

DRAFT

FPSU Committee on the Future

October 10, 2009

Enoch Davis Center, St. Petersburg

Draft Minutes

Committee Members Present:

Angela Aikens, Sherrie Colgain, Jim Evans, Freda Exum, Lovie Fulse, Judy Green, John Henkle, Liza Jacobs, Robin Kirkpatrick, Richard “Mac” MacDonald, Martha Mateen, Claire McGibbon, John McGibbon, Raymond Rawls, Sonya Roundtree, Pat Torrance, Robin Turner, Vergia Virgil and Theo Webster.

Observers:

Talmadge Andrews, Dennis Davis and Anita Richardson

FPSU Staff:

Kim Cronin, Caitlin Fishman, Colin Fiske, Nancy Orama, Maria Perez, Rick Smith, Frank Sosa and Maribel Soto

Facilitators:

Bob Gibson, Alphonso Mayfield and Megan Sweeney

Note taker:

Van Church

Goals:

- Finalize and adopt our article on membership rights and responsibilities
- Finalize and adopt the committee’s articles we need to carry out our vision
- Discuss the characteristics of good governance
- Draft articles on good governance – our structure/composition of elected leadership, duties of elected leaders

I. Introductions

Quick quiz

II. Review

- “What I contribute” review and additions by new committee members

- Committee on the Future Pledge – members signed the 2' x 3' version
- Megan: “What you’re taking to your members” – The process is transparent and all are welcome to attend COF meetings

Minutes of the September 26, 2009 meeting were distributed. **Motion to approve without correction was made by Freda Exum, seconded by Richard MacDonald and unanimously approved.**

Copies of FPSU’s Mission Statement (adopted at the September 26th meeting) were distributed

III. Members’ Rights and Responsibilities

Rights

- The right to have opinions respectfully heard, to be informed of union activity, to be educated in union values and union skills
- The right to choose the leaders of the union in a fair and democratic manner
- The right to a full accounting of union dues and the proper stewardship over union resources
- The right to participate in the union’s bargaining efforts and to approve union contracts
- The right to have members’ concerns resolved in a fair and expeditious manner

Responsibilities

- The responsibility to help build a strong and more effective labor movement, to support organizing of unorganized workers, to help build a political voice for working people, and to stand up for one’s co-workers and all workers
- The responsibility to be informed about the internal governance of the union and to participate in the conduct of the union’s affairs
- The responsibility to contribute to the support of the union
- The responsibility to treat all workers and members with fairness and respect
- The responsibility to offer constructive criticism of the union
- The responsibility to protect the union from all harm and ensure its vitality

Motion made to approve by John Henkle, seconded by Freda Exum and unanimously approved

IV. FPSU Standing Committees

- Standing Committees are advisory to, and make recommendations to, the FPSU Executive Board. The following shall be established as FPSU Standing Committees

Organizing Committee

The purpose of this committee is to make recommendations to the Executive Board to both sustain and expand the membership of the union. To achieve this purpose, this committee shall:

- Promote growth goals toward achieving full membership
- Focus on both obstacles to and opportunities for membership growth
- Recommend specific plans to achieve growth goals and oversee their execution

Political Education Committee

The purpose of this committee is to make recommendations to the Executive Board to elect and ensure that our political leaders stand up for working families and protect and enhance quality public serviced for all Floridians. To achieve this purpose, this committee shall:

- Get members involved in politics through communication, education and mobilization
- Recommend endorsement of candidates based upon members' endorsement criteria
- Lobby for pro-worker legislation
- Hold elected officials accountable
- Build our COPE contributions
- Educate and work with the community on pro-worker issues

Member Strength Committee

The purpose of this committee is to make recommendations to the Executive Board to enhance membership through stronger education and communication. To achieve this purpose, this committee shall:

- Create a member maintenance plan
- Build two-way communications between members and leaders
- Identify and develop new leaders

- Create diverse opportunities for members to develop leadership skills
- Develop strategies to increase union participation in all worksites
- Promote sustainability through membership retention
- Promote training for stewards
- Develop programs to enhance members understanding of contracts and labor laws
- Educate, educate, educate

Quality Bargaining Standards Committee

The purpose of this committee is to make recommendations to the Executive Board to improve local units' ability to bargain effectively and achieve quality standards in all our contracts. To achieve this purpose, the committee shall:

- Review contracts and make recommendations about universal contract improvements
- Recommend training programs for effective contract bargaining

Community Mobilization Committee

The purpose of this committee is to make recommendations to the Executive Board to promote mutual education and cooperation of our union and our community. To achieve this purpose, the committee shall:

- Commit to work together with community groups on shared, common goals
- Invite or solicit invitations from community members/leaders to discuss our common interests and aspirations
- Learn from each other in the spirit of cooperation and compromise

A motion was made to approve the article on FPSU Standing Committees by Theo Webster. It was seconded by Freda Exum and unanimously approved.

V. What is Good Governance? – Alphonso Mayfield

Good governance is:

Accountable – to the Mission Statement
to the membership
to the International Union

to elected leadership
to the moment in time (captures the current but looks to the future)

Accessible – Understandable (member friendly)
Promotes responsible participation

Democratic/Fair – Members make key decisions
No one group dominates
No one elected holds absolute power
No barriers to participation

Competent – Viable/Flexible
Should promote and develop the best mix of talent and leadership development,
organizational expertise and workforce/public service expertise

VI. What is the Structure of a Union? – Bob Gibson (Executive Director, Colorado WINS)

Bob Gibson made a presentation on the typical structure of a labor union – the membership (either in convention or during a vote of the full membership), being the ultimate authority. The Executive Board is the governing body between conventions. A chapter and standing committee structure is the direction for FPSU.

VII. Officers Proposal – Megan Sweeney

FPSU shall have the following officers:

- President
- Vice President for Operations
- Vice President for Organizing
- Vice President for Political Strength
- Vice President for Member Strength

The President Shall:

- Act as the union's chief administrator and principal officer
- Direct all organizing, political action, representation and negotiations of the union subject to the direction provided by the Board and members
- Serve as staff director and chief negotiator unless he/she designates that role to someone else

- Preside over the Board and convention meetings
- Be one of the persons authorized to sign contracts, agreements and checks
- Give a full report to the Board of local union activities regularly
- Make recommendations to the Board for strategic planning
- Appoint ad hoc committees as needed

The Vice President for Operations shall:

- Serve as the presiding officer in the absence of the president
- Assist the president on other affairs of the local union
- Be responsible for the financial affairs of the local union
- Counter-sign all checks
- Submit financial statements to the Board regularly
- Assist the president in the preparation of an annual budget to be approved by the Board and executive committee

The Vice President for Organizing shall:

- Serve as chair of the statewide, volunteer organizing committee
- Serve as chair of the community relations committee
- Help recruit and train the committees and prepare reports and recommendations for the Board
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board

The Vice President for Political Strength shall:

- Chair the statewide, volunteer political committee
- Help recruit and train the committee and prepare reports and recommendations for the Board

- Work with assigned staff to make recommendations to the Board about endorsements and candidate contributions
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board
- Along with the president and his/her designee, represent the local union with elected officials

The Vice President for Member Strength shall:

- Serve as chair of statewide, quality bargaining standards committee
- Serve as chair of the member strength committee
- Help recruit and train the committee and prepare reports and recommendations for the Board
- Be one of the persons authorized to sign contracts
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board

Following Megan's presentation, discussion included:

- Office of the president would be the only paid officer position
- President/Vice President/Secretary-Treasurer is the model for a 20th century local union. The above proposal reflects a 21st century model for FPSU.
- Non-paid officer positions would require no more work than is currently being done by chapter chairs
- FPSU is not yet self supporting
- Credibility of rank-and-file workers serving as vice presidents
- Question of President or Executive Board having hire/fire authority over staff
- FPSU financial statements requested for 10/24/09 meeting
- More persons than listed above should be authorized to sign checks
- Question of stipends for non-paid vice presidents

- Sub committee of Richard “Mac” MacDonald, John McGibbon and Theo Webster formed to recraft language in the Officers Proposal document prior to the 10/24/09 meeting

VIII. FPSU Union Governance Proposal – Alphonso Mayfield

Alphonso also distributed the “Member Unit Numbers by Area” document. Discussion on this issue centered on the equitability of the number of seats allowed on the Board for the various categories.

IX. Executive Board of FPSU Shall – Bob Gibson

Discussion was whether staff hire/fire right should rest with the President or Executive Board. Bob Gibson strongly recommended that it be part of the President’s responsibilities.

Freda Exum moved that approval of this arrangement be tabled until the committee is able to gather more information on the subject. The motion was seconded by Angela Aikens and approved with one member dissenting.