



Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day



Minutes of the BTA Representative Assembly Meeting: March 2, 2010

Table with 3 columns: Name, Title, and Status. Rows include Kim Atwell (President), Diane D'Uva (Vice President), Jeff Matus (Treasurer), Dawn Clemens (Secretary), Bobby Atwell (BHS), Bill Castaldi (BHS), Tom Clemens (RMS), Roe Greco (RMS), Elizabeth Hanrahan (JVF), Terri Losito (JVF), Alicia Falman (Glenham), Donna Snowden (Glenham), Matt Carpenter (Sargent - excused), Jane Cervone (Sargent), Kelley Bender (South Avenue), Lisa Biersack (S. Avenue), Charlotte Sypher (NYSUT Delegate), Jennifer Vasil (AFT Delegate), John Burns (NYSUT Delegate, VOTE/COPE - excused), Gina Fontenot (Retirement - excused), Jennifer Fisher (Social), Elizabeth Botero (Dental - excused), Donna Glynn (Mid Hudson Teacher Center Liaison), and Dave Ryley (Scholarship - excused).

President Kim Atwell called the meeting to order at 3:59 in the Community Room at BHS. Dawn Clemens made a motion to accept the minutes from the February 2, 2010 meeting. Seconded by Jeff Matus, the motion passed unanimously.

Officer Reports:

TREASURER: Jeff Matus Balances as of February 2, 2010-

Table with 2 columns: Account and Balance. Rows include Checking (\$22,280.34), Savings (\$30,653.84), CD (\$19,214.16), Total (\$72,148.34), and Dental (\$7,201.36).

- Major expenditure for the month was the 100th Night Celebration.

SECRETARY: Dawn Clemens

- Received a thank you card from Pat Tarquini in regards to the 100th Night Celebration
- The Executive Committee set dates for Pre-Contract Building level discussions. The dates are as follows:
o BHS- 3/8 at 2:30 pm in the Community Room
o Glenham- 4/5 at 3:30 pm
o JVF- 4/19 at 3:30 pm
o South Ave- 5/10 at 3:30 pm
o Sargent- 5/17 at 3:30 pm
o The RMS date will be rescheduled due to the snow day
o Members can attend meetings in any building
- DCUTC Report for the 2/18 meeting:
o Devereux School (Red Hook) - just organized and joined NYSUT. They are asking local presidents to send letter to executive director at school to urge them to settle their contract. A letter template was handed out. D. Clemens committed the BTA to send a letter.
o 3/16 will be the next Committee of 100 where NYSUT members go to Albany to lobby lawmakers. J. Burns will go on behalf of the BTA.
o NYS Legislature is currently at a standstill
o We are unsure as to what budget cuts will be made since funding from federal government is in question as well as the possibility of the State Legislature raising the cap on charter schools.
o Retirement 25/55- bills have been introduced but there is no guarantee that they will be passed. Hopefully legislators will live up to their word. There is a possibility of a 2-year window for early retirement (25/55).

- o August Endorsement Conference: Local presidents attend this conference. NYSUT is working to include more than just a candidate's voting record; public statements are being looked at as well.
- o Kids Expo- This year will be taking place on 9/25-9/26/10 instead of April. The DCUTC and its member districts take part.
- o Renegades Tickets- As members of DCUTC we are entitled to free Renegades Tickets. More info will be coming.
- o The president of Arlington Teachers Association proposed a boycott of the Poughkeepsie Journal by all teachers in the county. He proposed this because of their negative coverage of education and teachers.

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Diane D'Uva

- Non coaching supplementals- Our data collection is 90% complete. The BTA is compiling information to create job descriptions.
- Seniority lists- D'Uva is currently cross referencing our list with the list provided by the district. Once the list has been completed they will be distributed to the general membership to ensure accuracy.

**PRESIDENT:** Kim Atwell

**Snow**

- Thank you to district maintenance and Charlie Symon for the clean-up work following the major snow storm.
- The district stayed in touch with K. Atwell throughout the time.
- None of the buildings had power except for South Avenue which created heating and safety issues.
- All of our snow days are exhausted plus one. We will now have to come in on Friday, May 28<sup>th</sup> as per our school calendar. Please plan vacations accordingly.

**Contract**

- Pre-Contract meetings are starting this month. The BTA officers are currently working on creating a format for the meetings.
- The rationale for these meetings is for the leadership and general membership to discuss concerns informally. This will aid in creating a personalized survey for the general membership.
- It is in the best interest of membership to talk now about issues rather than complain later.
- The BTA is watching to see what happens with the administrators who are currently negotiating their contract.
- A suggestion was made for the RA to create "pre-questions" to draw the membership's attention to major points of interest.
- Reminder: if you miss your building's meeting, you can go to any other building's meeting.

**Budget**

- Atwell has been in continued discussions with Dr. Aefsky about potential budget cuts. She was informed that specific cuts would be announced would be after the April 12<sup>th</sup> Board of Education meeting when the budget is adopted. During the month of April people will be notified if their position will be cut.
- Between now and then we will be working with the district to create an accurate seniority list.
- The BTA has requested for the district to inform the union of who might be potentially cut which would allow us to ensure that correct seniority procedures are being followed.
- Potential cuts beyond teaching staff could include: administrators, BASE program, TA's, clerical, custodial/maintenance
- If the May budget vote goes fails and we go to a contingency, more cuts would have to be made.
- The district has reached out to the BTA to work with us to pass the school budget.

**Race to the Top**

- This is a federal program where states are competing for a \$700 million grant. NYS has applied for this grant (at the time these minutes have been published, NYS has been named as one of the 16 finalists for this grant).
- School districts from around the state have had to sign the State application and a memorandum of agreement to apply.
- The grant is based on certain criteria pertaining to reforms and the state (and districts) must agree to make certain changes. Changes could include: changes in administration, charter schools, or merit pay for teachers. Most NYS local unions and NYSUT are opposed to merit pay.
- In order for money to be awarded, a memorandum of agreement must be signed by the BOE president, Superintendent, and the BTA president.
- Most presidents in Dutchess County have signed these agreements with caveats stating that the MOA cannot override things in our current Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- NYS may not win the grant because by accepting the funds it would allow the federal government to dictate terms to the state. Our unions are strong in NYS. The final decision will be made in April.

**Underpayment Settlement**

- There has been collaboration between the BTA, our Labor Relations Specialist, the Superintendent, and the district lawyer.
- A rough draft of a MOA was made during the 2/16/10 meeting.

Thanks to Jen Fisher for 100<sup>th</sup> night party; there was a lot of great feedback.

## **Committee Reports:**

### **MEMBERSHIP:** Dawn Clemens

- Current membership is 269

**CONSTITUTION:** Dawn Clemens --Topics which will be discussed during committee meetings will include: Special Elections, Political Action Committee (it is not currently in the constitution), the possibility of adding building reps at the Middle School and High School.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS:** Dawn Clemens

- The BTA newsletter, *Between Assignments* has won the following awards: Award of Merit: Website, Best News Story; First Place: Opinion, Best Newsletter
- The February edition of the newsletter is out.
- The Book Swap is on 3/4.
- The Pancake Breakfast is on 3/21.

### **ELECTION:** Diane D'Uva—No report

### **GRIEVANCE:** Diane D'Uva-

#### Current Grievances:

- 1 grievance on longevity was sustained
- 1 grievance on Stage II was pulled; the grievant was not entitled after further investigation.
- 4 Stage IV grievances for 7% for musical performances have been tabled.
- 1 Stage III grievance on the timeliness of longevity payments has been tabled
- 1 Stage II grievance on the timeliness of receiving a copy machine at RMS

#### Things to be aware of:

- Check your paystubs for sick days charged. There are 2 potential grievances at BHS. You should not be charged days for sick and personal which end up becoming snow days.
- Time line of grievances is 30 School Days, not 30 calendar days. Snow days do not count towards the 30 days.

### **BUDGET:** Jeff Matus

- The Budget Committee had its first meeting and will be meeting again this month.
- The vote for the BTA budget will occur at the same time as the BTA elections
- The current plan for the 2010-2011 budget is to take some funds out of our savings to subsidize increased expenditures.
- There have been proposals made to increase salaries for BTA officers, include a Public Relations salary, create a line item for tax preparation, and include a cell phone for the president under equipment.
- Under this proposal there will be a 33 cent per paycheck increase in dues.
- This is not final since there could be changed in NEA, NYSUT, and AFT dues once each of the organizations approve their budgets.
- Matus based his calculations on having a total membership of 260 as opposed to the 270 we actually have in case we have fewer members.
- Of the \$673 total dues each member pays per year, \$134 stays within our local BTA fund.

### **SCHOLARSHIP:** Dave Ryley

- As of 3/2/10, the BTA has raised \$1,007 for the scholarship fund. This is in addition to the \$2,000 that is budgeted.
- Currently, we have three sponsorships for the BTA Scholarship Golf Tournament in August.

### **POLITICAL ACTION:** Kim Atwell

- The NYSUT annual Representative Assembly is taking place in Washington DC in April. K. Atwell, J. Burns, and C. Sypher will be representing the BTA.
- The VOTE/COPE spring campaign will be starting soon. Deductions would go into effect in September 2010.
- The presidents' meeting for local presidents in Dutchess County has been rescheduled due to the snow.
- There will be an ED 13 meeting on 3/11/10 in Kingston where they will be discussing Race to the Top and possible cuts to the Mid Hudson Teacher Center
- The BTA will be endorsing school board candidates. Packets are available at the board office. Candidates need to fill out the packet and get 100 signatures.
- We will be creating a committee and have interview sessions with potential candidates.

### **SOCIAL:** Jennifer Fisher

- There was a good turnout for 100<sup>th</sup> night. Fisher has been in discussion with other unions in the district to see if we could pool social funds so that more employees could attend social events. For next year, Fisher is looking at other venues with more competitive prices.
- Rock of Ages is on 3/13; tickets are still available.
- There will be a Picnic Committee meeting on 3/22; anyone may attend.

**TECHNOLOGY:** Bill Castaldi

- All is going well

**RETIREMENT:** Gina Fontenot

- Retirement Seminar is on 3/8.
- Fontenot is attending the NYSUT Journalism Conference with D. Clemens to learn new techniques for the retirement newsletter.

**DENTAL:** Kim Atwell

- There have been continued discussions about the possibility of having the district take over the dental plan. A lot of effort has been put in to try to make this happen. However, the information needed from the district has not been submitted in a timely manner and it appears to be unlikely that the district will be taking over the dental prior to our renewal date (4/1)
- The BTA needs to make a decision about the future of our dental. No one is getting paid for running our dental plan and it is very time consuming. If no one steps up than the BTA will not continue to offer dental to the membership.
- We are one of the only districts who run their dental as a voluntary program. Most other districts run their dental through a benefit trust.

### **Building Reports:**

**BHS:** There have been numerous payroll and sick day issues. The building advisory meeting has been postponed due to the snow.

**GLENHAM:** The new roof has a leak. There are concerns about when boxes will arrive for the move since they need to be packed up by 6/25. We would like to commend the custodial staff in the building to a phenomenal job during the storm.

**JVF:** There are cleanliness issues downstairs. Outside agencies are using building at night but they are doing damage. They have been warned that they will not be able to use building in the future if damage continues.

**RMS:** Congratulations to Mr. Archer on receiving his tenure. There continue to be payroll issues. The situation with the copier machine is unconscionable. Teachers are unable to give tests. The faculty has received misinformation about the situation.

**SARGENT:** There is a potential payroll problem. There were concerns about procedure when there is an early release. When are teachers allowed to leave the building? Teachers should not leave until the students have left.

**SOUTH AVE.:** We are very appreciative to the maintenance department for the parking lot. The BAC meeting for February has been rescheduled.

### **Old Business:**

- K. Atwell will be announcing negotiation team in next month's meeting for approval. She has reached out to the RA for suggestions. We can have five to seven members for team.
  - o Atwell believes that it is not efficient to have seven people sit at the negotiations table at every meeting.
- She is considering having a prep team and a table team made up of the seven people. The smaller group would sit at the table (ex. someone to take notes and two people talking).
- The BTA will not propose a roll over negotiation.
- Atwell cannot answer how long it will take to negotiate the contract. We should not feel an urgency to settle. Rear will not be a determining factor.

### **New Business:**

- T. Clemens brought up a major concern. The W-2's we received named as the "Beacon Central District" instead of Beacon City School District.
- D. Glynn urged the membership to make use of the Mid Hudson Teacher Center. If we do not use it, than we are going to lose it.

The next meeting of the BTA Representative Assembly (RA) will take place on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 in the Community Room at BHS. The meeting will start at 3:45pm.

All business having been completed, Elizabeth Hanrahan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Bill Castaldi. Kim Atwell adjourned the meeting at 5:54 pm.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by BTA Secretary, Dawn Clemens.