grant verify eligibility and count ballots with the assistance of volunteer Zanib Macki as AFO members look on.

the contract will be made available to AFO members upon request.

A document circulated during the ratification process as "Tentative Agreement Highlights" has been re-titled "First Contract Highlights" and has already been posted on the AFO website.

Anderson, who accepted the position of interim grievance officer in April, encourages every adjunct covered by the contract to become familiar with its provisions: "This contract is not going to be enforced by 15 or 20 stewards. Individual adjuncts should be aware of their rights and responsibilities as specified in the contract. If there is a problem, you

should bring it to the attention of the appropriate party. Experience tells us that most grievances can be resolved at the informal first stage and we also know that we have a much better chance of getting grievances resolved in our favor if they are dealt with constructively at the informal level. The fact is that implementing this first contract is going to require a learning curve on the part of individual instructors and associate deans. At least for now, we should assume that administrators are making a good faith effort to understand the contract and that they intend to adhere to its provisions."

Special General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, June 9
7:30 P.M.
Ghafari Conference Room
(T-123 of the Technology Building, behind the College Bookstore)

AGENDA

- **Constitutional amendments**
 - **Budget review and approval**
 - **Dues and agency fees by-law**
 - **Officer nominations and elections process**
- See back page for more information**

Inside this issue:

Budget and Dues Approval	<i>Back page</i>
Officer Nominations	<i>Back page</i>
Constitutional Amendments	<i>Back page</i>

First Year Budget and Dues Proposal to be Presented to Membership

Interim Treasurer Bill Breger and the Adjunct Faculty Organization (AFO) finance committee are busy finalizing a first year budget that will be presented to the membership for approval during a special general membership meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 9 at 7:30 p.m. (See notice on page one for meeting details.) Members will also be asked to approve a constitutional by-law that will establish the dues and agency fee structure for the AFO. The proposed budget and dues recommendations will be posted on the AFO website and announced via e-mail prior to the June 9th special membership meeting.

Up until now, the AFO has been supported by the American Federation of Teachers (national) and AFT-Michigan. Without the support of these affiliates, the AFO wouldn't exist. Interim AFO President Mary Beck said, "we won a fair and equitable first contract that will serve as a foundation for even better working conditions in the future because we had a dedicated bargaining team, an active and vocal membership, and the support of our sister unions and affiliates. We know that if the union movement does not grow that it will die and now that we have a contract, we have to support ourselves and pay our fair share in dues to the organizations that helped us get here." Beginning July 1, the AFO

will be expected to become self-supporting and will be required to pay dues to affiliated organizations.

Breger noted that these dues to affiliated organizations—the AFT, AFT-M, and the AFL-CIO—are the single largest line item in the budget. "That is typical of any local union," Breger said noting that other significant line items include "a salary for a staff organizer, office rent, legal and audit fees, postage, printing, education, and so on. We are also taking seriously a recommendation that most officers be paid a modest stipend. The reality is that managing our union requires a tremendous effort because of our large numbers and high turn-over. While we can't afford to pay the stipends officers of full-time unions receive, I think that we do need to pay a modest stipend that will show our officers that we appreciate their hard work and will send the right message to the next generation of AFO leaders."

Bill added, "based on our expected expenses, we think we can keep our dues at just under 2%. Agency fees will likely be a tenth of a percent or two less than membership dues." Membership dues are paid by "members in good standing" of the AFO while agency fees are paid by individuals covered by the contract who decline AFO membership. Only members have the right to vote in AFO elections and participate in AFO activities and membership meetings.

Floor to be Opened for Officer Nominations

The time has come to remove the "interim" tag from the titles of AFO officers. Assuming the constitutional amendments described in the last issue of the *AFO News* are approved (see sidebar), the AFO will have five elected officers—a president, a vice-president, a financial records secretary, a treasurer, and a recording secretary. The constitution (assuming it is amended as recommended) will specify that the president, financial records secretary, and recording secretary be elected to two-year terms during the general membership meeting to be held during the fall, 2009. The vice-president and treasurer will be elected to one year terms during the same meeting.

Under the constitution, officers can be nominated either at the general membership meeting just prior to the membership meeting during which the election will be finalized or by a petition signed by at least 20 members in good standing. The floor will be opened for officer nominations during the special general membership meeting to be held June 9 and members not nominated during that meeting who are interested in running for one of the five elected offices will have until September 15, 2009 to present petitions. The Elections Committee will oversee the election process that will begin September 20 and end on the date of the fall general membership meeting (which will likely be held in mid-October). The four individuals currently serving as interim officers (Mary Beck, Glenn O'Kray, Bill Breger, and Bill Norris) have all expressed an interest in continuing to serve the AFO, but encourage other interested individuals to run for office.

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Ballots to Approve Constitutional Amendments Posted

As described in more detail in the last issue of the *AFO News*, the Executive Board is recommending that the membership approve four amendments to the constitution: (1) reduce the number of meetings from four per year to two; (2) change the requirements for a quorum; (3) convert the Grievance Officer to an appointed position; and (4) add a new Executive Board position, "Secretary, Financial Records." Members will be asked to approve (or reject) the proposed amendments during the June 9 special membership meetings. Members who can not make the meeting can cast a ballot (digital copies are posted on the AFO website) by mail or it can be sent in by proxy.