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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING**  
FEBRUARY 12, 2016  
PEF HQ

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**PRESENT:**

Wayne Spence, President  
Kevin Hintz, Secretary Treasurer  
Nikki Brate, Vice President  
Rocco Brindisi, Region 1 Coordinator  
Andrew Puleo, Region 2 Coordinator  
John Prince, Region 3 Coordinator (via phone)  
Charles McRorie, Region 4 Coordinator  
David Dubofsky, Region 5 Coordinator  
Jeanette St. Mary, Region 6 Coordinator (via phone)  
Ed Snow, Region 7 Coordinator  
Michael Blue, Region 8 Coordinator  
Vivian Street, Region 9 Coordinator  
Sheik Nabijohn, Region 10 Coordinator  
Jemma Marie Hanson, Region 11 Coordinator  
Nora Higgins, Region 12 Coordinator  
Maureen Kellman, Trustee  
Sarah Lauser, Trustee  
Maddie Shannon Roberts, Trustee

**STAFF:**

Rebecca Lalli, Ex. Asst to the Secretary Treasurer

President Spence opened the meeting at 9:40 AM.

President Spence began by explaining that the previous minutes were being copied. He proposed that the approval of the previous minutes be tabled until the copies were brought down. President Spence noted concerns that came out of the SW Political Action meeting the day before and opened the floor to the Regional Coordinators to report out.

**Nora Higgins - Region 12:**

- Issue with Council Leader at place of work. CL is absent and has been doing settlements in lieu of discipline for PEF members. Concern about selling the members short especially in light of the Friedrichs case. Field Representative, Lisa Quarles, is not allowed in the building. Nora explained her acceptance of another position and the subsequent down grade she took from a Grade 20 to Grade 16 to get out of the hostile work environment. Issue of Regional Coordinator EOL - only 34 days last year. Concern about L/M meetings, election procedures.
- Beyond Stonybrook, LIDDSO is facing closures due to privatization. President Spence attended a meeting and a Facebook page was created.
- Ethics issue with SIF at Convention is currently on hold.
- Focus on organizing members, boots on the ground and contacting legislators.

Following Regional Coordinator Higgins' report, a discussion began among the group regarding her new position. President Spence asked if there were any possible solutions or remedies and suggested a meeting between Nora, the Council Leader, Assistant Council Leader and Executive Board members. President Spence will speak to Vice President Adams about a possible mediation. Region 9 Coordinator Vivian Street suggested an internal mechanism to address such issues beyond the Ethics Committee.

President Spence mentioned a possible Regional Coordinator training to pair seasoned Regional Coordinators with newer Coordinators. The Regional Coordinator Leadership training would be an opportunity for this team to stop talking and start acting and planning.

**Ed Snow – Region 7:**

- Similar issue to Nora's regarding the Council Leader not acting in best interest of PEF members. Ed was approached for information about a recall and provided the information and explained the process. He notified the Executive Board representative of this. To date, the recall has not been submitted.
- Rumors of prison cuts and closures following the Governor's budget. Possible affects in North Country.
- New Region 7 office is great.
- In contact with Geraldine Stella in Health and Safety regarding a husband and wife dispute and security issues.
- Broome DDSO expected to close on March 31. Four employees were placed more than 60 miles away.
- Long Island DDSO had 40 people displaced due to closure of 11 sites. Two weeks ago a bid sheet was submitted from 40 employees. The bid process is based on seniority. Issue of Medicaid funding by 2018 – no group homes that sit abut state property.

A discussion began regarding the Olmstead Act. President Spence questioned the interpretation of this act and why these properties are being turned over to non profits. He went on to say that the only difference is the people providing the care and that non profits will not be able to provide the \$15 minimum wage with the current contracts from the Governor. Region 9 Coordinator Vivian Street explained that agencies like OPWDD want out of the direct care business. Region 7 Coordinator Ed Snow went on to explain that there will be multiple private providers. The funding source will be the sale of these properties.

Trustee Maureen Kellman asked for clarification about what is happening to the 40 employees at Long Island DDSO. Region 7 Coordinator Ed Snow explained that through the bid process some will have a single choice, others based on seniority.

Vice President Brate touched on the recall issue. She explained her concern that recalls would result in fractured divisions and the high number of Ethics complaints at Executive Board pitting member against member. In light of Friedrichs, she suggested a possible mediation solution.

Region 7 Coordinator Ed Snow noted that there is a recall mechanism and asked, if 17 out of 24 members want a recall, should we mediate if there is a mechanism in place to recall? He also mentioned the issue of Council Leaders, who are volunteers, dropping due to too much pressure and paperwork.

A discussion began regarding the pressure on Council Leaders. President Spence explained the backlash from CLs regarding fee payers. Region 9 Coordinator Vivian Street also noted the issue of members not stepping up, then an individual steps up and takes control. She suggested prohibiting one member from being both the Council Leader and Executive Board representative.

President Spence brought up the issue of mailings and explained that this administration did not change any rules regarding this topic. Region 7 Coordinator Ed Snow explained that it was an issue of trust – Coordinators can have a credit card, but cannot send out mailings without big PEF approval. President Spence responded that the issue is not trust, but rather varying messages being sent out from different Regional Coordinators. The current process allows for review to avoid chaos. President Spence advised that the administration was following this internal process from 3 years ago – the Secretary Treasurer would review all correspondence as it is under his duties and responsibilities. The President and Secretary Treasurer will review with the 5 SW Officers and come back to the Executive Council.

Trustee Sarah Lauser noted the responsibility to keep members' privacy protected. Region 9 Coordinator Vivian Street also noted the issue of timeliness when submitting for PEF approval.

Region 7 Coordinator Ed Snow mentioned the ability to buy lists under the Election Rules. President Spence will look into this rule.

**Rocco Brindisi – Region 1:**

- Issue of getting labels – requested labels, sent copy of letter which went to Secretary Treasurer Hintz for review. Process is now stalled.
- Met with Denise Young, Organizer – 2 part plan for Region 1 – Face to face meeting at Roswell Park (120 fee payers) and personalized letter to remaining fee payers showing the benefits of the union and asking to join. Personal touch is important.
- Nurses at Roswell Park are having issues with Council Leader, no coordination and scheduling issues with Emergency Room nurses. Working with Field Representative Peter Yurkewicz on this.

Vice President Nikki Brate requested that she be informed of any Friedrichs related activity to avoid duplication.

**Jeanette St. Mary – Region 6:**

- Strong showing at Nurses meeting, 60 attendees and local Assemblyman. Nancy Wolff, Organizer and Field Representatives also attended. Pleased that PEF is working on

salaries. Mandation of nurses is a big problem. Assemblyman ---- willing to co-sponsor bill with PEF.

- Hutchins PC problem - 23 to 18 beds due to nurse crisis. As a result, Mohawk Valley up 5 beds even though they are at capacity.
- Float in St. Patrick's Day parade - all are welcome to come.
- Next PAC meeting is February 22, 2016.

President Spence asked about the dynamic of the Nurses meeting and if there were any requests of PEF. Region 6 Coordinator Jeanette St. Mary responded that the Nurses want support of reallocations. Overall concern is that no one wants to join State service when they can make \$15,000 to \$20,000 more in private hospitals with no threats from the Justice Center. President Spence suggested legislative efforts and rallies and asked if people would come out for this. He suggested that the time is right as legislatures are frustrated and the State has acknowledged the retention problem. Regional rallies could be an option.

**Andrew Puleo - Region 2:**

- Proposed changes to previous minutes - will submit later on
- L/M scheduled at Elmira for February 17, 2016
- Meeting with Denise Young, Organizer - 1<sup>st</sup> time in Region 2 in 9 years
- Invite out to fee payers - confident we can change their minds
- Fee payer information forwarded to Council Leaders
- Happy to report that Divisions Committee is effective working group
- Propose to off set Nora's pay cut
- Invite to Region 2 Annual Legislative Event on March 16, 2016 - 100 member audience - AFT is working on Randi Weingarten attending
- Sent letter to Supreme Court regarding Friedrichs case
- Reasonable for big PEF to review letters sent out by Coordinators
- Update on Action Item from previous meeting - page 9, #5 - did reach out to VP Peter Banks

**John Prince - Region 3:**

- Reaching out to Council Leaders and fee payers
- Denise Young, Organizer presentation
- Steward meeting on February 22, 2016 - possible town hall depending on President Spence schedule
- PAC meeting this week - planning to endorse Bernie Sanders and local Senator
- Legislative Breakfast planned for March 12, 2016 - finalize planning at next PAC meeting - Denise Young and regional Staff helpful in reaching out regarding Member Engagement
- Idea of training - Regional Coordinator is learned behavior
- Division problems - look to their Constitutions
- Message/ mailing/ label issue is longstanding

- Organizing Committee is meeting every Monday via conference call – using Regional Coordinator time until additional resources are confirmed – Staff and Elected officers working together toward Member Engagement

**Mike Blue – Region 8:**

- Member Organizing Effort
- Caribbean American Meeting
- Single payer healthcare forum in role as Health and Safety Chair – need pressure on Governor – it is a possibility – reduce cost through single provider i.e. the government
- 2 PAC meetings, support from Assemblymember Pat Fahy
- Legislative Breakfast – good member turnout and 4 Legislators
- Confirmation that memo to Legislators went out last Friday – Chris Leo will come down to address this

Vice President Brate asked if PEF has taken a position on single payer healthcare as some members have good healthcare plans that they do not want to give up. Region 8 Coordinator Mike Blue responded that he has not taken an official position on the issue.

President Spence mentioned that other unions (CSEA, UUP) are holding town hall meetings. Region 8 Coordinator Mike Blue noted that the 23<sup>rd</sup> is penciled in for a town hall meeting at NYSUT. Per President Spence, Mark Richards has agreed to March 29. The event will be a livestream. Vice President Nikki Brate suggested that other regions have viewing parties.

President Spence also mentioned the phone bank next week that AFT will be overseeing. On March 3 at Executive Board, there will be an invite only evening event for Executive Board members, Council Leaders in Albany and LM Chairs. It will be a working dinner with Elric in Organizing presenting on total member engagement. Mark Richards will also be there. VP Brate will report out on all upcoming events.

Region 8 Coordinator Mike Blue advised that training is vital for volunteers. We have the volunteers, but need work for them to do. Region 8 Retirees can also help with the Friedrichs effort. He continued that the \$15 minimum wage supports our position and effort.

President Spence mentioned regarding the \$15 minimum wage that both Internationals supported this from the Governor and he authorized a Facebook post regarding this. This set the stage for a conversation regarding raising wages at all levels. He urged all to avoid the Walmart mentality and noted that some PEF members are against the fight for 15.

Trustee Maddie Shannon Roberts noted that Elric’s training was great, but more guidelines were needed regarding money spent. Vice President Nikki Brate confirmed that once the plan is finalized, guidelines will be in place.

At 12:20pm, the group broke for a working lunch and will return at 12:45.

**Vivian Street – Region 9:**

- 4 or 5 Member meetings have been well attended – discussing Friedrichs and the contract
- VP Brate and Secretary Treasurer Hintz attended Holiday Party
- Working with Divisions with no leadership
- Doctor/ Psychiatrist meeting coming up – 2<sup>nd</sup> follow up meeting to address shortage of Psychiatrists – Doctors will go to LM in May – Goal is to equalize across state
- PAC meeting scheduled for February 29, 2016 – Invite to Greg Amorosi, Legislative Director
- Scheduled Region 9 Town Hall meeting with President Spence - contract update

**David Dubofsky – Region 5:**

- Utilizing Labor on the Move
- No issue with letter approval from big PEF
- Surprised that we do not have lists of Veterans and Nurses – should have this for marketing purposes – breakdown by age
- Contract update
- In conjunction with CSEA, RFP for agency
- Town Hall meeting scheduled for February 21, 2016
- PAC meeting scheduled for February 29, 2016
- Nora Higgins situation is a terrible reflection on PEF – hope that members do not know about this

Region 9 Coordinator Vivian Street asked for clarification from President Spence regarding a change in Field Representatives, specifically if Regional Coordinators should be given notice of this. President Spence responded that Jim Kemenash, Director of Statewide Field Services, notifies Executive Board and Council Leader if a change occurs, but that the Regional Coordinator does not need to be notified. Region 9 Coordinator Vivian Street proposed that training should be clear on roles and duties of Executive Board, Regional Coordinators, etc.

**Sheik Nabijohn – Region 10:**

- EOL Issues – cut from 2 days to 1 day – Spoke to Bob Carrothers about and was told agency is deciding factor – GOER directive to agency to deny EOL
- PAC meeting in Region 10 – Jeff Klien endorsement granted. Not a retroactive endorsement. After not hearing from Mr. Klien, it was proposed to withdraw endorsement if he does not meet with members.
- Merger of Region 10 and 11 Offices – President will send cost benefit analysis. Upset by attitude.
- Issue of Fee Payers – Denied list. Not going to participate in fee payer activity – will leave it up to the Council Leaders and will alert members of privacy violation for phone banks.

- Questioned the law firm hired to handle discrimination cases. Per Secretary Treasurer Hintz, not necessarily an attorney or law firm, just someone with experience in discrimination cases. This person would also train staff. This will be reflected in the next budget.
- Question regarding \$40,000 moved in budget – Secretary Treasurer Hintz will look into this and confirm.
- Question regarding budget cut by \$21,000. Per Secretary Treasurer Hintz, this cut reflected the change from 2 days of EOL to 1.2 days. Historically, Regions were given 1.2 days. The change will put Region 10 on equal footing with other Regions.

Vice President Nikki Brate commented that the \$40,000 will in part be used to train 30 Field Representatives in discrimination cases. She also recommended that all should be careful with endorsements as rescinding looks bad.

Region 10 Coordinator Sheik Nabijohn questioned if the attorney hired as consultant for discrimination cases represented Ricardo Cruz. President Spence responded no.

President Spence referenced the PEF Constitution, Item F and the 6 Convention Resolutions that dealt with Affirmative Action. In response, he reinvigorated the Joint Affirmative Action Committee. President Spence discussed a plan of action with Secretary Treasurer Hintz and decided not to engage an attorney, but instead brought someone in used by Parole. This individual gave advice to the Committee and agreed to train the PEF Field Representatives and members in discrimination cases. The administration came up with a pot of money to cover expenses. Vice President Adams sent cost information to President Spence and Secretary Treasurer Hintz.

Regarding the merger of Regional Offices 10 and 11, President Spence explained that it must be considered. If both leases were continued, over \$800,000 would be spent in one year on rent. A budget analysis was done and several properties in each location were viewed. Leasing versus buying options were also discussed. President Spence will bring this information to the Executive Board in March and make recommendations. Ultimately, the Board will decide.

Region 8 Coordinator Mike Blue brought up the position of Facilities Director, as these duties should be under this position, not the President. President Spence proposed the possibility of a Facilities Committee to handle this.

Region 2 Coordinator Andrew Puleo asked if there are possible shared services with AFT. President Spence explained that they are looking into this, much like NYSUT offices currently used in some Regions. He did ask AFT and SEIU for contacts for possible lease space.

**Chuck McRorie – Region 4:**

- DOT SW LM – Bill Holthausen has stepped down. Paul Gendron has replaced him.

- DOT New Title – replacing Civil Engineer title – conflicting stories among regions regarding this
- PAC meeting was well attended – endorsement made
- Volunteer outreach is good
- Promise to members to not give out contact info to big PEF
- Member Engagement – hard to reach younger members who have never worked outside the State
- Hutchins – Council Leader held Nurses meeting - Nancy Wolff, Organizer attended – losing beds and nurses
- Calendar full everyday with Union business
- Attending various Labor Council and Labor Federation meetings
- Suggestion: time limits on Regional Coordinator reports at Executive Council or make meetings 2 days

Region 6 Coordinator Jeanette St. Mary asked what PEF Civil Service is doing about the civil engineer topic. Region 2 Coordinator Andrew Puleo responded that Jim Kemenash is going to report out on what Headquarters is doing. Region 6 Coordinator Jeanette St. Mary requested a copy of this report by March 11, 2016.

President Spence spoke about the Organizing Department and the issue of 3600 fee payers. President Spence had a conversation with the Organizing Department and since then, has seen results.

President Spence moved the agenda to the Secretary Treasurer’s Report.

Secretary Treasurer Hintz reported the following:

- Current task at hand is to cut \$1.2 million from budget
- Similar cuts made in 2011 and 2012 due to decreasing membership
- Range of opinions on how to proceed in light of Friedrichs – Responsible to assume we will lose all fee payers – This stance is reflected in current budget.
- Would not call this an austerity budget, as mentioned in the previous minutes
- \$1.1 million cut from \$35 million budget is roughly 3% decrease
- 80% of budget is already spoken for leaving \$5 to \$6 million to play with
- Goal is no loss of staff jobs and no cut in direct services
- Regional, division and LM funding maintained
- Staff maintained
- Cut Committees
  - Looked at value of each, goal was to treat all fairly
  - No EOL for Special Interest Committees i.e. Veterans Committee

Secretary Treasurer Hintz opened the floor to questions.



Vice President Nikki Brate commented that cuts were made to the Women's Committee and IT Committee as well. The goal was to treat all committees fairly. She explained that the Political Action Committee was not cut to zero, but rather a separate account was set up to fund this.

Region 10 Coordinator Sheik Nabijohn asked why the PAC budget was cut by half. Secretary Treasurer Hintz explained that per policy, funding is \$.75 per member, plus rollovers and since all have generous rollovers, not much difference will be seen.

Region 10 Coordinator Sheik Nabijohn requested information regarding new hires, salaries and names under this administration. Secretary Treasurer Hintz will provide this information.

Trustee Maureen Kellman asked about the budget cuts coming from Committees and not services. Secretary Treasurer Hintz explained that if the Friedrichs case is not as bad as anticipated, money will be added back into the budget. The timing of the Friedrichs decision will also affect the budget.

Region 8 Coordinator Mike Blue commented that the Regional Coordinator dance at Convention was cut from the budget. Secretary Treasurer Hintz explained that now that Regions are properly funded, regions can contribute to this event. This event developed historically due to inadequate regional funds. Regions can now either do their own event or combine to host an event together.

Region 8 Coordinator Mike Blue recommended that a contingency budget be available in case PEF loses more than fee payers. He also noted that an additional Health and Safety staff person was not hired and that grant money was lost due to decreased training. He will provide more detailed analysis at the upcoming Executive Board meeting.

Vice President Brate asked how she can request funding for the Friedrichs campaign. Secretary Treasurer Hintz explained that a motion to fund the campaign will need to be made at Executive Board. The Board will need to approve funding from the AFT Solidarity Fund.

Region 1 Coordinator Rocco Brindisi suggested the \$.75/per member policy from 1983 be revisited.

Secretary Treasurer Hintz suggested that next year the budget be discussed in November as January is too late.

President Spence shared with the group that an OTDA employee is suing PEF under the same guise as the Friedrichs case. Lisa King, General Counsel, is working with the Attorney General and the Comptroller.

Region 8 Coordinator Mike Blue requested 2016 Legislative Guides be available at the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus event and was referred to Chris Leo, Chief of Staff. President Spence advised that anyone needing tickets for the reception see Chris Leo, Chief of Staff.

Region 11 Coordinator Jemma Marie Hanson provided an update on the Contract Team. The State presented 4 articles. More dates were demanded and the team is currently scheduled to meet with the State on 9 dates through the beginning of May.

President Spence reported out on the following:

- VP Adams working with Secretary Treasurer to get law enforcement committee up and running
- Andrew Puleo accepted position on Privatization/Go Public Campaign and will engage Executive Board members
- Kay Wilkie and Ken Ferro working on RFP issue
- Town Hall Meetings – schedule these meetings to build internal capacity – draw is contract update
- Regional Coordinator Training – top of agenda at next meeting – mentoring program and technical training – possible venues are Gideon Putnam and Sagamore – most likely in April
- Massive changes in Workers Comp/SIF – attorneys now building coalitions – Darlene Williams and Mohan Radhakrishna attended meeting on this

Meeting closed at 3:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by,



Rebecca Lalli  
Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer