

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
GOVERNING BOARD

UNADOPTED MINUTES  
December 17, 2008

**APPENDIX A**

7. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Board President Young recognized CTA President Tom Grube who requested to comment on faculty negotiations.

CTA President Grube began by making the following comments:

“For months, tensions and frustrations grew as contract talks dragged on with no end in sight. Had the Faculty Association accepted the offer made in early October, many would have received a retro check in January accompanied by a larger bill for the contribution the District wanted to impose towards health care--then a decrease of \$300-\$400 a month in their take-home pay relative to 2006-07 pay levels. Few people would have viewed the District’s last offer as a serious one. We saw it as a delay tactic designed to wear us down and a means for the law firm employed by the District to ‘assist’ with negotiations to rack up more billable hours and suck limited resources from the District.

Finally, on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 526 days after the last contract had expired, we received what we could only view as the District’s first *real* offer. Now, the District had received a 4.53% cost of living adjustment for last year. The purpose of a COLA is to offset inflation in both institutional and employee expenses. The difference in cost to the District between the 3% being offered and passing through the COLA, which should have been automatic is roughly what was spent on the legal team hired to deny giving us the COLA.

In light of the recent bad news regarding the state’s economic issues, and to a greater extent because of a desire to move forward and focus on accreditation issues, we reluctantly brought forward the proposal to the Association’s Executive Board. We had hoped that by stepping up and showing good faith, we could move forward with a more cooperative spirit to work on accreditation, health care, safety, and other issues. We hoped that by showing our willingness to cooperate the moment that the District made its first reasonable offer, we could begin the next round of negotiations with a better spirit of cooperation--perhaps without the ‘help’ of a law firm that has little incentive to actually help us settle.

On Monday afternoon, I was told that, ‘the College was not withdrawing the offer but that the District needed to let us know that we had information that the College’s financial picture was not as solid as previously thought.’ Yesterday, I was told that, ‘The District also wanted us to know that the College may ask to wait on signing off on the

tentative agreement.' Today I was told that the District was not willing to sign a tentative agreement at this time and this afternoon's meeting was cancelled by the District.

So where will we go from here? I've decided that I can't take my family to Monterey as I had hoped so that I can be here for mediation on January 7<sup>th</sup>. The mediator will use his skills to help us find a middle ground between the District's last offer--a 3% salary increase for 2007-'08; COLA for 2008-09, with no change in health care and all other issues that were being negotiated off the table, and the bottom line that the Association is willing to accept a 3% salary increase for 2007-08; COLA for 2008-09, with no change in health care, and all other issues that were being negotiated off the table. I expect that the District will fly up an attorney from San Diego to help represent the District as we try to find a middle ground between 3% and 3%.

The Executive Board, the Negotiating Team, and I think the entire faculty was looking forward to going into the winter break with a tentative agreement. I was looking forward to presenting the TA to the faculty when we returned in January. I'd like to remind you that the offer was for less the two-thirds of the COLA the District received last year. We were willing to accept that and agree to not demand a salary increase this year. The Faculty Association is really trying to show good faith moving forward, and put behind us the fact that money which should have gone to providing us with a more competitive wage has been squandered elsewhere. We hope that you'll encourage your negotiators to return to that brief spirit of cooperation and help us to move on to tackling other pressing issues."