



## MINUTES

UUP Binghamton Executive Board / General Meeting  
Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Executive Board: 11:30 a.m.- 11:50 a.m. General Members Meeting: 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
UJW-324

PRESENT: R. Andrews, S. Atav, B. Becker, T. Chadha, T. Chronopoulos, P. Doyle, L. Gallagher, C. Gelderloos, F. Goldman, C. Ignarri, D. Kunkel, A. Mathis, B. McGovern, R. Mess, A. Morris, T. Norton, C. Slocum, J. Starks, A. Wang, M. Weiland

Executive Board Members Attending Virtually: R. Collier, B. Polzin

GUESTS ATTENDING IN PERSON: C. Sielaff, Labor Relations Specialist, N. Alfarano, K. Cummings, L. Dong, M. Gunter, R. Harrison, P. Hill, M. Kelly, C. Konnick, A. Messersmith-Mars, J. Ponstingel, D. Schuster, P. Valenta, M. Vinluan, E. Wright

GUESTS ATTENDING REMOTELY: J. Kiereck, F. Reichert, S. Sigelman-Schwartz, B. Zelesnikar

Brendan McGovern called the meeting to order at approximately 11:34 a.m. and welcomed all to the December meeting.

### Executive Board Meeting

1. Approve Minutes from November 8, 2023, Executive Board Meeting (attached) (Brendan) Courtney Ignarri **MOVED TO APPROVE** the November 8, 2023, Executive Board / General Meeting Minutes. **SECONDED** by Robert Mess. **MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENT.** (19 AYE, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN)
2. Passing the Hat for the Sunshine Fund (Brendan)  
The Sunshine Fund was set up to use for purposes that would not be covered by the Chapter Allocation, such as get-well gifts and retirement gifts. The Executive Board has been passing the hat for the last nine years (unless meetings were held virtually). It is voluntary and up to members if they want to contribute or not. \$57.00 was collected at the December 6, 2023, meeting.
3. Treasurer's Report (Alan):  
Treasurer Alan Wang reported the Chapter received an allocation from Statewide and asked for comments or questions. Robert Mess **MOVED TO APPROVE** the November 2023, Monthly Treasurer's Report. **SECONDED** by Courtney Ignarri. **MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENT.** (19 AYE, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN)
4. New Business

- a. Expenditures
  - i. Motion for a one-time expenditure of up to \$2,500 for new items to show our UUP pride across campus. The specific design will be voted on by the e-board at a later date.  
 Courtney Ignarri thanked the Executive Board for their response to her survey. She received good suggestions, with some who thought the word “beg” in the design was a bit too aggressive. She explained she would like to give the company some type of a commitment rather than ask for free labor. It was asked if members would be able to purchase the items individually. Courtney explained it would be more of a type of give-away to those who are active in the mission of the union, such as Executive Board members, department representatives, and other volunteers, as there didn’t seem to be much interest in setting up a store, although the company does provide this option. A starting point would be an expenditure of \$2,500 of these items to support UUP’s mission on campus and depending on how things go, we may want to continue this or include it in the budget request. It was suggested in addition to T-shirts and bags, polo shirts be purchased similar to the green polos purchased in the past. Serdar and Brendan thanked Courtney, recognizing she has been working on this since last spring. Robet Mess **MOVED TO APPROVE** a one-time expenditure of up to \$2,500 for new items to show our UUP pride across campus. **SECONDED** by Serdar Atav. **MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENT.** (19 AYE, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN)
  - ii. Motion for one-time expenditure of up to \$300 for two portable Double-Sided Sandwich boards.  
 Brendan displayed a picture of a portable double-sided sandwich board and suggested the Chapter purchase two of these at a cost of approximately \$125 each for a total of up to \$300 to advertise Chapter events. It was suggested the boards be made of heavy material, so they do not fall over during inclement weather and to purchase them from a more union friendly retailer rather than Amazon. Troy Norton **MOVED TO APPROVE** the purchase of two boards. **SECONDED** by Patrick Doyle. **MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENT.** (19 AYE, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTAIN)

## General Meeting

1. President’s Report (Brendan)  
 See attached Report from UUP Chapter President Brendan McGovern.
2. Chapter Officers’ Report:
  - a. Acting Vice-President, Academics (Carl)  
 Acting Vice-President for Academics, Carl Gelderloos stated he had nothing to report.
  - b. Vice-President, Professionals (Claire)  
 Vice-President for Professionals, Claire Kovacs did not attend so no report was given.
  - c. Officer for Contingents (Renee)

Officer for Contingents, Renee Andrews stated she had nothing to report.

d. Officer for Retirees (Bob)

Officer for Retirees, Robert Mess reported a retiree luncheon was held on November 20, which was well attended. Drew Deskur from the Kopernik Observatory and Science Center presented, and people reported they enjoyed the talk. Robert added future luncheons are going to be moving back to the TAU room. He stated he received questions from members who retired between the old and new contract, and he was able to assist. He is now working with Dan Quackenbush on another matter concerning a former retiree.

3. Committee Reports:

a. Membership (Don)

Membership Development Officer, Donald Kunkel reported he continues to meet biweekly with new employees, and Courtney and Brendan have been helping him with presentations. The orientations continue to go well with a consistent stream of new employees who they welcome and educate so they can advocate for themselves. Donald added he is looking for help with membership development, explaining the NEO's are held biweekly and UUP is allocated one-half an hour to present. Whatever membership forms are completed, are dropped off at the UUP office for processing. It takes under an hour of time biweekly. If anyone is interested, Donald encouraged them to contact him. Donald stated he will be retiring in May, and his job has been posted. If anyone is interested, he encouraged members to go online and apply.

b. Communications (Kitty, Marjorie, Troy)

i. Chapter Notes biweekly newsletter (Marjorie)

Kitty Cummings reported the UUP Chapter Notes Newsletter is sent every couple of weeks, adding if anyone is not getting it to let her know. She stated there is a registration link to the Zoom sessions of the Executive Board / General Membership Meetings in order to have a record of who attended virtually. If anyone has questions or issues assessing it, contact Kitty or Troy Norton.

ii. Spring Newsletter (Troy)

Troy reported the Chapter has a new "OWL" device that will be used in Executive Board /General Membership Meetings and asked that attendees be cognizant of their volume when they are speaking and try to keep noise at a minimum. He stated there are five people in the chat room right now and thanked Courtney Ignarri and Sara Oliveira for their assistance. He added the spring semester Newsletter will have a timeline associated with it and it will be a bit more of tapping on people primarily on the Executive Board and general membership to identify what we want reflected in the Newsletter. He asked members to keep an eye out for more information regarding the spring semester Newsletter.

c. Outreach (Brendan)

Brendan announced Advocacy Day will be held in Albany on March 4 and 5, adding last year UUP was able to gain political clout that enabled getting more money into SUNY.

UUP was able to reach out and lean on the representatives it supported and they helped us. Please contact Brendan if you are interested in attending Advocacy Day and/or becoming involved in Outreach. Donald added UUP advocates for SUNY more than SUNY advocates for itself.

d. IDA (Don/Brendan)

Donald Kunkel reported the campus has a lot of Individual Development Award money and the campus IDA committee is expecting to receive applications. He added applicants can submit up to two applications totaling \$2,000 for reimbursement for conference registration, hotel, food, transportation expenses, and other funds used for a professional development activity. There are two separate award amounts that can be applied for: April 1, 2023-July 1, 2023 (Retroactive Period) and July 2, 2023-July 1, 2024. Serdar explained the information appears in Dateline and the UUP Chapter website, but no matter how many times the announcement appears, it is not as effective as personally announcing it to your colleagues and staff members. He encouraged people to spread the word. Donald, Brendan and Serdar are members of the campus IDA committee. The campus committee reviews all applications and makes its recommendations to Albany, where applications are reviewed again. In the past, the campus committee has had very few problems regarding its recommendations.

e. Events & Hospitality (Allie/Tejpreet)

Alexandra Messersmith-Mars reported the coffee and donuts event held today at the Decker School had a nice turnout. People from both Decker and Pharmacy attended. Conversations were held, and people had the opportunity to ask questions about things they are concerned about. People in Decker were thankful the union cares enough about them to go to them without them having to come to the main campus. Alexandra added there is another coffee and donuts event scheduled for tomorrow from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. in UUW-325. Plans will be made to continue visits to the Health Sciences campus and Downtown Center.

4. Chapter Business:

a. Lunch & Labor (Claire/Courtney)

Courtney Ignarri reported on the new 101/102 union group, with ten solid members attending. The group is reading a book from 1973 and discussing how to become engaged and invested in union and labor struggles. As it is UUP's 50-year anniversary, she added a Zoom may be held with founding members of UUP who will speak about their experiences. Next semester, discussion will be held on current labor struggles in the world.

b. Workshops (Brendan/Don)

Brendan announced Donald Kunkel will be leading a workshop titled *Self-Nominate for a Promotion or Salary Increase* presented by Brendan, Donald, and Chris Sielaff on Tuesday, December 12 at noon in UUW-324. The workshop is designed for UUP staff looking to self-nominate for a promotion or salary increase and will discuss the process and the documentation required to create a nomination packet. An opportunity will be provided to answer specific questions raised by participants. The link to register can be found in the latest issue of UUP Chapter Notes Newsletter.

5. New business/questions/comments/issues from the floor

- a. Discussion – Alarming nationwide trends of faculty, staff, and program cuts.  
(Casey/Andy)

Andrew Morris reported he was asked to backup Casey Slocum's initial request to discuss this topic, adding he belongs to a number of higher education newsletters and stressed the need to be aware of the nationwide trend of faculty, staff, program cuts, and college and university closures as a result in large part to declining enrollments. He stated there are cuts or pending cuts at Potsdam, Fredonia, University of Wisconsin, University of West Virginia, UNC Greensboro, and the College of Saint Rose in Albany will be closing at the end of the year. Across the country, institutions impacted by COVID and enrollment are looking at easy ways to eliminate costs, and we all should be aware of this. President Stenger stated at the November Labor Management Meeting that Binghamton University is not looking to grow undergraduate enrollment but is looking for growth in graduate enrollment. Discussion followed. Graduate enrollment funds stay directly on campus and graduate enrollment does not create as much of an issue for dorm and classroom space. An immediate concern on this campus is what are we going to do to promote this graduate enrollment growth, as we don't have enough staff to support the enrollment we currently have.

Tina Chronopoulos asked why a 10-month faculty member cannot donate leave time to another academic, but an academic can ask for leave donations. Labor Relations Specialist Chris Sielaff explained 10-month academics do not accrue vacation leave. Academics on a calendar-year obligation receive vacation leave and can donate this time. UUP has brought up the request to use sick leave for donations in bargaining, but the State wants it to remain tied to vacation time. This is a Statewide rule across all State bargaining units. He added leave donation is not the last stop for people in need of leave time. Usually after someone has exhausted leave donations, they can request presidential leave. The campus operates the leave donation system as a quasi-bank. If someone doesn't need the days allotted, the person who donated the leave will be asked if they would like the time to be returned or go to someone else in need. Alan Wang reminded people their vacation cap is at 40 days this year. Brendan added there are three members in need of leave donations and the names can be found on the Chapter Facebook page. Andrew Morris stated he knew of a person who was able to stay on the payroll for three years because of the Donation Leave Program. The person's family would have been in crisis without this Program.

Courtney Ignarri stated that plans were in place to make UUW-324 and UUW-325 into student office space. She added students rejected a plan to turn the rooms into student offices. A justification given for repurposing these rooms was that they are only used 20 percent of the time. Courtney urged more groups to requests these.

Serdar Atav asked for clarification of the nomination process for academic delegates and Vice President for Academics, as it is his understanding you can nominate yourself and anyone else. Donald Kunkel explained only one name is needed for the nomination, but five votes are needed in the actual election to become an academic delegate or Vice President for Academics. Only one vote is needed to become a member of the UUP Chapter Executive Board.

Carl Gelderloos asked if Management had provided information to UUP at the October Labor Management Meeting on knowledge of the rpk group. Brendan reported Management stated they had no knowledge of who the rpk group is or of them working with SUNY.

Tina Chronopoulos reported she has been asked by people with offices in the Library Tower who they should go to with questions and concerns regarding the windows in the Tower that don't close very well, are drafty, and may present a safety concern. Labor Relations Specialist, Chris Sielaff stated this issue does not have to wait until the next Labor Management meeting and suggested this be brought up to campus facilities, similar to issues with heat in a building. Carl Gelderloos added there was a meeting involving people with offices on the top two floors of the Library Tower, and window limitations will be installed with faculty receiving keys to these to be able to open them as needed. Courtney Ignarri suggested bringing concerns to the Library Tower Building Administrator.

6. Announcements
7. Adjourn – Donald Kunkel **MOVED TO ADJOURN. SECONDED** by Robert Mess. The meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

The next Executive Board / General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. in UUW-324.

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