

2017 RA Minutes

Hyatt Regency, Atlanta GA
June 8-9, 2017

I. **CALL TO ORDER AND GREETINGS:** - President Darjean

The 2017 RA was called to order at 9:15 a.m. by President Darjean.

President Darjean asked Mr. Sears to welcome the Delegates to Atlanta.

President Darjean - This Representative Assembly is special to me, as it's my first as the President of our union. This RA will be punctuated with reports relative to what's going on throughout our union, make no mistake we are here to take care of the business of our union, you will also have opportunities to network and socialize, and that is one of the strengths of our union. The cordiality that exists among us is unparalleled.

President Darjean challenged the delegation to introduce themselves to two people you do not know. This will enable us to make ties with other people, other affiliates, and other states that we can rely upon for information when the time comes.

First time delegates were recognized. It's vital that our union continue to have an infusion of new blood as we march forward with our mission. I'd like to recognize the members of the NSO Executive Committee. These are the men and women who contribute much of their time and energy to keep NSO on track with our core values as we provide services to you, the NSO membership. First, I'd like to introduce the Vice President of Defense, Mr. Mike Boyer of Washington, Our Vice President of Program, Mr. Tom Greene of Michigan, our Treasurer, Ron Goldenstein of Nebraska, our Secretary, Dawn Basurto of California. Our Region 1 Director, Ms. Charmaine Champagne of Massachusetts. Ms. Robin Gardner of Virginia, Region 2, Ms. Tammy Whitaker, Florida, Region 4, Region 3, Ms. Rose Tapp, Region 4, California, John Avouris, Region 5, Ohio, Region 7, Catherine Alexander, Oregon. Our At-Large Director, A. Robert Blackwell, North Carolina, At-Large Director B, Lois Tarr, New Jersey, I'd like to also acknowledge the NSO General Counsel, Mr. Rob Day, NSO Pension Consultant, Mr. Mort Reinhart, and our NSO Parliamentarian, Mr. Tal Hutchinson. I'd like to acknowledge Past President Chuck Agerstrand.

President Darjean asked for a moment to acknowledge our fallen brothers and sisters who have passed away over the course of the last year. If you have a person from your affiliate who has passed away I ask you to please step to a microphone, so you can announce their name and the name of your affiliate:

Gilbert Valderrama from Missouri Professional Staff, Karen Allen, Oregon Professional Staff, Clifford Silvers, formerly from Connecticut Professional Staff, Ron Emery, Virginia Professional Staff, Rosemary Wolf, Washington Education Association Staff, Joe Keo, New Jersey United Staff Association, Guy Enfalvo, Hui Littlefield, and Jennifer Grugen, Florida Staff Organization, Barbara Tataishi, Hawaii State Teacher Staff Organization Associate Staff, Mike Ford, California SO, Lennell Terrell, AFSE, Cole Williams, Illinois.

President Darjean asked for a moment of silence in honor of our fallen brothers and sisters:

A few housekeeping items, before we move on with the agenda, please submit New Business items by 4:00 p.m. this afternoon. When approaching the microphone please do not forget to state your full name and the name of your affiliate so that we can have it accurately recorded in the minutes. I also ask that you visit the disaster relief table as well as the Org 4 Power table.

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION 1 Tammy Whitaker (FL), Rich Wergen (NE)
Approval and adoption of the revised agenda as presented. **Motion passed**

III. APPROVAL OF RA MINUTES

MOTION 2 David Hernandez, (CA), Naomi Chisholm, (NC)
To approve the 2016 RA minutes as amended. **Motion passed**

IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Brad Darjean

Let me say I believe NSO is in a good position to deal with the challenges that are facing us head on. The problems that are before us in your respective states as well as those that are before us on a national level are indeed serious and nothing to play with. We should not take them lightly, but now is not a time to panic. This is a time to stand firm on our principles, to lead, to promote, to secure, and to defend. This is a time to fortify our resources and make sure that we are in a strong position to assist each other and stand with each other in our individual time of need and our collective time of need.

I stand before you to tell you that our finances are strong and solid. The crisis funds are healthy and will meet our immediate needs. Our membership is stable. In fact, we have seen a slight increase in our membership. As such, our proposed budget does not include a dues increase. Our committees with NSO are working hard to provide necessary resources that are needed by you and your affiliates as we fortify ourselves for the challenges ahead.

I would like to thank the men and women who volunteer their services on the Organizing committee, Insurance and Emerging Concerns, Special Services, Research, and Pension Benefits. Our CBCs are working hard on the bargaining challenges around the country. Later, you will hear about a slight structural change that will allow more specialized training to take place and more time to meet as regions to plan and coordinate.

I urge your participation and attendance at this crucially vital meeting. If you're not at the CBCs, we are missing something. That is where we share our bargaining information and the challenges that we're individually facing. Many times, you find out that you're not alone in this world at those CBCs. Many others are facing the challenges you face, and you also get to understand how they are dealing with those challenges, and the tactics and the strategies that they're employing to meet those challenges. So, again, I encourage Presidents and Chief Negotiators to attend the CBCs.

Our advocates, both active and retired, are being deployed around the Country to various affiliates and deserve our thanks and appreciation. Their service is invaluable to us as NSO, and without them, we would not be able to provide those services. We will continue to strengthen and expand our army of volunteers, as they are well-trained and capable to assist you in the day-to-day tribulations that you encounter. I ask that when you have advocates assigned to you, you treat them well. They are experts in their field.

From this podium, we have heard this MLK quote before. *"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort or convenience, but where he stands in times of challenges and controversy."* As we face these attacks from our employers on our pensions, healthcare, and our working conditions, we stand

strong and we stand tall together. Recently, NSO, NEASO, and AFSE stood together as we attempted to renegotiate the 2007 MOU relative to the NEA pension plan. We endured – during that 16-month process; comments from NEA management about eliminating the MOU, thus allowing them to determine what is best for us. We stood together, and we determined what was best for us by standing together and focusing on what was most important to the 16 affiliates in the plan, but also what was best for all NSO members and how such changes could impact everyone's pension plan around the country.

Collectively, the NSO Executive Committee is proud to say that we reached a tentative agreement with NEA management on a new MOU that will secure funding into the plan in perpetuity. At the conclusion of today's business session, we will have an informational meeting for those affiliates who are in the plan and other interested delegates to go over the draft document and answer questions you may have as we prepare to get this document implemented.

I want to give a special thanks to Susan Nogan of NEASO and Nas Afi of AFSE. Also, I'd like to thank and acknowledge other members of the respective teams. They all deserve a big round of applause.

I'd also like to thank past NSO President Chuck Agerstrand. We started this process together, and together, we finished it. The 2007 MOU is something he held dear to his heart, and we're very proud of it.

I mention the process because it's an illustration of what we can do together. We didn't always agree as the labor team, but we never gave up on each other. We pushed and dragged each other along to get where we needed to be. We never disengaged from the process because we didn't agree with the other party as labor, so we are proud of what we accomplished, and we look forward to continuing that collective work together and demonstrating to the rest of NSO that in situations – similar situations, you too can accomplish the same goals in a collective manner.

I also would like to thank Maggie Copeland, Montana and Graham Picklesimer of Florida. They are NSO designated trustees to the NEA pension plan. They also supported us throughout the process and they supported us at the board level by holding management back from adopting new rates, etc., while we continued to work and continued to push.

As we fortify our union for the challenges ahead, I encourage you to focus on our principles. This is a highly stressful time for all of us, but as we breathe, we can rely on each other, and we can stand confident that we have each other at our backs whenever the time is necessary. We must not be afraid to ask for help. We must not be afraid to communicate, sit down with each other, and have difficult conversations that will take us where we need to be.

So, with that, I applaud you for being here and taking time out of your busy schedules. Many of the people back at home in our respective affiliates don't understand the time that we volunteer to do this work and the time it takes away from our families, so I'll end my speech with my applause to you for being here and giving us your time. Without you, we cannot build our future. We need you and we need your participation, so thank you. It's been a great year.

V. VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEFENSE – Mike Boyer/Rob Day (Appendix A)

Mr. Boyer thanked President Darjean, Brad has done an exceptional job in his first year as president. I think you all need to know what a phenomenal job he's done. I want to extend a thank you also to my friend Tom Greene, who's serving in his last term as Vice President for Program, and I really appreciate his friendship and his support all these years. President Darjean just talked about how much time this takes. Mr. Boyer acknowledged his wife and two daughters for their support. Mr. Boyer thanked the many NSO members past and present this past year who've contributed so much to us as far as doing arbitrations, and mediations on your behalf – again, all volunteer work. I'm not going to list everybody, but I'm going to list a few that come to mind: Mike Horner, Nate Williams, David Morocco, Erica Clay, Todd Jaeck, Elizabeth Collins, John

Avouris, Jack Shamel, and Jim Gasper. This past year, NSO's been involved in and supplied representation at arbitrations, grievances, unfair labor practices, legal defense and support, and other matters affecting employee rights under the National Labor Relations Act in all the following states: California, South Dakota, New Hampshire, Maryland, Colorado, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Arizona, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Maine, Washington, Michigan, Virginia, New Jersey, Alaska, Wyoming, Minnesota, Mississippi, AFSE, Tennessee, South Carolina, Nevada, and Minnesota. That's quite a list. A couple of years ago I talked about the fact that we continue to deal with a lot of frivolous lawsuits against our affiliates. We've had to continue that practice this year. We've had to defend, unfair labor practices or duties of representation claims against Nevada, Wyoming, California, and Georgia. We've been successful in every single case. We're tracking increasing efforts by state EA management to interfere in our affiliates this past year. Our general counsel Rob Day has been involved in numerous matters advising our locals when needed and has assisted in every DFR and ULP of our affiliates. His advice and counsel are always outstanding and his reaction and response time to my requests is near instantaneous. NSO has been involved in using our contracted pension attorney Lisa Smith to defend various attacks and misinformation on our pensions, recess systems, and those types of retirement programs. Lisa has also provided sound advice to our locals during negotiations. Several settlements have been reached in other disciplinary matters, as was true last year. Due to the hard work of our advocates, every EPO filed or defended this year has been resolved favorably.

GENERAL COUNSEL – Rob Day

Good morning, Mr. President, Executive Committee, delegates, it's a pleasure to be with you. In the past, because of my background as a former NLRB attorney, I've always made the point that your local union is covered by the National Labor Relations Act, and that your status is that of 9(a) Representative under the act, which is roughly comparable to a legislator to its – or, his or her constituencies. More or less – that's a good way to look at it. So, in the wondrous variety of the NSO with all of the states, you have a great variety of relationships. Some are quite cooperative. Some are contentious. On the cooperative basis, it might be very, a big state and a small union because you just don't have a lot of members. On the more contentious side, you need the 101st Airborne to referee your relationship. In either case, we must not lose sight of the fact that as a union and, I'm talking to you now more than the NSO because the NSO doesn't have bargaining rights anywhere. We're a confederation. You're the union. So, with that in mind, you must have in mind that you cannot let personalities trip over the basic job. In the basic job, a person feels as if they've been wrongfully evaluated, maybe they've been disciplined; they have the right to ask for a grievance. In some cases, you would have the right not to accept a grievance if you know 100 percent that there's no basis for it.

VI. VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROGRAM – Tom Greene (Appendix B)

Good morning. I want to take a moment to acknowledge and show respect and appreciation of all of the work of my predecessor in this role on behalf of NSO. Lynn Adler from Illinois served in this position for many years and always made sure our members' needs were met. Lynn, thank you. I have enjoyed serving NSO membership in the roles of At-Large B Director and most recently, VP of Program. I have been a unionist and involved in my union for many years, and I've had many roles, but I can honestly say these two roles have been two of the most rewarding I have ever spent. My other one would be my 18 years as USO president in Michigan. When you see the people that care about the union and care about union values, that can't be beat, and it gives you a very warm feeling inside. I am looking forward to my new experience coming up as being retired. I want to thank the Officers and Executive Committee members of NSO. People don't realize how much time and effort they put into this work, and as Brad mentioned before, it is volunteer, and I am very respectful of what they do for us. I want to give a special thank you to Dawn, no one realizes what she goes through to make sure that our War College and our CBC's and our RA's run smoothly. I listed all the people that have helped NSO in the past year, defending people and their affiliates, offering trainings, presentations, assistance in bargaining, writing proposals, being at the table, and making this past War College, a very, very successful event. We had 42 sessions, with 22 of them being new, and I am so appreciative of the folks that have come forward to help our union brothers and sisters, and I sincerely

apologize if I left anybody off.

President Darjean thanked Tom for his service to NSO, your presence will be missed, and we appreciate your service on the various levels throughout the years.

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT – Ron Goldenstein (Appendix C-D)

Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, union brothers and sisters. Michelle Stryznski, our NSO Auditor and I will be given our reports together.

The numbers of, members for associate and professional for '16-'17 are not correct, the number of associate staff members for '16-'17 – instead of 1,831, it's actually 1,713 FTE. The 1,831 is correct in terms of the number of bodies, On the professional staff side, we have 2,263. That is 2,251 FTE, so I want you to note that. I do want to point out that there is no due's increase this year recommended by the NSO Executive Committee. The reason for that is because we had a substantial number of new professional staff members, and that enabled us to grow the budget without having to have a due's increase. We continue to lose associate staff members, however. So, that is a concern, and that is something that is reflective, I believe, of the number of positions that have been eliminated in different affiliates. You'll see on the crisis funds, the balance of \$5,640,000.00 ending with \$6,000,109.00. We broke the \$6 million mark for the first time, that's primarily because the stock market's up.

AUDITORS REPORT – Michele Stryznski

Good morning. I wanted to let you know that we recently completed an update on NSO's internal control procedures. That is where we documented, step by step, the procedures for cash disbursements, cash receipts, invoicing, accounts payable, and information technology. Once completed, we cross-referenced those procedures with the financial policies of NSO. We also had extensive conversations with your treasurer, and also with Mary Freel, the bookkeeper, regarding the procedures that are currently in place and any potential risk factors. We then performed a risk assessment, looking for gaps or areas of concern that we believed needed to be addressed. Upon completion of this process, we issued a letter of recommendation based on our findings to the Executive Committee, and that letter was issued this week. As a point of information, we do file all the Federal and State tax returns and reports. All filings are completed, and they are up to date. All financial records of the organization are kept up to date and current by the treasurer.

MOTION 3

Ron Goldenstein

Martha DeBloom (NJ)

To receive the financial report of the 2015-2016 Fiscal year. **Motion Passed**

VIII. MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Dawn Basurto (Appendix E)

Good Morning, Ron gave you the additional numbers of our professional and associate staff, and as you can see there is a lot of decline in associate staff affiliate, that are not filling positions. Hopefully, things will change next year.

IX. PENSION BENEFITS REPORT – Ron Golendstein/Mort Reinhart

Mr. Goldenstein referred to his written report and introduced Mr. Reinhart.

X. PENSION BENEFITS CONSULTANTS REPORT – Mr. Reinhart (Appendix E-1)

Mr. Reinhart – Thank you Ron. My report's not very long. I urge you to read the report. I get up here every

year. Some people call me Mr. Gloom and Doom because I always talk about the status of retirement systems, the status of the benefits for folks who are retired, they don't get any better because they all need money, and as President Brad just said a little earlier today, they work very hard to get the MOU with NEA, and that included the need for more money, Pension funds are extremely expensive, and the only way for them to grow and to be satisfactory to all of you when you do retire is for there to be adequate funding, and that is always the issue. We've had a change in administration, and the new administration is one that –considers itself to be businesspeople. I don't know that they're politicians or that they don't stumble, but they're businesspeople. They look at dollars, and they promise or, the current president has promised he wouldn't touch Medicare and Social Security, during his administration. So far, they've lived up to that, but who knows what will happen when they finally get to the budget? So, I urge you to read and to keep an eye on what's going on out there because it is your future that's in doubt here and will be determined by how much money is put into the system.

XI. COORDINATED BARGAINING COUNCILS – Catherine Alexander

Good morning, so, I have the pleasure of serving as the chair of chairs for the Coordinated Bargaining Councils. At last year's national CBC, a decision was made by the body to rotate a full national CBC with regional CBCs. So, this year rather than one full CBC that we've had in Vegas the last few years we're going to regional CBCs. We're adding some time and the ability to build in some training. Affiliates will have the opportunity to send additional people beyond the President and the Bargaining chair at their own expense to be able to participate in some more regionally based training. We'll be starting the CBCs in the afternoon on Thursday to allow for more training time – so, Thursday afternoon, Friday morning, and then, people can break into their regional CBCs. But, in trying to provide an opportunity to bring training closer to where some people are, this is one of the attempts to do that, so we want to make sure you know that. Additional information will probably come out in late August or early September, but if you have the ability to send additional people for training I encourage you to do so. We will get the information as soon as we can.

XII. MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT SURVEY – Catherine Alexander

Last September, we undertook what we called a “Member Engagement Survey”, and we sent the links out to the Presidents and asked them to send share with their members to take the survey, I'm happy to say we had about a 25 percent return rate of the membership, and that really enabled us to get some good data on where we stand as a membership in terms of our demographics One of the questions asked on the survey was, “Are you willing to get involved and provide assistance to your colleagues?” And, I'm happy to say that 10 percent of the people who took the survey said yes. So, we want to undertake an active recruitment effort for people who are willing to get engaged. I'd really encourage all of you to get involved.

XIII. ELECTIONS COMMITTEE – Kristi Baker

Good morning, it's my pleasure to serve as Chair of the Elections Committee along with Jennifer Lawson from Kentucky, Mary Stern from Nevada. Serving as tellers right now, I have a list of names, Gwen Kuroshima from Hawaii, Naomi Chisholm from North Carolina, Tim Smith from Michigan. Voting is tomorrow from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Please remember that there are no campaign stickers or literature allowed in the voting area. Petitions have been filed in accordance with the NSO's elections campaign rules and regulations for the following two-year terms. Region 1 Director, Charmaine Champagne from Massachusetts. Region 3 Director, Tamara Whitaker from Florida. Region 5 Director, John Avouris from Ohio. Region 7 Director, Edna Jenkins from, Washington. At-Large Position, Robert Blackwell. At-Large Position B, Lois Tarr and LaTasha Ball. Petitions have been filed in accordance with NSO's elections campaign rules and regulations for the following one-year positions that have been vacated: Region 6 Director, Kurt Swanson from Missouri. Vice President of Program, James Schweigert from Michigan and Catherine Alexander from Oregon. All candidates must be members in good standing. Nominations were open up from the floor

Nominations from the floor for Vice President for Program
Denise Hamilton, New Jersey, nominated Lynn Adler, Illinois, for Vice President of Program.

Ms. Alder, declined the nomination.

MOTION 4

Eric Urban (OH)

Fred Glover (FL)

To declare by acclamation the positions not being contested, Region 1 Director, Region 3 Director, Region 5 Director, Region 7 Director, At-Large A, and Region 6 Director. **Motion Passed.**

A ballot will be done for Vice President for Program

Catherine Alexander
James Schweigert

XIV. CANDIDATE SPEECHES

XV. CREDENTIALS REPORT – Dawn Basurto

We have 273 delegates, 21 guests, 14 Executive Committee members, for a total of 308. That is my report, **Motion Passed**

MOTION 5

Jay Junter (NEASO)

Sue Ogg (TN)

POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

This is Tracy Butler from the Florida Education Association from the Florida Staff Organization, and I wanted to thank my NSO brothers and sisters. I was a recipient of the disaster relief fund and I want to thank everyone for that, I want to encourage everyone to make their donation. I had some damage from Hurricane Matthew and everyone came through for me, and I thank you very much

I'm Kathleen Edwards from the Ohio Associate Staff Union, and on behalf of our sister in Ohio, we would like to thank NSO and the disaster relief fund for their assistance our sister, who lost everything in a house fire. She wouldn't be able to recover without the help that she received. So, based on that, I would love to encourage everyone here to please purchase those raffle tickets because it does help. Thank you.

XVI. INSURANCE & EMERGING ISSUES – John Avouris

Hopefully, you have received throughout the year some of the updates that the IEC has sent out and has asked for to be distributed to your members regarding, making sure your contract is strong, that your benefits and some of the elements of, creating a dialogue between the union, management, and governance to make sure that all parties are engaged and doing the work that's necessary to reengage the members that we work with in our day job so that our employment and our unions are secure. In addition to that, the insurance and emerging concerns committee has a list of those of you who attended the insurance trust informational meeting this morning, we have been exploring the creation of a possible NSO insurance trust. Key to that is the filling out of the NSO insurance trust survey. We are asking for one and only one per affiliate. If you did not attend the session this morning you can do the survey online. It is important that we receive information relative to your affiliate's interest and your estimation of your employer's interest in this process in order for the IEC to know whether to move forward with this as it will make a difference as to whether or

not there is potential budgetary impact in next year's RA and a new business item that would authorize NSO to pursue that. Mr. Avouris recognized the members of the committee, Tracy Butler, Carol Hoppert from Iowa, Eric Urban from Ohio, Dan Gottheimer from Maryland, and two members who are not here at this assembly, Sarah Geiger from New Jersey, and Janet Beck from Washington.

XVII. HARVARD TRADE UNION PROGRAM – Charmaine Champagne

NSO takes great pride in sponsoring seats to the prestigious Harvard Trade Union program, better known as HTUP. We are actively looking for interested candidates to participate every year. For those of you that don't know about the Harvard Trade Union Program, it's an intensive six-week program designed for trade union leaders. This year's 107th session is from January 8th through February 16th. It's comparable to the advanced education that Harvard University offers to executive level individuals in business and government. It teaches essential skills necessary to effectively manage and lead unions. This past year, we were fortunate enough to sponsor three. Their names are, Jess Lima, from the California Associate Staff, Kristi Baker, from the Alaska Associate Staff, and Mark Duarte from California Staff Organization.

XVIII. OLD BUSINESS

2016 New Business Items Status Updates (Appendix G)

RA Recessed until 9:00 a.m.

XIX. RECOGNITIONS

Mother Jones Award for outstanding unionism was awarded to Dave Rafke, from Illinois.

XX. NEW BUSINESS – NBI's

OTHER – ELECTION RESULTS – Kristi Baker

Vice President for Program – Catherine Alexander (Or)

At Large Director B – LaTasha Ball (Oh)

APPROVAL OF 2017-2018 PROPOSED BUDGET

Motion passed as presented

Moved by Ron Goldenstein

Seconded by Rich Wergin (NE)

Motion to Adjourn the 2017 RA