

UFF-SEMINOLE NEWS & NOTES #5 MAY 26, 2010

PERC HEARING CONTINUED

The May 10 Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) hearing regarding Seminole State's challenge to the composition of our chapter bargaining unit has been continued until June 8 (this is the second continuance, the first was to May 26). As previously indicated, the college is seeking to exclude department chairs, program managers, and temporary full-time faculty.

President McGee commented at a recent President's Council meeting that PERC, not Seminole State, is to blame for delays in the process. Of course, the college's very attempt to disenfranchise certain faculty is the principal reason why the election was not held during spring term. Moreover, college attorneys have now requested (and the commission has granted) three extensions – the first one provided additional time to submit paperwork back in March. Ironically, the May 10 continuance was asked for, in large part, because a department chair testifying on the college's behalf had to leave the hearing to teach a class. Their second continuance request was made because some of their witnesses were not available to testify on May 26th. Such requests are common and PERC usually grants them, but it is incredulous to suggest that the commission is responsible for the slow timetable.

At the request of the attorney representing Seminole State, the PERC hearing officer sequestered witnesses on May 10. Intended to prevent discussion of testimony, this rule remains in effect throughout the continuance period. Upon completion of the hearing, the three-member commission and its staff will review the hearing officer's recommendations and PERC will issue a final order.

CHAPTER APPEARANCE BEFORE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chapter members appeared before the Seminole State Board of Trustees at their April meeting. Interim Vice-President Heather Edwards and fellow faculty Frank Albritton, Sue Kellicut, Interim Secretary Carol Clayton, Chrisawn Speller, and Doreen Collins-McHugh stated why they favor collective bargaining.

The Board's response was both unfortunate and telling. Individual trustees, by and large, did not even extend the courtesy of making eye contact with our speakers. None of them thanked any of the speakers for their information or perspective. Their silence conveyed their message; after all, the trustees had played their hand at the previous monthly meeting when each of them expressed an anti-union position absent any dialogue or discussion.

In light of Board rules limiting our appearance to fifteen minutes, UFF-Seminole members Ed Chin, Margaret Jenkins, Kevin Jordan, Art Litka, Virginia Magarine, Bill Schmidt, Kerri Smith, Stephen Summers, Trent Tomengo, and Lane Vosbury submitted written statements that were presented to each of the trustees. Interim chapter President Michael Hoover did elicit an angry response from Board Chairwoman Lisa Greer who shouted "No!" when he rose and asked to distribute the information packets.

Faculty Survey Results

Results of the on-line Faculty Organizing and Bargaining Survey are in. The survey was available to the 138 faculty members who signed cards seeking a collective bargaining election. Forty-six professors (a 33% response rate) went on-line and completed the questionnaire.

Join UFF-Seminole Now

If you join right now, you can immediately enjoy the benefits of membership for free. Your dues will not start until the new academic year, but, your membership and all benefits and protections start right now. Those who join the United Faculty of Florida-Seminole State Chapter this summer will make our faculty voice stronger and send a message to the Board of Trustees that we want our union! New members will immediately be covered for \$1,000,000 in professional liability insurance and will begin receiving local, state and national publications on higher education issues. All of this and more while saving money to boot. Contact UFF-Seminole Membership Coordinator George Bernard for an enrollment form as soon as possible.