

AFSCME Local 696 Meeting September 19 2024

Brief Summary

District Council 33:

- District Council 33 plans to sit with the Office of Labor Relations between September 26-29 for negotiating.
- President Greg Boulware is launching a newsletter for our District Council.

Local 696:

- (215) 895-3330 is the point of contact for 696 that is guaranteed to have someone answer or, if it goes to voicemail, follow-up promptly afterward.
- Local 696 is launching a newsletter **October 15th**
- There was a lot of arguing

Full *Unofficial* Notes from Francis Bass, J. Matthew Catron, and Jeanette Coppinger

Bold Names are Rank-and-File Members of 696

Underlined names are AFSCME Staff and/or Elected Officers

Meeting called to order at 6pm

Acting Secretary Aurellia Harrell (Executive Board, Steward/Delegate)

Amber Cruz (Political Director, AFSCME International)

- Rallies members to vote for Kamala Harris
- "Make sure our jobs are protected"
- Highlights the low voter turnout in Philadelphia
- Offered members a guide to Trump's Project 2025
 - Matt has her number. Contact him to get in touch- don't want to publish a personal cell phone number

Greg Boulware (President, AFSCME District Council 33)

- More rallying people to vote for Harris
- Highlights the work of Governor Tom Wolf and Senator Bob Casey in preventing Pennsylvania from becoming a "Right to Work" state
- Briefly explains Janus V AFSCME 2018 Supreme Court Decision
 - In summary, Janus allows members to opt out of the union, paying no dues, while still receiving full representation. For a more detailed explanation, read https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Janus_v._AFSCME .
- Emphasizing our power in voting because of the numbers we have
- Mentioned that he met with the City Controller recently
- "They [Mayor's team] still haven't offered anything"
- "I've sat with the mayor twice"

- “Bonuses don’t work for us [DC 33 workers]” ... “I like percentage raises” - emphasized the priority of raises over bonuses
 - Voiced his disapproval of the leak of his contract proposal, asserting that it will weaken our negotiating process
 - Read President Boulware’s full contract proposal here: <https://696rabblersusers.com/documents/2024-contract-proposal/>
- We have “left no stones unturned” when preparing the contract proposal
- “I’ve got militant blood in me”
- “There’s a time and a place” for agitation, but not yet
- Wants to take a multi-year, regardless of what the other unions did. Doesn’t think we should take an extension just because they did. DC 33 is powerful enough just by itself to negotiate for a multi-year contract
- In a week - ten days [Sept. 26-29] he will sit down with the mayor’s negotiators
- “We have a gun, there’s one bullet for that gun” - talking about a strike
- “My office is always open”
- Legislation will soon be passed to grant DC 33 the things the mayor promised when she announced her return-to-office plan (black friday holiday, paid parental leave). Seemingly this is something that we were going to get regardless, something which does not need to be bargained on or used against us in negotiations, and we won’t need to sign some kind of MOA like DC 47 did. Boulware says DC 47 bargained on that to get the language how they wanted it, but ultimately it was a done deal regardless

Ada Ginger: I get we don’t want to strike, but we have leverage... we should be louder today. People feel like we’re not seeing results.

Boulware: There are no elections for local office in the November General Election. The coming election is only for state and federal offices.

Stori Grovski: Several remarks on the low flow of information from the union

Boulware: I have sent two letters on social media. We don’t have a newsletter yet. We are launching a newsletter next month.

Dan DeDomenico: Have you considered inviting the general membership to be present in negotiations?

Boulware: They can’t be there, the DC 33 constitution specifies who can be in the room. BUT “I have no problem posting where it [the negotiations] is ... and people can rally outside” ... “I used to do that [rally during negotiations to show support]”

- Read the DC33 Constitution here:
<https://696rabblers.com/documents/dc33-constitution/>

Kass Gaffney: Did we receive a one-month extension in July [of this year]?

Boulware: No, we are operating under the terms of the 2021 contract.

- Boulware and a few others especially pointed out that we are not working under *no* contract. We are working under the terms of the 2021 contract.

Mary Kachline (Free Library, 696 Executive Board, Steward/Delegate):The last DC 33 contract wasn't signed until September. Our contract will be backdated to July 1st.

Roxanne Huff-Gross (City Commissioners Office, Steward/Delegate): "It's a two-way street" between union members and president, greater transparency is needed, people in her office don't know the president and aren't getting information from DC 33 leadership. 120 new staff are expected in the commissioners office

Boulware: I need invitations from Locals to visit job sites. My door is open, my phone is open, my email works"

- Greg's email is GBoulware@dc33.org
- Greg's Office Number is 215-895-3300

Arnold Norfleet: Are you waiting for the mayor?

Boulware: Clarifying about who they meet with in negotiations - "It's never really the mayor, it's labor relations"

Boulware: I do have my unit cultivating areas to take a strike vote* in case that ends up being necessary.

*Not sure I got the wording on that quite right, but it sounds like Boulware is making some preparations for the possibility of a strike vote

[Didn't catch who asked this, but fairly certain it was a steward/delegate and member of the Local 696 Executive Board]: What can we do about poor conditions in rehabilitation clinics? I had to recover from a surgery and left rehab early due to poor conditions.

Amber Cruz: Call your state rep first, then Tony Dinkins.

7:01 PM: Local 696 President Anthony Dinkins dismisses District Council 33
President Greg Boulware

7:02 PM: Motion to accept the Meeting minutes of the May 2024 General Membership Meeting (Missed name of member)

7:02 PM: Motion to accept the Profit/Loss Statement for January 1st-September 11th 2024. (Missed name of member)

Tony Dinkins

- President Dinkins begins his speech by noting that there is “one group here” and “one group there” highlighting that the left side was mostly Library workers.
 - Matt’s note: While it is true that there were 6-7 vocal Rabble Rouser supporters on the left side of the room, there were Rabble Rousers, Unity Caucus members, and Library employees scattered around fairly evenly.
- “We have to be very careful” about sharing a newsletter because they have to make sure the information is accurate
 - This was in reference to Unity Caucus’ meetings, the recent rally and the recent publication of *The Rabble*, available here: <https://696rabblerousers.com/2024/09/20/rabble-1-1/>
- At this point, precise notes become difficult due to members and leadership speaking over each other. Here are a few snippets:
 - **Mark Claes:** DC33 online newsletter signup is broken.
 - Matt’s note: This is true, however the newsletters that Boulware and Dinkins were discussing are new, and unrelated to that broken link. This was not made clear during the presentation.
 - Dinkins: We will forward this issue.
 - **Quinn Midkiff:** I emailed [Tony] and Mary Kachline, and got no response. There is a serious communications issue here. I have questions about Gender Affirming Care
 - Dinkins: I answered you! ... With certain groups you can’t say stuff - Doesn’t want to over-promise without being certain yet. Dinkins is working with DC 33 medical broker about getting coverage for gender affirming surgery added to our healthcare plan
 - **Stori Grovski:** When is the next Health & Welfare Board Meeting?
 - Dinkins: First Tuesday of every month.
 - Nathaniel Brown (Licenses & Inspections, Vice President, Steward/Delegate): You have stewards at-large. Anyone from any 696 department can come help you.
 - **Mark Claes:** Can we do these meetings on zoom?
 - Dinkins: No
 - **Mark Claes:** It hurts me to hear you yell. Can you use a microphone?

- Dinkins: No harm, no foul
- Dinkins, after much arguing: Okay, we can use a microphone next time.
- **Midkiff**: I am feeling a lot of hostility.
- Dinkins: Don't do that
- **Amber Crouthers**: This is my first meeting... there's so much resentment... I have no support.
- **Alex Romasky**: I am feeling a lot of animosity towards the Free Library.
- The newsletter and a new DC33 portal (not fully explained) will launch October 15 and it will include meeting minutes
- (215) 895-3330 is the point of contact for 696 that is guaranteed to have someone answer or, if it goes to voicemail, follow-up promptly afterward.
- 696 leadership came into Parkway Central Library to have a meeting about the mistreatment of guards, mistreatment of LGBTQ staff [and something else?]. Met with director of the Free Library Kelly Richards and his executive board. Dinkins says "the emails are slowly coming out" regarding whatever was resolved for the library guards. Lots of secrecy around this
 - Area Guard Supervisor **Sterling Davis** specifically requested that Dinkins not discuss the details of issues pertaining to Municipal Guards.
- Roxanne Huff-Gross: in addition to a union-orientation at work-site, she brings her employees to the DC 33 building for another orientation - and this can be done during working hours.
- **J. Matthew Catron**: I am the one who made the claim about Local 696 not having enough stewards. Can we amend the Local 696 Constitution to increase the number of stewards at a later meeting?
- Dinkins: That's a complicated process, I need to do some research.
 - Matt's note: The process is described in the Local 696 Constitution, available here:
<https://696rabblers.com/documents/local-696-constitution/>

7:40 President Dinkins asks for a motion to bring in members from all 696 departments for the purpose of gathering information for the coming newsletter. J. Matthew Catron makes the motion (Did not catch who seconded it).

- More talk about misinformation
 - Matt's note: Dinkins was very specific that the misinformation largely was related to the number of Stewards in Local 696.

7:58: President Dinkins organizes ride sharing.

Matt's note: I did not hear a motion to adjourn.