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REPORT

MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING FRIDAY/SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6-7, 2009

The MTA Board met recently in Waltham, Friday evening and all day Saturday. The following is a report from your Region 44H directors.

Margaret joined the MTA Board at its August meeting at Williamstown.

The recently completed annual MTA Audit was presented by MTA Director of Financing and Accounting and MTA Auditor. The audit was clean. There were no unusual transactions, no anomalies, no major issues, or difficulties in performing audit.

Two routine business items: The MTA Ethnic Minority Involvement Plan was adopted as is the case every year. No changes were proposed this year, but there may be some next year as the resurrection of the Minority Internship Program gets underway. Members on MTAB whose terms were up, were nominated and re-elected by the Board.

Some work is being done by Richard Sanders, Director of Affiliate Services to organize, among other groups, those involved in early childhood education. There is an attempt here to build a coalition of MTA/AFT/SEIU. Note implications to higher education: Richard was made aware in an external conversation that early childhood teachers are already unionized under the MCCC, where they teach in children's schools on community college campuses.

Some information was presented regarding the various ballot initiatives underway. Those responsible for bringing Question 1 to the voting booths last year have a number of initiatives going forward. Signatures are being collected across the state. MTA has a "think before you ink" campaign to make members aware of these attempts.

Barbara Capuano, wife of Mike Capuano, addressed the Board on Saturday morning. She thanked the MTA board for endorsing her husband and said that it was the one he most wanted because of his lifelong devotion to the cause of public education. She spoke of Capuano's involvement in Somerville politics before he ran for Congress. During his tenure as Somerville Mayor, he reduced class size to 19. In Congress he voted against No Child Left Behind, against the U.S. going to war in Iraq, and against the USA Patriot Act. She emphasized that Capuano will not compromise on: (1) war/peace, (2) civil rights (3) human rights. He is also very committed to fiscal responsibility and characterizes himself as a "Pay as you go" legislator. Board members were directed to www.mikecapuano.com to find out more about Candidate Capuano.

George Larson spoke about the Teacher's Trust Fund, which was set up to help locals deal with the costs incurred when they engage in union action. There is a need for additional funds and volunteers to serve. Locals have been called on to support this.

Civil Rights awardee, John Reed, MTA retired, spoke about the need to support State House bill H 3430, a drop-out prevention bill that would advocate for a common sense approach to expelling students from school, with an emphasis on due process being applied in each case.

Human Relations Committee Chair, Gladys Durant, announced the creation of a new award that would be given in the name of MTA retired member (and former MTA President) Kathleen Roberts for her extraordinary commitment to creative and outstanding leadership in support of students, schools and their communities.

Kerrie Costello, chair of the Candidate Recommendation Committee, discussed the procedure that led to MTA's endorsement of Mike Capuano, reinforcing what Don William, who is on the CRC reported out at the MCCC BOD meeting.

Jo Blum reported on ballot initiative concerns, budget woes and revenue enhancement needs, charter school legislation in light of the Race to the Top federal monies, and unfunded higher education contracts. Higher Ed contracts have been submitted by Governor Patrick. The legislature has the cost request in hands, but there is no sign that these contracts will be reopened and no sign that they will be funded this fall.

Jo Blum also shared some concerns related to the state's budget gaps and identified initiatives that might make it on the ballot next year include: (1) Sales Tax reduction from 6.25 to 3 percent (\$2.5 B from state revenues) (2) Liquor Sales tax eliminated (\$80 million from state rev.). She emphasized the problems related to past structural budget deficits, the current economic crisis, and the public's belief that taxes are bad and the government, wasteful and too big, all of which contribute to current revenue problems. The Revenue Enhancement Committee will work on long-term strategies, but MTA members should be educated on this as well. Noah Berger will provide an update to MTA BOD in January 2010.

The forthcoming governor's race was discussed. Whether the MTA should support Patrick and to what extent was presented. Members who are interested in weighing in were invited to contact the chair of the CRC to let her know what they think. The governor's strengths and shortcomings were examined as were those of his possible opponents.

Each MTA Board member signed an annual statement confirming compliance with the provisions of MTA's Financial Conflict of Interest Policy for MTA Officials.

Respectfully Submitted,

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MTA Directors for the MCCC