

United Teachers of Dade
2200 Biscayne Boulevard
Miami, Florida 33137

Council of Building Stewards Meeting
January 21, 2010

Unapproved Minutes

This regular Council of Stewards meeting was called to order by President Aronowitz at approximately 5:00 p.m. Ms. Linda Gilbert, UTD Steward, Kendale Lakes Elementary School, led the Pledge of Allegiance. President Aronowitz asked for a moment of silence on behalf of our brothers and sisters from Haiti.

Adoption of Agenda: It was moved by Esther Garvett and properly seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. After discussion, motion carried.

Adoption of Minutes: It was moved by Esther Garvett and properly seconded to adopt the minutes of December 3, 2009 as read. After discussion, motion carried.

Agenda

Special Item: Tomas Regalado, Mayor, City of Miami

President Aronowitz announced to the Council that Mayor from the City of Miami, Tomas Regalado is still at a City of Miami commission meeting, but his daughter, Raquel, will be addressing the Stewards. President Aronowitz reported that she had met with Mayor Regalado at a Central Labor Council meeting, and they had a very good discussion regarding the situation in Haiti and UTD's willingness to help and welcome these children since they will be coming to the Miami-Dade County Public schools.

Ms. Raquel Regalado addressed the Council of Stewards and thanked UTD for all of the support. She feels very strongly for the role that we play in the schools; she also indicated that we provide a great service – we bridge the gap. Ms. Regalado further indicated that the City of Miami will be more involved in our schools, and she announced that Mayor Regalado has appointed President Aronowitz to the transition team dealing with education – they are working on bringing community schools to the City of Miami.

President Aronowitz requested that if Stewards are contributing goods to Haiti, to please not bring clothing, but do bring water, can openers, non-perishable products, bandages, and baby formula. The number one contribution the people of Haiti need is money. Stewards are directed to check the UTD Web site for a list of organizations through which they can contribute.

President Aronowitz reminded Stewards that what has happened in Haiti will require continuous work over the next several months, so donations are a continuing process. She likened this disaster to what happened in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and reminded the Council that AFT has been instrumental in rebuilding of the schools in New Orleans.

Bob Barnett, Chairperson, Internal Functions Committee

Mr. Barnett addressed the Council of Stewards and stated that in order to keep meetings professional and in order to conduct Union business at Council meetings, no campaigning will be allowed within 50 feet of the venue. Mr. Barnett asked candidates to please respect each other, and to remember that we are all Brothers/Sisters in this Union.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Fedrick C. Ingram

- *Financial Management Review (November 2009 and Year-to-Date)*

Secretary/Treasurer Ingram reported on the key financial points, highlights and achievements noted in the report. Secretary/Treasurer Ingram stated that we have 15,886 members for a total of 12, 693 FTE's – the UTD Budget is based on 12,500 FTE's. Stewards who have any questions are asked to contact Mr. Ingram or Ms. Podnar.

First Vice President's Report: Artie Leichner

Report from the Field

- *Paraprofesional, Clerical, Educational Support Professional Critical Issues Task Force*

First Vice President Leichner reported this Task Force had met two weeks ago, and he asked Valarie Johnson and Sharon Williams, members of the Task Force to update the Council.

Ms. Valarie Johnson reported the Task Force had met and one of the major issues that they will be working on is RIF procedures. Ms. Johnson stated that a survey will be developed asking members to identify other issues that can be addressed in the next round of negotiations.

- *School Improvement Plans*

First Vice President Leichner introduced to the Council, Roz Ciriano, Steward at South Miami Senior High school to address this issue.

Ms. Ciriano stated that she would not sign the School Improvement Plan at her site because it violated the UTD contract – everything contained in the plan was a mandate. Due to her not signing the plan, the principal is extremely upset with her and he refuses to change the language. Thus, as of now, she is still not signing off on the plan. Ms. Ciriano acknowledged Artie, stating that he has been very supportive of her efforts.

- *Health Care*

First Vice President Leichner reported that if Stewards know of any members who have found mistakes on the insurance print-out, to please contact their Organizer with the issue involved, name and employee number – he will be meeting with Fringe Benefits about a solution. Mr. Leichner also reminded the Council of Stewards that he will be revamping the UTD Health Care Committee – interested members are to contact Artie.

President's Report: Karen Aronowitz

President Aronowitz reminded the Council of Stewards that the district will be putting out an IPEGS survey and UTD is asking every member to complete the survey; American Fidelity Assurance will be visiting worksites, and Stewards are asked to remind members that enrollment will be until the first week in March; ER&D flyer in the Council folders, Stewards are asked to remind members of all UTD course offerings – courses begin in February.

- *Race to the Top (RTTT) Update*

President Aronowitz stated that the State of Florida submitted the RTTP application to the Federal government on 1/19, and they will decide if Florida will get the grant. President Aronowitz stated that 61 Union presidents did not sign the MOU – Duval and Hillsborough did

sign but with caveats. President Aronowitz stated that if Florida is rejected in the first go-round, it does not mean that we will not continue to engage in discussions with the District.

- *UTD's Legislative Priorities*

President Aronowitz reported that this is Part I of a two-part process, and we are asking Stewards to have a unit meeting and urge members to participate in legislative prioritization; Part II will deal with advocacy training. Mr. Joe Minor gave an overview of the five UTD 2010 Legislative Priorities: 1.) Proper funding for Education, 2.) No new mandates until appropriate funding is available, 3.) Class size, 4.) Common Sense Assessment and 5.) Retirement. A video presentation followed and Stewards heard comments encouraging activism by Dwight Bullard and Alex Villalobos. Both legislators urged Stewards to keep the pressure on by contacting their legislators with emails urging them to make education funding their number one priority.

Ms. Karen Cunningham also addressed the Council of Stewards urging Stewards to educate members on legislative issues and place the information distributed on the bulletin boards and to participate in the legislative survey.

Ms. Cunningham also urged Stewards to become members of TIGER COPE but to remember that we cannot take the cards to the schools – members must be asked to join off-campus.

President Aronowitz reminded Stewards of the Dade Delegation forum being held on February 25 and urging Stewards to attend and post the information and also of the Multicultural Event scheduled for February 6.

- *Membership Drawing*

First Vice President Leichner announced the winner of the Membership Drawing, Mari Corujedo, Steward, Jack Gordon Elementary School.

Adjournment

It was moved by Esther Garvett and properly seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Karen Aronowitz
President

Fedrick C. Ingram
Secretary/Treasurer