



MEA NEWSLETTER

September 2009

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1st Quarter MEA Membership Meeting Wrap Up

On Monday, September 14 the first MEA Membership Meeting of 09-10 provided an inside look at San Francisco politics, featuring former Board of Supervisors' President/current Democratic County Central Committee Chair Aaron Peskin and veteran Chronicle reporter Rachel Gordon. In a wide ranging interview Gordon pressed Peskin for his views on "set asides" (particularly the recent Prop A MTA version he spearheaded), the budget process, the relationship between the Board and the Mayor and the challenge presented by diminishing revenue and a voter population uninterested in increasing taxes. Peskin praised MEA's recent work in the policy and political arena and expressed his support for the Office of Management Budget (OMB) proposal put forward in MEA's White Paper. He reiterated that trust between the Board and the Mayor is fundamental in shifting the budget dynamic and he suggested that the City's managers need to make sure individual Supervisors know what is actually getting done within their departments. His assertion that "if they understand what you do and how complex it is" they are more likely to work collaboratively was welcome advice. He urged MEA to facilitate that education process especially among the newer members of the Board who are often hampered by lack of detailed information about the actual inner workings of City programs and departments.

In an open Q&A period, Peskin was asked about his future and who on the political horizon he thought was worth watching. While he denied any plans to seek office and declined to comment on any other potential candidates, he did encourage MEA to continue to expand its political program including holding similar forums to assess where the potential candidates for Mayor stand on the issues most important to public services and public employees. He noted that MEA is in a unique position to frame that discussion within the labor community because of the knowledge and expertise of its members.

Prior to the main event, brief reports were given on the status of Court and Housing Authority negotiations, upcoming changes in the Management Training Program and the 08-09 Year End Fiscal performance of MEA, which was also provided in writing. In addition members were asked to weigh in with recommendations to the PAC for November and to complete the recently launched MEA Strategic Planning Survey.

MEA Board Names Newest Member

At its meeting earlier this month, the MEA Board of Directors named Tina Olson, Deputy Director of Finance and Administration at the Port to the remaining vacant Board seat. Tina joins recent Board recruits Neal Taniguchi, Chief Financial Manager at the Department of Emergency Management and Mark Culkins, Court Manager, and her confirmation restores the Board to its full compliment of eleven members.

Tina brings both a wealth of budgeting experience within the City, and service to MEA as an active member on the White Paper Review Group as well as the Sub-Committee that looked at budget reform and MEA contract concessions. Neal spent many years at the Courts and also brings extensive expertise in budgeting and management to the Board. Mark was an active member of the MEA Bargaining Committee at the Courts and was instrumental in the recent multi-union coalition that worked together to deal with the legislatively mandated court closure.

Member leadership is the lifeblood of any organization and we welcome Tina, Neal and Mark to MEA Board service. The Association will be well served by these three experienced and respected managers and every member should be grateful for their willingness to give of their time and their expertise on behalf of public employees and public services.

Longtime Board Member Jean Mariani Steps Down

Jean Mariani recently announced her decision to give up her seat on the MEA Board of Directors. The significant contribution Jean made to MEA during her tenure cannot be overstated. Jean's many years of service to MEA, serving as a key member of the bargaining committee numerous times and lending her expertise in the City's budget process were invaluable to MEA and its members citywide. It was Jean Mariani who initiated the idea of MEA putting together a policy document on the budget process, and Jean's ongoing commitment to that project is in large measure responsible for the final product, the MEA White Paper.

MEA Strategic Planning Survey Now Online

Join fellow MEA members who have already weighed in and fill out the MEA Strategic Planning Survey which can be found online. The MEA Board of Directors is planning a one-day retreat in October and your input is absolutely crucial as they discuss how to identify prioritize and address the issues that matter most to members. **Do Not Delay – Take the MEA Survey Today** at:

http://www.kwiksurveys.com/online-survey.php?surveyID=OIEHL_cb06a8af

Management Training Changes Delayed

As previously reported the City's handling of Management Training Program reimbursements will soon be decentralized and requests for reimbursement will be submitted on a departmental level. Initially the change was scheduled to take place on October 1st but that date has now been pushed back to November 1st and may be changed again. Please look for a joint MEA-DHR email to be issued over the next few weeks setting out the final timeline and changes.

MTA Seeks Employee Input

MTA will soon launch an employee survey and we encourage MEA Managers at the Agency to participate. Under Proposition E, MTA is required to conduct the annual survey and this year a more comprehensive version is planned. The results will be integrated into MTA action planning so it is crucial that you make your voices heard.

Keep Us Posted: Change of Address

We cannot keep you informed if we do not know where you are! Make sure we have your current home address and personal email on file if you want to receive timely information about your contract, your benefits and your union. This information can be emailed to staff@sfmea. Please include a phone number so we can contact you if we have questions.

MEA Mission Statement: To enhance the quality of life for all San Franciscans and visitors by promoting sound government practices, supporting professional excellence for our City's managers, and maintaining the highest ethical standards in the delivery of service to the public.

MEA Board:	Mary Fitzpatrick, Treasurer	Sharyn Saslafsky	Staff:
Eileen Hirst, President	Rafael Centeno	Matt Smyth	Rebecca Rhine
David German, VP	Mark Culkins	Neal Taniguchi	Raquel Silva
Cheryl Austin, Secretary	Tina Olson	Bob Thomas	