



SWNC Meeting Minutes May 8th 2023.

1. Welcome/Introductions: Attendees: Patricia Richardson, Nora Higgins, Susan Billi, John Taverne, Vincent Cicatello, Jennifer Bradt, Dan Carpenter, Amy Pacholk, Debbie Egel, Margaret Dobbins, Karen Hockey with bad connection. Sherri Carr Joyner has resigned from the SWNC. Scott DeFruscio and Patrick Lyons to join meeting today as schedule allows.
2. Review of the Agenda/Previous March Minutes for approval. SWNC Bylaws are up and running on Nurse landing page, after they were approved by President Spence. SWNC March minutes were in fact from January. March minutes to be sent to the SWNC for approval via email, so they can be sent to President Spence for approval and posting on Nurses page on website.
3. Scott DeFuscio: Civil Service Q&A surrounding longevity in the midst of restructure:
Amy Pacholk SUNY SB stated, "there is confusion with longevity". Scott replied "With any title that was restructured they may have fallen below job rate, once they get back to job rate, they will need additional time for a combined 5 years credit to get the first longevity. Any member who wants to know where they are, Scott will be happy to help/talk them through it. Jen Bradt OPWDD stated "they have nurses that are having issues with the longevity credit". Scott said OSC manual has these things listed that deal with titles reallocated. Scott will share the manual with Nora so the members can send to HR. Nora states members in the step 5/6 @sg16 are now step 4 @Sg 18? Scott states "they get the greater of the calculation or step 4 of the Sg 18". Send Scott the specifics and he will do the recalculation. Jen Bradt stated, "someone that who has worked at OPWDD are in the same title as a new hire". Scott states that can only happen if they are experienced or hired as "appointment above the minimum". Nora asked, "is the hiring rate something that can be grieved? John states it depends on the supply and demand. They can be hired at step 1 if they have a lot of applicants. Scott states the agency can go to CS and asked to be hired at a higher rate. It all depends on recruitment and retention. Margaret Dobbins spoke about her issue - not receiving an increase in grade for (previous) RN3 title. Grievance filed and still pending. John stated the process can be lengthy. In closing Scott stated, "any issues, please reach out".
4. Deb Egel: Leadership Conversation. The "Code Red Campaign" was initiated by AFT to help the nurses during this staffing crisis. AFT did not want to dictate what the solutions should be, but wanted to hear from the union affiliates for a plan that had the backing of their local, with people and resources. If grant proposal accepted, affiliates would be eligible for (up to) \$100,000 grant. Just prior to the March 25th, 2023, Nurses Conference in Syracuse, President Spence announced that he wanted PEF to apply. Members at the Nursing Conference were educated about the campaign premise and had a breakout session that allowed the members to give feedback. Debbie, Amy, Nora, John, and Vinny wrote up a proposal within 2 weeks and submitted for the grant proposal. The next AFT Code Red meeting will be later today, and hopefully we will find out if the grant is approved. Sub Committees will be needed to get the work done. President Spence wants Debbie to train/ teach the group leadership skills. Debbie summarized that Nurses Lobby Day was a disappointment- SWNC involvement is a disappointment, and she needs the group to tell her how she can be of assistance to help them



with more involvement. John commented that people need time out for things like Lobby Day- people want to spend time with their family not to do things like Lobby Day. Debbie states the union needs to do a better job of communicating with members and ask for involvement. How do we motivate them as leaders? John stated “staff”- until staffing is fixed the members will be unhappy. Debbie states that we still need involvement. Debbie asked if anyone read the code red proposal- Susan states it seems like a lot of work. John stated he has stepped down as a Council Leader due to expectations and wants to focus his time on the committees he is on. Debbie said we should give the members 5 minutes to complain but also 5 minutes for solutions, the energy needs to be turned to something positive.;

5. Lobby Day Advocacy: Vinny stated the last few virtual Lobby Days have been successful. “We should have done virtual”. It was requested that before the year's end -that the team pick a date for 2024 Lobby Day. A “save the date” and getting other unions involved was also discussed. Request made to avoid nurse's week in the future- too much going at the job location. Debbie wants the team to ask the membership why they are not involved in Lobby Day. John asked if we could send out a questionnaire to the nurses asking why they did not attend. Debbie states they should work with Rene to get the survey going. Amy states people aren't talking to legislators due to being uncomfortable. Lobby day discussion about Statewide Political Action (PAC) members to have joined Nurses for lobby day together this year which yielded low registration from both committees. Many felt if the nurses did not get the raise, they would have come to Lobby Day. Debbie mentioned a social media campaign.

6. SWNC Open seats -currently vacancies in Regions 5, 8, 9, & 10, and 4 people not in attendance today. Possible recommendations for President Spence to consider; Jeff Taylor from Clinton CF, Rachel Amodio Kopp @ SUNY Upstate. John recommends we should also get retirees involvement. Discussed DOCCs L/M meeting being canceled. Question asked if OMH will have a conference in Mid-Hudson area? No one knew of this.

7. Roundtable discussion: Regional Nurses meetings. The Statewide Nurse Committee members should share statewide information locally, and local/regional meetings should be held to bring local issues to Statewide. Region 12 nurses committee purpose was read and will be emailed to all SWNC members.

John requested to have the next meeting (SWNC) in person and not at HQ/Albany- not sure of committee's budget. Nora will contact the finance department for updated SWNC budget. John mentioned having a small conference -something to get personal face to face time. Susan would prefer a blend and to have hybrid meeting. Amy stated September 12th was already marked as an “in person meeting”. John wanted an in-person meeting in a few weeks. It was pointed out that there is not enough time for EOL request, and most schedules are out that far already. John states special events should handle the planning- Ithaca was a location suggested. Mid-Hudson was suggested as a mid-way for all. May need to reach out to Diane Jaulus for advice for Reg 9 locations.



Discussion of possible convention resolutions- a bonus for higher education, CBA article for 24/7 employees. Past resolution sought 8-hour holiday credit for those who made it to work in state of emergency that was never addressed at convention. If not heard at convention, it must be resubmitted. (Doesn't roll into following convention).

Housekeeping: Committee reminded to use EOL time for today's meeting. SWNC members should not be using accruals to attend. Janay Anderson sent out an email requesting EOL forms for the January and March meetings to be submitted. Members will need to use the "Concur" app to be reimbursed for in-person meetings that require food/travel/etc.

Suggestion made for umbrellas as a gift at convention. Unanimously voted "yes".

Question asked about any expenditure for Lobby Day T-shirts? Answer was "no".

Discussion about repeating raffle baskets to raise scholarship money at convention, and holding scholarship for attendees again, verses opening it up Statewide. Amy reviewed how she offered 10 scholarships and had a hard time getting responses at Stony Brook. Possibility of incorporating the scholarship within the proposed survey. Considered doing 2; an email and hustle survey with one scholarship for each? Final decision pending*

8. What is your role on SWNC? Goals? Vision? How do you want to make an impact? Move the needle?

Amy's goal-She has a vision on what it should be, not sure of everyone's capacity, sees her role as an advocate for the people. Goal help people work on their mind set to achieve things or not to have it all be about money. How to get our members to move? Wants this committee to change nursing. She wants people to be more positive and be better.

John's Goal- leave the union and profession in a better state than when he came in, uplifting peers training new ones coming in.

Vinny's goal- wants to get information to nurses and encourage people on the committee to be a part of local union council meetings. More involvement with members with Area Labor Federations (ALF) or Central Labor Councils (CLC). More cohesive despite what happens in other regions. A win for one is a win for all.

Susan's goal- to work for the good of all RNS, improve the salary for RNS across the state.

Jen's goal- Empower, inspire. Face to face is best. Prior to joining SWNC she had no idea it existed-she wants to change that and improve the work environment.

Margaret's goal- is to get one person at a time engaged, and have them engage, and so on.

9. Setting up future meeting dates: September 12th, 2023, next in person meeting. Site TBA*. 12/4/23, 3/1/24, (by zoom). 4/15/24, and April 16th, 2024, LOBBY DAY

10. Patrick Lyons-Legislative updates; State budget passed, and you can view it on the PEF webpage. Had wins with Indexing the minimum wage to inflation, OMH reform, expansion of childcare credit, attraction to those who need childcare making under 92K. SUNY Stony Brook doing ok. SUNY hospital funding-Upstate has monthly operating deficit. SUNY Downstate has significant problems. Debt service \$68 million, \$72 million disproportionate share money, Fund for distressed hospitals \$950 million, Healthcare transition money from last year \$900 million. Which can be used for operational needs. Increase in Medicare reimbursement rate up 7.5%



(goal was 10%). Long term sustainability for all SUNY Hospitals. Long term viability to train the next generation of HC professionals.

Nurses' scholarship program continued. Civil Service exam fee is waived from July to 2025. Some SUNY/CUNY campuses will be used as testing sites. Paygrades study asking for at least 2 pay grades increase for all titles. Susan noted-Private nurses had big raises in winter and most pay nothing in healthcare. Paid paternal leave will be negotiated in contract. Agency Nurse Companies need to report to the state-their activities. Licensure oversight to DOH from SED defeated. Qualified mental health associate title defeated. 150 State operated mental health beds will be reinstated. Increase in outpatient services mental health (not state). \$12 million to OPWDD in Finger Lakes and 39 new beds for those with profound disabilities. Roswell received operating money. \$600 million reduction in capital (not hearing that it is a problem). Mandatory overtime with fines. Nurse Compact defeated. Out of state healthcare professionals extended 6 months with a sunset.

UUP with a Study Bill on SUNY downstate evaluating children's health outcomes. Patrick will send an article to Nora who can share with committee. Debbie reviewed Code Red with Patrick. Debbie asking how to get Nurses involved through the PAC- Patrick will connect both committees. Also, legislative letters are on the website. Local lobbying in lieu of in Albany. Nurses committee bill sponsored by Assemblywoman Gunther and Senator Rivera. NYSNA has some concerns.

Top Legislative priorities

1. Tier VI reform
2. Expanding the Worker healthcare bonus to those who have not received it.
3. Workplace Bullying-attempts to build a standard of behavior.
4. Telecommuting policy/opportunity
5. Protection of retiree health insurance-approval by Commissioner of civil service, division of budget, Majority Leader, and the Speaker of the House.
6. Improving the COLA for retirees
7. Less is more/HALT/ re-entry services/30 for 30 suspensions.
11. Committee report out:

Article 44 report: Susan Billi had a call with David Snyder on how SUNY Upstate is having computerized employee evaluations and how peer review is needed for magnet status. This has been reviewed through local L/M. Susan asked for minutes- never received. This should be referred to SUNY Central. Amy states this is not the case, peer review is optional. Amy went over the program from Stony Brook with optional peer review. Document kept in LR where managers have no access. DOCCS L/M will not have a meeting this year as the budget was minimized. PPC/Code Red- message moving out nationally. Advocacy for national staffing bill- Lobbying in Washington.

Clinical Staffing Committees- Bill for all HC agencies to participate with CSC, and system in place to trial staff -driven ratios that have been rejected twice.

Steering committee exists with multi-unions meeting twice a month. Currently working on ICU ratios.



Meeting Adjourned at 2:10pm. (No lunch break)