



Science in Action

Wisconsin Science Professionals Local 3732

Volume 7, May 2008

In this issue: 2007-2009 Ratification, Contract Copies, Dues Changes, ULI

**Dates to remember: WSP Board Meeting May 31st, 2009 (Members Welcome)
Great Lakes Union Leadership Institute - July 27 - 31, 2008**

Contract Ratified !!

The Science Professionals membership has ratified the tentative agreement with the State. Ballots were counted on Monday, May 12th, with 2/3 of eligible votes cast and a clear majority supporting the agreement. Raw vote totals will not be released as we want to keep the State in the dark about whether the membership thought it was a great deal or barely passed it. If you would like to know the count please contact Gary Steffen: president@wspunion.org, or Matt Roach: roachmj@mail.slh.wisc.edu.

Budget Deal Reached

Legislative leaders have announced the details of the budget repair bill. As many of you know, state statutes require that the state have a balanced budget. Not long after the Governor signed the 2007-09 budget into law, the Fiscal Bureau announced that there was a budget deficit and a budget repair bill would be necessary. The Fiscal Bureau estimated that the state was \$625.3 million in deficit.

The legislature is expected to take up the budget repair bill on Tuesday and Wednesday. The budget will not be amendable by either the Assembly or the Senate, so barring vetoes from the Governor, there should be few surprises in the final bill. The following is the most important piece concerning our contract:

*Lapse \$69 million from state agencies to the general fund.

The 2007-09 budget that was passed in October called for a \$200 million dollar lapse to state agencies. The budget repair bill calls for an additional lapse of \$69 million. The budget repair bill specifies that \$50 million of the lapse should come from the Department of Transportation highway bonds. (This money will be replaced by bonding). **The additional \$19 million will come from the compensation reserve as a result of the tentative agreements reached with state employee unions and non-represented state employees (UW employees). All non represented state employees had previously been given a 2%-2%-1% increase in salaries over the biennium. The budget adjustment bill is reflective of a change in this increase to 2%-1%-2% over the biennium.**

Once the repair is out of the way we would expect the legislature to act swiftly on state contracts, with action coming as early as next week.

2007 – 2009 WSP Bargaining Agreement Copies

We will be changing the way we deal with bound printed contracts once the 2007 – 2009 agreement is finalized. In the past many members have told us that they don't want or need a printed copy if they have web access to it. Rest assured we will still provide printed copies to those members who want one! Sometime after the contract becomes final, look for a survey asking who would like a printed copy. We will print the appropriate number of copies and mail them out. Please note this agreement does not cover WSP members at the UW Hospital, who should have copies of their own recent agreement.

The contract will also be posted on the union's website and the site of the Office of State Employment Relations. Copies can be printed from either site, but be aware that the agreement is ≈150 pages.



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Dues News #1

Partial Dues Rebate

At the recent Wisconsin Science Professionals (WSP) convention, an amendment was made to the constitution regarding the partial dues rebate. Previously the partial dues rebate was called the part time dues rebate. Until 2007, members could only request the part time dues rebate if they worked 0.5 FTE or less AND earned less than a specified amount. In 2007, a constitutional amendment approved at the WSP convention changed the wording for the partial dues rebate to remove the 0.5 or less FTE requirement, and use only the annual gross wages as the criteria for the rebate.

At the 2007 convention, the annual gross wages amount was set at \$32,000. Effective April 27th, 2008, **WSP members earning less than \$34,000 in annual gross wages at their state employment position are eligible for the partial dues rebate.**

At the fall 2007 American Federation of Teachers-Wisconsin (AFT-W) convention, an amendment changed the wording for part-time per caps to "earning less than \$34,000". WSP pays per caps to our affiliate AFT-W, based the wording in their constitution. To allow for consistency between the organizations and to benefit our members, WSP approved a new amendment at the 2008 convention.

The rebate is based on the previous year per cap amounts paid to AFT-W and American Federation of Teachers-National (AFT-N). The currently rebate is \$ \$17.91/month (\$53.72/qtr), paid quarterly at the end of the quarter.

How do you get the partial dues rebate? It's easy! Email the treasurer at treasurer@wspunion.org and request to be added to the partial dues rebate recipients. The treasurer will verify your annual gross wages and notify you of when to expect the rebate. Each quarter wages will be verified to make sure you are still eligible.

You are required to notify the treasurer of a change in your FTE and/or hourly wage immediately after the change. If you fail to notify the treasurer of a change and the change made you ineligible for the partial dues rebate, you will be required to repay the amount of rebate paid in error.

Dues News #2

Increase in Per Capita Payments to AFT-National

The American Federation of Teachers-National (AFT-N) convention will be held this summer in Chicago. WSP will be sending several delegates and we hope to make our voice heard, especially on one important vote. This year, as every year, there is a proposal to increase per capita payments paid by locals affiliated with AFT-N (i.e., the national organization part of our dues).

WSP objects strongly to such an increase as we must pass those increases down to our members by raising the dues deduction. There is no stated reason for the increase and WSP does not support any increase in per capita payments at this time. Everyone has to tighten their belts as the economy experiences a "correction".

At this time, WSP will not support a vote to raise dues. It is time to step back and reprioritize using the existing funds and income. It is misguided to expect members to pay an increase in dues when the raise in the cost of living is causing everyone to reconsider every expense and wages are not keeping up with inflation.

Great Lakes Union Leadership Institute - July 27 - 31, 2008

Great Lakes ULI is a four-day training and leadership development program. Its purpose is to provide hands-on learning of union skills, to acquaint you with the AFT and its issues, and to give you a chance to exchange information with your union brothers and sisters in a relaxed, casual setting with wonderful resort amenities. The program is open to any AFT member, but is designed with the needs of the Great Lakes region in mind. It will be held at the Lake Lawn Resort, Delavan, WI. This year's topics include:

Union leadership skills



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Effective grievance administration
Effective union communication

Introduction to negotiations
Building a political and legislative powerhouse

Commuter rate: \$225 per person
Single occupancy: \$735 per person
Double occupancy: \$465 per person
Triple occupancy (loft): \$450 per person

Registration rates cover lodging, a reception on Sunday, two dinners, four breakfasts, four lunches and coffee breaks throughout the week. For questions about the Union Leadership Institute call 1-800-238-1133 x4497.

For more information, including how to register, go to: <http://www.upilocal4100.org/pdfs/2008/042908ULItaining.pdf>

PLEASE NOTE! FINAL REGISTRATION DEADLINE is June 20. No refunds for cancellations received after July 18.

Help Your Union

The table below lists the current WSP leadership. Please note: there are currently five vacancies – that's where you come in! Would you like to fill one? If so, contact a current representative or email president@wspunion.org. Terms are two years. However, in the odd numbered districts one year of the term has already been completed. Approximately 5 board meetings are held throughout the year on Saturdays with travel, meals and lodging paid.

Executive Committee

President

Gary Steffen – DNR

1st Vice Pres.

Lisa Treffinger – DOJ

2nd Vice Pres.

Matt Roach - UW

Treasurer

Brooke Ludwig – DNR

Membership Secretary

Sara Schreiber- DOJ

Recording Secretary

Chiara Wuensch – DOJ

Grievance Chair

Carol McCurry - DNR

Newsletter Editor

Donalea Dinsmore - DNR

Representative Council

District 1

Constantine Tsois, Ron Grasshof, Percy Mather, 2 Vacancies

District 2

Sandy Koresch – DOJ, Karla Leithoff- DOT

District 3

Vacant (contact District 2)

District 4

Vacant (contact District 6)

District 5

Rick Thorbjornsen – DNR

District 6

Ron Schneider – DNR

District 7

Vacant (contact District 5)

District 8 UW Hospital

Dave Vandermeuse – UWHCA

AFT WI VP

John Burger - UWHCA

Science in Action provides short, timely articles on major issues affecting membership and is released on and as-needed basis. References for additional information are provided at the end of most articles. Science in Action is coordinated with stories and articles that appear in the Professionally Speaking, newsletter, and our website: www.wspunion.org