

VSEA Council Meeting

March 13, 2024

Call to Order

1st Vice President Margaret Crawley called the meeting to order as chair.

Ballot Counters: Maureen Lynch, Leslie

Timekeeper: Tammy Johnson

Parliamentarian: Dave Clark

The meeting will be conducted using Roberts' Rules of Order.

Approval of Minutes

Thomas Randall moves to approve the minutes. Seconded by **Brad Herring**.

Thomas Randall adds to the record that the minutes are missing the Unit Chairs attendance for the December Council Meeting.

Bee Hesselbach adds to the record that they were not unexcused for the December Council Meeting. It was a Judiciary Bargaining Date.

Approval of Minutes passes on a voice vote.

New Council Members

Oath of Office: I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully perform the duties of the office of Council Member of the Vermont State Employees' Association, Inc. and therein do equal justice to all, for the mutual benefit of the State of Vermont and its employees.

Susan Ransom-Kelley: Retiree, Alternate, Retired in June 2022 from the Vermont Department of Corrections after 35 years of service.

Gina Clithero (she/her): Agency of Agriculture - Food and Markets, 4.5 years of service.

Christopher Rossi: Agency of Human Services (AHS) - Department of Mental Health (DMH) Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCR), President of VPCH Chapter, 4.5 years of service.

Administrative Reports

Executive Director's Report

Steve Howard, Executive Director

- Union Membership has grown from 6,057 in December to 6,087 today.
- Credit is due to our organizing staff's dissemination of information on the new Bargaining Agreements. We had record member voting numbers this year.
- Legislative dinners were successful, where members met with Legislators.
- S. 96 received a good hearing yesterday. This is the Anti-Privatization Bill.
- VSEA continues to work with the Department for Children and Families (DCF) Family Services Division (FSD) on the fallout of the shuttering of the Woodside Facility. Shout out to Trissie Casanova for being a rockstar witness. This puts our FSD workers in danger while doing their jobs. The State is not doing well by our children.
- The VSEA staff is trying to be as efficient as possible with travel resources. We have greatly increased our site visits. The ask is for Chapters to plan Chapter meetings for the next year. We want to plan Chapter Meetings on the same days as site visits.
- Introductions of VSEA Staff.

Questions and Comments

Peggy Burbank (AHS - DCF FSD): Kudos to Trissie Casanova. Expressed feelings on FSD situation.

Bruce King: I have a question concerning obtaining the voter list from the AFL-CIO. Have we received it, and can you remind us of the benefits?

Steve Howard: The voter file is a database of all registered voters in Vermont. It includes data that indicates voting tendencies and whether they would be sympathetic to an issue we care about. The voter file is maintained quarterly, which helps us track down our members.

President's Report

Aimee Bertrand Towne, President

- Apologies for being late.
- This is a reminder that the Board of Trustees sends out a monthly warning for their meeting. There is a member forum at each meeting.

- Introduction of Board of Trustees.
- There is one vacancy on the Board of Trustees for the Judiciary Trustee. Speak to your leadership.
- BOT recently voted to pass several resolutions to make the VSEA more visible in the community.
 - Approved 4th annual State Parks Day.
 - Approved 4th annual sponsorship of the Governor's Cup at Thunder Road.
 - Let the Board of Trustees know if there are any other community events that you think VSEA should participate in.
- Thanks to VSEA staff for support of our Bargaining Agreements.
- We need Stewards. Plea to Council to please volunteer.

Treasurer's Report

Eric Davis, Treasurer

Please email Eric for an update on the budget.

Special Presentations

Solidarity Movement

Margaret Crawley, 1st Vice President

Please email Margaret for a copy of the presentation.

Chapter and Committee Introductions

Margaret Crawley, 1st Vice President

Please see the [Member Comittees page](#) on the VSEA website for ways to volunteer.

Motion: Moves to Adjourn by Brad Herring. Seconded by Tyrel Kerr. Motion fails on an 18 to 25 ballot vote.

Business

Old Business

Margaret Crawley, 1st Vice President

Dylan Frazer (AHS - DVHA): Is there any update on the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) move to the Waterbury State Office Complex (WSOC)? Was there any impact bargaining?

Gary Hoadley (VSEA Labor Relations Director): The Supervisory and Non-management Bargaining Units met with the State. There was no outcome that benefitted our members.

Steve Howard: There is a satellite office in Burlington.

Margaret Crawley: The building is called [Hula](#).

Danielle Warner (VSEA Organizer): There are hoteling spaces at the Office of Local Health Office in Burlington and at the VDH Lab in Colchester.

Michelle Thompson: Employees are getting used to the hotel spaces, which are basic and lack ergonomic accommodation. There are more teleworking agreements, but they are only one year at a time; we'll need to see where that goes.

Terri LeFabvre: Can someone explain what you mean by hoteling space?

Steve Howard: This is where workspaces are scheduled and shared.

New Business

Margaret Crawley, 1st Vice President

Kent Hedberg (Vermont Forensic Lab): Can we get clarification on the Family Medical Leave Insurance (FMLI) benefit? Leave Management Unit seems unable to answer questions about it.

Ted Dale: You can use up to 19.25 hours per pay period. The Hartford pays 60% of time off payroll.

Thomas Randall (ADS - AHS IT): You have up to the 240 hours. You can use up to 19.25 hours without losing your standard benefits. You can use it for over 19.25 hours per period, but you will be billed for your health insurance.

Ted Dale: Can the union donate money

Steve Howard: Council can make a motion to a

Motion: Ted Dale moves to make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees to allocate some funds, if any, to the Vitali family. Seconded by Sue LeFleche. No discussion. Motion carries on a 41 to 0 ballot vote.

Terri LeFebvre: Please consider joining.

Danielle Fuoco: The Human Rights Commission (HRC) views the Personal Leave Incentive, a collectively bargained benefit, as discriminatory based on sex. If you have any comments, email me.

Steve Howard: The HRC has not reached out to us.

Kay Hopper: Can I make a motion to the Building Committee and Board of Trustees to investigate flood insurance? I recommend that we sell the building.

Steve Howard: It's under the purview of the members on the building committee. The claim on the elevator was not covered because a permit was not filed when the elevator was installed.

Karen Hango: To the best of my knowledge, it is a Board of Trustee committee. I appreciate Kay's feedback and recommendation. The building committee has been looking at the expenses of maintaining the building and what the value we gain from owning the building. For anyone who has an opinion on that, please email me. (karen.hango@gmail.com)

Margaret Crawley: The Building Committee is one of the 18 standing committees that are made up of members, not just the BOT. No motion is really needed as this is already being investigated.

Kay Hopper: Do we want the Council to vote to make a recommendation to the Committee?

Margaret Crawley: The Committee is already charged with generating a report. Council would act once the report is presented to them.

Christopher Rossi: Speaking of anti-privatization. The Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) is seeing an influx of travel nurses.

Bee Hesselbach (they/them): It is 2024, and the VTHR system does not allow non-binary genders.

Thomas Randall: This is being addressed in an ongoing project to replace VTHR with Workday. Given the system's age, adding an additional gender is not possible, but ADS is aware of the request.

Motion: Moves to Adjourn by Terri LeFebvre. Seconded by Tammie Johnson. Motion passes on a voice vote.