

# Union News

• FROM THE FACULTY STAFF UNION •

## Elizabeth Mock, Long-time Union President Retires as UMass Archivist after 37 Years

DOROTHY SHUBOW NELSON, ENGLISH

*Now I could tell my story./ It was different from the story told about me./ And now also it was spring./ I could see the wound I had left/ in the land by leaving it. – “Mother Ireland” by Eavan Boland*

Elizabeth Mock is leaving UMass/Boston after a devoted career that spans 37 years. There will be an unmistakable void because of her determined efforts as a union officer, astute negotiator and committed activist and because she takes with her many stories – experiences that few people on this campus know about, particularly of her role as union president for this campus during nine very difficult years.

She began her career at UMB as a library assistant in 1973. After receiving her library degree in 1976 she became head of the Serials department in 1977. In 1979 she received her Masters in History from UMass Boston and was the first graduate from the Masters in History Archival Management program. At Walter Grossmann's invitation she started the Archives Department in 1981 and took over the special collections department in 1985.

**Please Join Us to Celebrate Elizabeth Mock's Contributions to our Union and our University**

**Wednesday, October 13 at 4:00 p.m.  
in the Alumni Lounge of the  
Campus Center  
Second Floor, Room 2551.**

ELIZABETH MOCK PICKETING THE STATE HOUSE IN 2003



In the 1980's she became a member of the bargaining team of UMB's Faculty Staff

Union. She has been involved in union work ever since in various capacities, serving on the executive committee and as union president. She was union president during the terms of four consecutive Republican governors, William Weld, Paul Celluci, Jane Swift, and Mitt Romney and was in the midst of negotiating the union contract during and after the catastrophic terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C on Sept. 11, 2001. Arthur MacEwan, who worked on the FSU Executive Committee with Elizabeth during most of her tenure as president, said that she was like a rock. In a recent discussion he made it clear that she was the force that kept things stable and on course during those trying times. Remembering Elizabeth's years as union president Arthur explained, "It's one thing to bargain with people you have difficulty with and another to be bargaining with people who are fundamentally opposed to unions and what they stand for."

In all her years serving on the bargaining team for the FSU the hardest struggle for funding a contract took place during the years 2001 – 2003. The contract had been settled. But after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, there was an economic crash in Massachusetts and the rest of the country. The administration and the state had agreed on the contract, the legislators had also voted for it but acting Governor Jane Swift in 2002 vetoed the negotiated pay raises she had once approved for all of the unionized workers in the system. The bill went back to the Legislature for an override.



## Letter from the President

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back to the new academic year – and to our third issue of Union News from the Faculty Staff Union. This newsletter includes more of David Hunt's early history of the FSU; an interview with former union president and University Archivist Elizabeth Mock; a report on the contract agreement of the new University College (formerly CCDE); details about what graduate assistants should (and shouldn't) be doing – and more.

The toughest part of this letter for me comes now. Our contract is not yet funded by the Commonwealth's legislature. We are assured by Speaker of the House, Robert DeLeo, that it will be passed in a House supplemental appropriations bill this fall. The Senate, in a symbolic vote in July, has already approved the funds (it's symbolic because all appropriations have to be initiated by the House). Recall that we are supposed to have a 1.5% raise as of June 30, 2010, followed by 3.5% raises on June 30 of 2011 and 2012. Recall also that we agreed to a new contract in late 2009; were forced to accept concessions to that contract in June 2010; and have been working since then to get it funded. We and the other higher education unions are very disappointed, and frustrated that we simply didn't have enough political clout to get these funds approved earlier despite all our efforts to persuade the legislature. All the UMass unions are also disheartened by the university administration's lack of strong active support to get these contracts funded.

Partly out of our frustration with the backsliding by the state on our contract, the FSU Executive Committee held a very successful retreat in August to assess our current situation and plan for the next couple of years. Our objectives include increasing our union presence at UMB and getting more members involved; providing better orientation to new faculty members, and creating a faster way to get information to all of you. We want to work more effectively with unions on other UMass campuses and increase our visibility in the state legislature. All of us should continue to lobby (calls, visits, letters) for fair and timely funding of our contracts, and for support for public higher education in Massachusetts.

Looming on the political horizon are two key election issues. The first is Question 3, which proposes a disastrous slashing of the state sales tax to 3%. (One poll puts Questions 3 ahead by 10 points. Find out more at [votenoquestion3.com](http://votenoquestion3.com)). The other is the election for governor. In late September you should have received a package of materials from us in your mailbox which gives more details. We urge you to become informed and talk to your family, neighbors and friends about these issues. This November 6th election is really important. If Question 3 passes, we're in real trouble no matter who is the governor. I urge you to vote and, if you're not yet registered, please register; you have until October 13th to do so.

Finally, I hope to see you on October 13th, 4:00 pm, when we gather to celebrate the contributions of Elizabeth Mock to our union and the university. The event will be held in the Alumni Lounge of the Campus Center on the 2nd floor, room U02-2551.

Regards,

*Catherine Lynde*

CATHERINE LYNDE, ECONOMICS  
PRESIDENT, FACULTY STAFF UNION

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When you write letters to the editor you are writing to the community that reads this newsletter.

Please send letters to the editor, comments, questions and suggestions to the Faculty Staff Union.  
[fsu@umb.edu](mailto:fsu@umb.edu)  
617-287-6295  
Union News is a publication of the Faculty Staff Union at UMass Boston.

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Sabrina Askari, David Hunt, Larry Kaye, Catherine Lynde, Dorothy Nelson, Lorenzo Nencioli, and Amy Todd

For a list of union officers, information about the union, contract and other matters please visit the FSU website:  
<http://www.fsu.umb.edu>

## Elizabeth Mock continued

Elizabeth Mock recalled that time. "There was a long fight to convince the legislature to override that veto. It was a difficult campaign. We stood outside and picketed in front of the state house every day for a long time. We talked to senators and representatives. We called into Finneran's office." But speaker of the house, Thomas Finneran did not follow the democratic process and prevented that veto from coming up for an override vote.

That situation resulted in an intense campaign by all of public higher education unions to get those contracts funded. Elizabeth summarized the plans that they developed. "We formed an alliance called Higher Education Unions United. There were demonstrations, contacts with legislators, in-district meetings, lobbying with other public sector unions, and a picket at the state house on a daily basis with a banner that noted how many days we had worked without our new contracts being funded."

The highlight of the Boston strategy was to emphasize that this was a contract the state had to honor. "The tide started to change," she claimed, "when we talked about it as a labor issue. The AFL-CIO stepped in because of this labor focus. The AFL-CIO said it would withhold funds from certain candidates from public office if the state did not fund the contract. It took a couple of years, until 2003, to get that money funded. It was very stressful." Elizabeth added that during that struggle, there were times that very few members of the faculty from UMass/Boston were on the picket line with the union officers. She had the feeling that faculty overall saw her and Arthur MacEwan as the union and that they acted "as if we were a service organization."

There were other struggles that she recalled. At one time while Elizabeth was on the executive committee, Governor Weld put everyone on forced furlough. The MTA sued and they won and the state was required to pay back all wages. That judgment was also based on the fact that these employees have a contract and it must be honored.

## Victories for Part-time faculty

The struggle for benefits for part-time or non-tenure track faculty (NTT) was a more positive experience. NTT faculty won health insurance benefits, a huge

victory, in 1998. Major improvements in wages and opportunities for promotion, followed in subsequent contracts. Elizabeth explained that full-time faculty had to give something up for the part-time faculty to accomplish these gains, especially the much needed health benefits. This struggle succeeded because NTT faculty were highly organized and made a committed effort to include full-time faculty and even administrators in their struggle. She said, "It was exciting to see the outpouring of signed petitions and letters to the legislators." Looking back she summed up

"The tide started to change," she claimed, "when we talked about it as a labor issue. The AFL-CIO stepped in because of this labor focus. The AFL-CIO said it would withhold funds from certain candidates from public office if the state did not fund the contract. It took a couple of years, until 2003, to get that money funded...."

at least two major reasons for the victories of part-time faculty. 1) Problems were identified and information that brought those problems to the forefront was disseminated. 2) The solidarity throughout the campus was strong, continuous and visible. Elizabeth underscored, "this is how bargaining works. It is more difficult without on-going organizing." Elizabeth's support of the part-time faculty's struggle for health insurance and increased wages was not lost on other union activists. Arthur made it clear by saying, "She never

took a parochial view concerning part-time faculty. She facilitated the efforts of part-time faculty, they were important to her, because fairness is important."

After talking with Elizabeth and with Arthur I was struck by how little we know about people who work hard behind the scenes for the benefit of others. It is the back story that we rarely hear, especially because many of these people do not talk about themselves, about what they are doing and what they are going through. Academia can generate an elitist culture, similar in many ways to corporate culture. It's unusual to hear about the good work, sacrifices, burdens, stresses, initiatives and intelligence of people a bit outside of the elitist circles.

If you have read this article and did not know Elizabeth, I hope what you take from these pages is that her prime concern as union president and union activist was fairness. She heard members recount many stories of injustices, took the stories to heart and went to bat for them. There are probably only a few people on this campus that know how much she carried on her shoulders.



## Origins of the FSU, Part II

**Part I** which appeared in the spring 2010 issue of “Union News,” the FSU newsletter, discussed the development of tenure granting procedures, tenure controversies, and the administration push for “tenure quotas” at UMass/Boston in the decade after the opening of the University in 1965. As noted then, the treatment is a personal recollection rather than a fully realized history of the FSU, written from the point of view of someone who was a junior faculty member from 1969 to 1975. Much of it is based on “Faculty Primary Responsibility at UMass/Boston,” written by David Hunt and Jack Spence in 1981.

DAVID HUNT, HISTORY

The decisive year, 1974-1975 began with departments positively recommending 23 out of 28 tenure candidates. The CPC vetoed 7 out of these 23, and the deans, the provost, and the chancellor also dissented from peer evaluations in a number of cases. Yet when the returns were in, all of the negative recommendations had not blocked as many candidates as proponents of a tenure quota might have wished. The administrators of that era were either faculty members with distinctive educational philosophies and multiple ties to the rest of the faculty (Knight, Babcock, Steamer, Spaethling); or they were newcomers, like Dean Daisy Tagliacozzo, who hastened to find a constituency once they arrived on campus. Even the relatively isolated Chancellor Golino, who later was to lose a vote of confidence among the faculty, had a recognizable following on behalf of which he was ready to contend with other administrators. The first loyalties of these educators were to pedagogical principles and to faculty allies who shared their aspirations, rather than to the administration itself. Instead of acting in concert, they often publicly disagreed with each other as well as with departments. Candidates who were positively recommended by their peers, then denied by one echelon, often received support from the next, with the result that most could demonstrate some significant support from the bureaucracy as well as from the faculty by the time their dossiers reached the president's office.

Faced with this situation, President Wood tried in the spring of 1975 to exercise his own veto against a number of candidates. In four instances, he delayed recommending tenure until well into the summer. In another four, he put up a more prolonged resistance.

**A language instructor was denied by both department and administration in 1972-1973, then tried again in 1973-1974, received a 2-2 vote at department level, followed by positive recommendations from the dean, provost, and chancellor. The president's office announced in late summer 1974 that it would not follow suit, the candidate appealed, and the case dragged on through the next year, becoming associated with those of the 1974-1975 cohort.**

**A candidate in the social sciences also had originally been considered in 1972-1973 and had been turned down by both department and administration. He tried again beginning in the fall of 1974, receiving a positive recommendation from the department, a negative from the CPC, a negative that was later switched to a positive from the dean, and a positive from the provost and the chancellor, before being turned down by the president.**

**Another candidate in the social sciences received a 4-3-1 positive vote from his department in the fall of 1974. The CPC and the dean both made negative recommendations, followed by a positive from the chancellor and a negative from the president.**

**A candidate from the sciences was positively recommended by his department. Between 1972 and 1976, the liberal arts at UMB were divided into two separate colleges, while physics and chemistry stood apart in their own “central administration,” directly under the jurisdiction of the provost. The faculty advisory committee formed to review tenure cases for those two departments found against the candidate, but the provost joined the department in making a positive recommendation. The chancellor first voted no, then was persuaded to switch over into the other camp, and the president followed with a negative.**

By 2010 standards, the details in these cases call attention to disarray at department level, where changes of mind from one year to the next and split votes seemed to invite trouble further along. Divisions within the faculty were again apparent as departments and the CPC often clashed. But the faculty of the mid-1970s, with great vehemence, insisted on the principle that its will, even when made manifest in highly contested tallies, ought to prevail. The fact that the tenure procedure had been transformed into a prolonged ordeal, marked by jarring and seemingly arbitrary reversals from one level to the next, fueled a conviction that candidates were being subjected to cruel and unusual punishment.

The year's tenure cases reached the president's office in March 1975, and by the end of the month news that they were running into difficulties began to spread. The mood on campus was already tense as a result of a series



of initiatives from President Wood, for example, his announcement that full-time professors were to teach three courses per semester rather than two (in UMB's first decade, the full-time faculty carried a 2-2 load and everyone else carried a 3-3). Also significant, in the words of Seymour Katz of the English Department and chair of the Assembly Personnel Policy Committee, was the unannounced and unexpected arrival toward the end of February of the Ad Hoc Multi-campus Personnel Policies Committee's working draft entitled Academic Personnel Policy of the University of Massachusetts. That document arrived with instructions that the separate campuses complete their review by March 31. The unexpected arrival of that document, together with its impossible deadline, led us to ask each other whether the people who sent us the document were utterly ignorant of UMB's governance procedures or were deliberately subverting them.

The sudden appearance of the "working draft," which turned out to be the basis for the "Red Book" of 1976, and the disputed tenure cases came together to create an explosive mood on campus.

Discontent found expression in the remarkable faculty meeting of April 2, 1975. Suspicious of the "administrative channel" championed by George Goodwin (Politics) and of the Ad Hoc Multi-campus Committee represented by David Landy (Anthropology), some, but not all of the faculty were ready to consider the possibility of forming a union. Speaking for the Junior Faculty Association, precursor of the FSU, Keitha Fine (Politics) declared that the junior faculty were increasingly concerned about personnel policies, especially tenure quotas and had concluded that the most powerful option open to the faculty was to build and work for a strong, independent, faculty-based union.

By a vote of 188-27-5, the meeting went on to affirm its commitment to the principle that "faculty judgment on personnel actions will be reversed by the administration only in 'rare' cases and for 'compelling reasons to be stated in detail.'" It further specified that "administrative review of personnel matters should deal with the particular interests and reflect the special competence of the administrative level concerned and should as a rule not repeat the professional evaluation made by the faculty." These affirmations echoed the 1966 AAUP statement of principles that had served as a point of reference for faculty pronouncements on tenure in the early years of UMass/Boston and once again protested against the administration practice of conducting de novo reviews of tenure cases. In a final vote, the administration demanded that the chancellor and the president respond in writing before April 15.

President Wood did write back a few days later, declaring that "the primary responsibility of the faculty in academic matters and in matters of faculty status" amounted to the "capacity to initiate recommendations." He went on to state: "I find little substantive difference between the language of our governance document and that of AAUP in the application of administrative action. Reversing a department, dean or chancellor decision is serious business," he noted, "and barring a general breakdown of the process, is done only in exceptional circumstances and for written reasons."

The faculty persisted in seeing a difference between the two formulations and between their own notion of primary responsibility and the manner in which the president's office was handling that year's tenure cases. As a result, another faculty meeting, on May 15, empowered an ad hoc "Faculty Committee" to produce a response to the president's letter. There were approximately 200 faculty at the May 15 meeting and according to the minutes the motion to create the committee passed "without opposition."

In the fall of 1975, the Faculty Committee presented a number of motions for the consideration of their colleagues. Among them was the demand that Trustees of UMass/Boston recognize the principle that faculty recommendations on faculty status will be reversed only in "rare instances" and for "compelling reasons . . . stated in detail." This principle had been violated in the cases of the four professors denied by President Wood, the committee argued, and it demanded that Wood and the Board of Trustees grant tenure to all four. A faculty meeting on September 24, 1975, passed the motion on faculty responsibility (tally unrecorded, some 110-120 in attendance). It further moved by a vote of 53-46 to demand action on the four tenure cases by October 20. Members of the Faculty Committee then met with some board members to try to find a way of resolving the standoff, but without gaining any concessions from the other side.

Seemingly united in the spring of 1975, the faculty had not fully thought out the implications of the statement it was making, and its ambivalence emerged strikingly in the fall. When the motion was made to "demand" that the trustees affirm the principle of primary responsibility (September 24), three senior faculty argued instead for the phrase "calls upon." An amendment to this effect was defeated 60-57. Still troubled, the faculty reopened this issue once more in its meeting of September 29, at which time an amendment was again introduced in favor of "calls upon." It passed by a vote of 72-38-2, but clearly without resolving the issue. Were the trustees adversaries to be bluntly confronted? Or were they

partners in a common endeavor, whose good will should not be recklessly sacrificed? The hesitations over “demanding” satisfaction and the tendency to retreat back to a familiar, though unpromising, approach centered on the University Assembly.

The campaigns of 1975 mobilized support on an unprecedented scale and in the end achieved a measure of success. The delayed tenure cases were passed through by the president and the Board of Trustees in the summer of 1975, and outside review committees were formed to consider the cases of two of the four faculty denied by President Wood. These committees sided with the candidates, and as a result one received tenure in 1976 and the other in 1977. Still, this whole episode persuaded many that primary responsibility would remain vulnerable unless the faculty could find some more powerful way of safeguarding its prerogatives.

## An Independent, Faculty-based Union is Born

The campaign to form a faculty-staff union was the beneficiary of this line of thought. Junior faculty and part-time faculty had begun to meet to discuss the idea of a union in the spring of 1974. This group produced a number of position papers in the following summer, then helped organize the Ad Hoc Junior Faculty Association, which in December 1974 unanimously voted to begin a unionization drive (about 50 people were present at that meeting). The union effort received a kind of official, although contested, recognition when it was accorded a place on the agenda of the April 2, 1975, faculty meeting. Union spokespersons figured prominently in the debates that followed and several were members of the Faculty Committee. A vote in April 1975 designated the MTA as bargaining agent for the faculty and staff, and the union won the certification election conducted in the fall of 1976.

Unionization seemed to be the logical next step, but the level and strength of its following within the faculty remained to be tested. So did the ties between the UMass/Boston and UMass/Amherst wings of the union, who would have to work together as collective bargaining loomed. The administration was clearly not well disposed, but its resistance and the sorts of tactics it might employ were not yet known. A hazardous path toward union recognition and the first contract lay ahead.

Part III will appear in the next issue of the Union News.

## New Agreement Achieves Salary Increases for U C Faculty (formerly CCDE)

LARRY KAYE, PHILOSOPHY, VICE PRESIDENT, FSU

At the end of spring semester 2010 the FSU concluded the University College (CCDE) bargaining that began in September 2009. The bargaining team consisted of Larry Kaye and Kathy Kogan (co-chairs) and also John Hess, Sandy Howland and Robert Sauer, and Michele Gallagher, our MTA consultant. This bargaining only concerned in-person UC courses; we are slated to bargain over on-line teaching in the near future.

**A number of good gains for teachers in UC and for non-tenure track (NTT) faculty were made. Here are the main changes:**

**Unit membership:** Per course lecturers hired without benefits (usually 3 courses) are not in the bargaining unit until their second year (first course taught in 2nd consecutive year) this applies equally to those teaching in UC.

**Probation:** NTT faculty are probationary for the first 3 years and reviewed during their third year. This applies equally to those teaching in UC.

**Increased course rates:** The per course probationary rate is \$4109 for both regular/day courses and for UC courses. The post-probationary rate is now \$4477 for UC as well as for regular courses; the rates are effective July 1, 2010 for UC. The rates are scheduled to increase by 2.25% each of the next two years, contingent on funding of the contract.

**Simplified Summer/Winter priority lists:** A new Summer/Winter priority list will be generated for each department by taking the current ranking (total UC courses taught) of faculty who are presently in the Summer/Winter pool for that department and creating an ordinal list. Anyone who begins teaching Summer/Winter courses (due to course availability after assignments to those on the list) will be added to the end of the list.

**Just Cause protection:** NTT faculty faced with disciplinary action are entitled to the same type of “just cause” hearing procedure that tenured faculty are entitled to.

## Honoring the Rights and Responsibilities of Graduate Assistants

SABRINA ASKARI, ORGANIZER,  
GRADUATE EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION

A graduate assistant attending graduate school on a student visa sits behind his computer for eight hours every day without going to the bathroom because his professor scowls when he requests a break. Another graduate assistant spends 6 hours in the library one day doing research for her professor when she is contracted to work 4.5 hours per week. Yet another graduate assistant carries books from his professor's car to his office, spending the rest of week icing his sore back.

The Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) was formed in 2000 and organized by the United Auto Workers. The first contract with the university was ratified in 2001. This union of graduate assistants on the University of Massachusetts Boston campus increasingly receives complaints from graduate assistants about working more than their contracted hours or performing labor intensive tasks not stipulated by their contracts. Occasionally, the GEO committee learns about their members performing these tasks directly from the members who are experiencing violations of their contracts. Members who do inform the GEO committee about instances where their professors requested that they perform tasks outside of their responsibilities, usually refuse to file a grievance or confront their professors. Graduate assistants typically work for professors who are also faculty members of their respective programs; thus, they are often students in their courses. Due to the nature of the dual relationships between graduate assistants and their employers, many fear that challenging their professors in the context of their employer-employee relationships will negatively impact their professor-student relationship and possibly affect their grades.

However, the GEO committee members frequently learn about their members performing tasks outside of their contracts through word-of-mouth. Unfortunately,

this means that most graduate assistants are unaware of their rights as employees of the university and are consequently taken advantage of. In either situation, it appears that graduate assistants are at risk of performing more work than they are being compensated for or performing work for which they are not responsible.

Sabrina Askari



**Graduate assistants are at risk of performing more work than they are being compensated for or performing work for which they are not responsible.**

the assigned course. Research assistants are contracted to perform academic research to include "gathering and analysis of data, conducting bibliographical searches, the development of theoretical analysis and models, the production or publication of scholarly journal and research reports, which are for the benefit of the university, its faculty, centers, institutes, or an academic staff supervisor, or a granting agency, and secondarily for the graduate student employee's own research" (Section 1.03). Finally, administrative assistants are hired to perform administrative work. Graduate assistants may only be asked to perform clerical or secretarial tasks that are directly related to the graduate employee's primary assignment and not of a personal nature.

As we begin a new semester, the GEO would like to remind professors of the contractual rights and responsibilities of graduate assistants employed in their departments. (Please contact [geo@umb.edu](mailto:geo@umb.edu) with any questions or comments).

### Contractual Rights of Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistants are hired as either teaching assistants I or II, research assistants, or administrative assistants. A graduate assistant hired as a teaching assistant I is obligated to "coordinate, lead, or assist in the instructional process in preparation and direct interaction with students in lab, discussion, quiz, examination, or problem sessions" (Section 1.03). A teaching assistant II has independent responsibility for the teaching and grading of



## Members Urged to Take Action at All Union Meeting

Tom Goodkind and Paul Toner address a large crowd at UMass Boston.

LORENZO NENCIOLI, FSU MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

On Tuesday, September 28th hundreds of members from the Classified Staff Union, Faculty Staff Union, and Professional Staff Union attended a meeting to discuss the current contract-funding situation. Tom Goodkind, President of the Professional Staff Union, early in the program, pronounced that it's time for the unions to stop acting like pawns and to fight back against the disrespectful treatment they have received. The time had come, he asserted, for the unions to take more dramatic action. He urged all union members to attend a rally organized by PHENOM (Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts) on Thursday,



**It's time for the unions to stop acting like pawns and to fight back against the disrespectful treatments they have received.**

— TOM GOODKIND

October 7th at 1:30 PM at the State House. The rally is meant to give a strong message to the governor and to legislators to defend public higher education in the state. But the unions also need to send a message to the state house to keep their word on the contracts. Goodkind maintained that if enough people from UMass/Boston attended the rally the UMB administration would surely notice their absence and take the distress of union members more seriously.

In his remarks he reminded people that all the higher ed unions had ratified the latest contracts by early Spring 09. Despite this approval, the legislature failed to pass a bill that would have funded the contracts. In early 2010, the governor asked the unions to renegotiate the contracts and take concessions. But the stance of union members was a refusal to re-negotiate the contracts. As Goodkind conveyed, "Instead of re-negotiating, we fought them to get the contracts funded as originally negotiated and ratified. Re-negotiating and taking concessions in the form of delayed raises, is what we were finally forced to do in order to get the contracts funded. Except that even that hasn't worked."

In the question and answer period that followed union members responded with a wide array of concerns and comments. Some felt that the unions should be pushing for even more dramatic actions to get the contracts funded while others voiced concerns that pushing too far on this issue will alienate the general public and harden anti-union and anti-state worker sentiment.

Following comments from Classified Staff Union President Shauna Manning, the meeting closed with a talk from MTA President Paul Toner, who discussed the MTA's decision to endorse the re-election campaign of Governor Patrick and the MTA's campaign against ballot questions 1 and 3 which would completely eliminate the sales tax on alcohol and roll back the state sales tax from 6.5% to 3% respectively. Toner noted that Patrick has been a great friend of labor and public education in the state despite having to navigate the state through treacherous economic times. He claimed that Patrick's actions during this time have saved thousands of public education jobs that otherwise would have been lost during the recession. He also presented in no uncertain terms what would happen to the public sector if Charlie Baker were to be elected governor and followed through on his campaign promise to reduce the state payrolls: thousands of state workers, including hundreds of UMB union members, would lose their jobs. Toner closed his talk by urging union members to vote no on Questions 1 and 3. He said that Question 3 alone, if passed, would cost the state billions in revenue and would result in the decimation of the public sector, including the UMass system.

A vigorous discussion followed Toner's talk. For the most part, the audience seconded his support for Patrick and his opposition to questions 1 and 3. But one union member urged colleagues to support Green Party gubernatorial candidate Jill Stein and to support question 3 as it is a regressive tax that disproportionately impacts working and low-income residents of the state. Another believed that Governor Patrick was not a friend of labor and that none of the gubernatorial candidates should be supported.

Despite the high level of union member frustration over the unfunded contracts and the dissatisfaction directed at the Governor and legislature for their inability or unwillingness to have the contracts funded, a civil tone was maintained during the meeting. Members voiced their resentment and disagreements while upholding solidarity with their union colleagues.