

SU Teleconference minutes

April 10, 2015

Called the meeting to order at Noon'ish. Single item agenda, funding our contract.

Several hundred dialed in! Conference line limits were exceeded. Lists are trying to be compiled.

Overview: Senate Finance Committee has removed our 2.5% increase in the 3rd contract year. Money is currently in the House version. Now it goes to conference committee to decide what stays in and what comes out. We need to bring pressure to committee members, legislature in general, and the Governor: make their word good and support the contract that was signed.

John White: We need to move quickly, get some contact to our representatives and beat the drum to uphold the contract deal.

This is a call of action for the members. Thank you and I plead for your help.

Contact your legislators and the Governor – be firm, specific, businesslike and civil.

Cindy Spanyers, Legislative Liaison: We all feel as if we were ambushed in this process. This didn't come up before but presented itself when it came into the Finance Committee room. Some Senators (Egan among them) rose to the occasion and supported us. House and Senate budgets do not match; conference committee meets today at 4 pm – organizational committee only. Operational meetings upcoming; no advance notice of what items will be covered. Thus, time is of the essence. No time to write conventional letters. Senate committee members: Kelly, McKinnon, Olson. House committee members: Thompson, Newman, Gara. Two people on both sides must agree. Not optimistic about this committee but as a whole, i.e., when it comes before the entire legislator for an up or down, the outcome may be different.

On SU website, the addresses will be posted where you can reach committee members. Also links to your own legislator. Cathy Munoz has supported us. Despite Rie's death, she has stated loud, clear that #1 priority is funding of state contracts. Those members who are in her district, thank her for her stand and ask her to stand her ground. Contact Governor also. Keep contacting them. Legislature closes on the 19th. We have 9 days to compete with the crescendo of others similarly situated, e.g., school districts; public radio. A lazy susan of crises. But all is not lost if we keep fighting.

If it fails, we need to renegotiate contracts. Option is to have Governor call a special session and have him carry a lot of water for us. There are other options available but this is the most immediate way to a potential remedy.

You may not use state equipment to make calls/send email. You can call 24 hours a day. Every phone call is transcribed. Volume, i.e., sheer number of calls, helps.

Education funding crisis is overshadowing everything else. Call every day. They don't compare what you say each time you call; this is a volume exercise.

They are saying this will save 300 jobs. This is not true! When they took our raises out, they didn't add one penny of that amount back to the budget. Our argument is a contract is a contract; promise is a promise. Fund the contract and we'll deal with issues in future contracts.

What about furloughs, reduced time? We did it twice in the past. It was workplace by workplace. No one was mandated to take a furlough. It was mostly because the budget was going to be short in current year, but not in the new one starting July 1. Our current situation is different. We would rather have this added back in before regular session and not have to push it past that.

This is collective bargaining. We deal with unexpected stuff all the time. We are prepared to do all things and submit to members for approval/rejection as they come up in working with the state. They don't have to take away things that were agreed to. We can always modify things and work them out during course of contract. But we are past point of reasoning and arguing. Again, make your message "a contract is a contract; a promise is a promise. KEEP YOUR WORD".

Call after hours, your message will be transcribed. You will get the voice mail, no need to interact with person on the other end. We (SU leadership) are available to visit with people.

POM system so inundated they aren't using it anymore. Send fax or email.

Tell them you are a constituent, they want to hear from those who will vote for them in the next election.

Committee members – first thing they look at when they get a message is: are you a constituent? Individual legislators are where we have to hammer. Send email to conference committee members, fine, but hammer your legislators. Do it every day. Copy it and send the damn thing every day. This has worked before. If we fail to step up this time, we will be w/o a raise. This is Phase I – there will other actions. Right now – get your opinion/dissatisfaction before each member of the legislature, esp. the one representing you.

Check SU website for addresses and how-to message. They will send website link out after the teleconference.

Questions?

This seems like breach of contract. Is this correct? The part you are missing is that an act provides that the legislature can modify financial aspects of contract on a year to

year basis. SU is studying it, but if no funding comes, it will be deemed legal. I agree, it's breach of contract but in this case it appears to be a lawful one.

What committee are you referring to? The conference committee to reconcile the difference between House and Senate budgets. 3 Senators and 3 House members. Result will become the final product sent for approval.

Are you coordinating with other unions? Answer is yes.

Would this be considered a ULP? No. NLRB is for private sector. But if we find basis to make that argument, we will. But it seems unlikely.

Senator McKinnon has laid the foundation for the message that it would be unfortunate if state employees bow their backs and insist on getting their 2.5% raise. **Do you have a countermesssage to top that?** We are attempting to do it on a higher level but we don't want to get bogged down in current debate. They haven't taken a dime of the 2.5% and put it back in the system; they just cut it. One leader said he spoke with McKinnon on a plane in the past, and she was with us then. But she has done a 180 on us. Unfortunate.

We know they have money problems and we are prepared to negotiate. What are we going to negotiate? Unless something changes, negotiations will be really hard. If they defund us, what do we have to talk about in the fall?

Strike could occur by strike-eligible members of SU. GGU folks, Local 71 folks are mobilizing. We are not in this alone. The university is in the same pickle.

Tok caller will make himself heard again. But he finds it ironic that union is concerned about having wages frozen it won't make a difference. He wants geographic difference corrected as it should be. Geo diff issues in the Interior were not successful, but we worked very hard to get fixed. We are not done with this.

Is contacting House committee folks a waste of time? No. Contact all members of conference committee. Everything is on the table. Things get crazy at end of session. It's not a lost cause; you need to talk to everyone. And soon, as deals are going to be cut soon. When they open up meeting, they already have their minds made up. Contact soon.

Do departments have option to self-fund the 2.5% out of their own funds? No. They have taken affirmative action to not fund any of these raises out of their own budgets.

Have you met with DOA, DOP? Yes, we told them we were disappointed they weren't out here with us screaming about turning back on a contract that was negotiated. Would like to see Governor do more.

Do we have sense of what Walker/Mallott position is? They seem to care but not sure if they care enough. Hence, messages need to be sent to Governor. Governor told John White before that his admin would do nothing to not fund raises. We are unsure what action the Governor is taking to back this up at this time. So contact him, too. AFL-CIO leader met with him yesterday, made strong point to support what they agreed to.

Is the Governor or anyone else - can they initiate action to reduce legislative salary? No. So \$50K and 180 days per diem is protected? Yes.

Use in subject line – “Honor the contract! “A deal is a deal!”

Putting a good rally together takes too much time, and we don't have the luxury of time. Electronic petition, perhaps.

General discussion on SB 21 impacts and that Amendment 7 to Senate bill is ambiguous; “Monetary terms” is a broader term than just the raise. They are monitoring that. If we have rejected contract, we will be exploring all nuances. That's why we want to focus on **Honor The Contract.**

Marketing campaign in media? Letters to Editors are good; issue is so new. Even some committee members were caught unawares. Then ambush came and was well-executed. Our 2,400 members need to inundate legislators with communication.

Governor can line-item veto but can't use that as a vehicle to put money back. If not passed by the Legislature, we will be asking Governor to call a special session in order to fund the contracts. Hammond did that years ago. Would make Governor look like a strong leader, I hope he does it.

Thanks for dialing in.

Adjourned the meeting around 12:50.