



# CONVENTION REPORTER

A DAILY REPORT FOR DELEGATES TO THE FLORIDA AFL-CIO BIENNIAL CONVENTION

**Tuesday, October 06, 2009**

President Cindy Hall called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM.

### **Credentials Committee**

Dan Reynolds, President, Federation of Public Employees and Co-Chair of the committee, reported that 52 **registered credentials** that were received **prior** to the September 15th on-time deadline were reviewed and found to be in good order; 4 **Pre-registered credentials** that were received **after** the September 15<sup>th</sup> deadline were reviewed and found to be in good order and 8 **on-site credentials** were reviewed and found to be in good order.

The committee moved that 64 **voting delegates** be seated. The motion received a second from the floor and was affirmed by a voice vote. **There are currently 183 delegates.**

President Hall introduced **James Williams, General President of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades.**

### **James Williams, General President of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades.**

President Williams congratulated Cindy on her years of service and conclusion of her successful career. President Williams shared information about his long career with the IUPAT as a third-generation member. He spoke about moving up through the labor movement, from high school to the apprenticeship program to the National Labor College and all of the opportunities his involvement with the union has afforded him. He spoke about AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, calling him "the right leader at the right time to bring all of organized labor together...a strong leader and a compassionate leader." He recalled a story about his father, an IUPAT member and said that his father would have joked about his current role as President and speechmaker....saying that he was a "substitute for a prostitute who is destitute for an institute." He shared fond thoughts about Arlene Holt-Baker, Liz Shuler and the rest of the new leadership team at the AFL-CIO. He spoke about the need for compassionate leadership and said that Richard Trumka followed the truism, "In order to know how to lead you must know how to follow." He said that the message and the focus since the Pittsburgh convention has been to put the AFL-CIO back together and to unify all of the nation's unions in one house. He spoke about the need for labor leaders to be committed to transparency and accountability. He spoke about Trumka's successful efforts to bring UNITE-HERE back to AFL-CIO and said that Richard Trumka wanted him to deliver the message that uniting the labor movement was a priority and would happen in the near future. He shared information about his efforts along with other general presidents to build the structures necessary to strengthen our CLCs, our State Federations and have them

work seamlessly with the National AFL-CIO. He spoke about IUPAT's effort to create, as their logo says, "One Union." He thanked Tim Maitland here in Florida for his hard work and his efforts and said that the structure the IUPAT has established for rapid action is very similar to what is envisioned for the AFL-CIO. He spoke about the need for all leaders to put their egos aside. He said, "We are not big shots, we are just rank and file members who were lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time and were given the opportunity to lead." He said that now is the time for people to lead and not follow the path of the past that has led to personality rifts and groups looking out for their immediate, short term interests instead of focusing on the long haul. He talked about being a maverick in his early years but said that the movement does not need mavericks and that he had been wrong in the past. He said now is the time for all of us to unite. We need to ask each other for help. He talked about being the lone vote against the Solidarity Grant proposal, believing that unions should be in or out. However, he acknowledged that the majority is right and we must believe in the Democracy of our movement. He shared that the AFL-CIO was using Solidarity Grants to help state federations and CLCs cope with the loss of unions following the split, he said that the national AFL-CIO had sent \$600,000 to Florida over the past four years between the direct affiliation funding and grants and that the only program area that had not been cut at the AFL-CIO was resources for state federations and central labor councils. He hopes that with the election of our new leaders that Florida will send a clear message of unity to the rest of the country. He shared information about the federal stimulus program, discussing how it is working and creating jobs for our nation's workers. He affirmed his support of President Obama, stating that "the job this guy is doing, he will go down in history after turning this country around after eight years of total destruction by George Bush. Let's send a message of hope to our members for the future." He thanked all the delegates for supporting the IUPAT bus tour and urged everyone to keep up the momentum of last year's election and keep the movement moving forward.

**Ken Johnson, Director, AFL-CIO Southern Region.**

Ken Johnson thanked Cindy Hall and Dwayne Sealy for their tireless dedication and service to Florida's workers and the labor movement. He also thanked Janet Conner and remarked that his job would be much more difficult with her absence. Brother Johnson went through all of the accomplishments made in Florida under the New Alliance restructuring process. He spoke about the need for the labor movement to continue growing so that we can continue the fight to build better, more just lives for all of America's workers. He spoke about the incredible promise offered by the Employee Free Choice Act and how here in the South, it is especially important. He spoke about the rise in corporate power and influence and charged everyone with doing everything in our power to halt its rise. He said, "Your challenge is to stop this resurgence of the robber baron era, stop them from destroying our economy and from leaving working families to suffer. Your challenge is to educate, agitate and mobilize your members and your community partners so that they say with one very loud, very forceful and very unified voice. No! Not this time and not ever again."

**Award Presentation for Janet Conner, Senior Field Representative, Southern Region, AFL-CIO**

Sister and Friend Janet Conner will be re-locating to Oregon to continue her service to the labor movement in the Northwest portion of the country. The award included the inscription "*In deep appreciation for her dedication and commitment to the labor family in Florida. We wish you the best as you move on and we will miss you. The officers,*

*executive board, members and staff of the Florida AFL-CIO.” Janet has been a critical asset to our work her in Florida and has helped make all of our successes possible. She said there was “no chance in hell that she would ever forget the Florida Labor movement. Thank you so much, everything I have ever learned I learned from you.” She thanked everyone for everything we have done for her and pledged to be back in Florida whenever possible.*

## **Committee Reports**

### **Elections Committee**

**Claudie Pouncey**, co-chair of the committee delivered the report. He reported that the committee met on October 5<sup>st</sup> and reviewed the reviewed the nomination and elections procedure outlined in the Florida AFL-CIO Constitution and Bylaws and Rules Governing State Central Bodies. He reviewed Articles V, VI and VII which are reproduced in the convention booklets. He moved that the convention accept the report and rules to govern the elections. **Martha Shunn-King, APWU 1073** seconded the motion, which carried by a voice vote.

### **Communications and Outreach Committee**

**Kimberly Bowles, IATSE 631**, Co-Chair of the committee delivered the report. The committee deliberated Resolution #12-Journeyman Craftsman Certification and Enforcement and voted to recommend adoption of it as submitted. The committee also discussed resolution #9-The Future of NASA and Other Space Activities In Florida and also voted to recommend it as submitted. Resolution #22-Media Reform and Alternative Media was discussed and a motion to recommend adoption by the convention carried with a voice vote. Rich Templin, Communications Director, Florida AFL-CIO and Aaron Carmella, Zone 3 Coordinator with the Florida AFL-CIO shared information on valuable internet opportunities such as Twitter and Facebook that could be utilized to communicate electronically with members at the Local Union level. Careful attention was paid to the use of these and similar opportunities when used for political purposes specific to “Restricted Class” use. Other electronic opportunities were explained and sampled to show the diverse possibilities to be explored. The report carried a motion to adopt its recommendations which was seconded by Russell Harper and passed with a voice vote.

### **Constitution and Bylaws Committee**

**Lynne Webb, AFT 3600**, co-chair of the committee delivered the report. Sister Webb explained that the Committee had four items of business on the agenda: the consideration of Resolutions 3, 4, 5, and 16 that make changes to the Florida AFL-CIO Constitution. The committee voted to recommend passage of resolutions 3, 4 and 5 and to reject Resolution 16. The co-chair also reported that the committee would continue its work over the next two years to separate policies and procedures from the more fundamental elements of the constitution. The report included a motion to adopt these changes as recommended by the committee. Loraine Tuliano seconded the motion. President Hall gave the delegates a few moments to consider these resolutions since they all change our constitution. She encouraged the delegates to read them carefully.

**Pat Emmert, Palm Beach Treasure Coast CLC** raised objections to resolution 3, she argued that it looked as if the resolution was designed to micro-manage our officers. She argued that less is better in the constitution. She prefers the current language.

**Russell Harper, IBEW 177**, raised objections over resolution 3, offering similar arguments to those of sister Emmert. He argued that this did not look fair to the officers.

Sister Webb explained that these resolutions were the product of the Florida AFL-CIO's strategic plan and were consistent with proposed changes to the budget. She argued that the language dealing with officers and other areas were more like policies than the type of fundamental elements usually found in constitutions.

**Dan Reynolds, FOPE** raised a point on resolution 16, stating that resolution 16 was out of order since it was not timely filed under the provisions of Article IV of the constitution. President Hall accepted the point and ruled the resolution out of order.

**Ellis Canty, ILA 1416**, called for the delegates to stand and be counted during voting to ensure that the 2/3 threshold required for these resolutions could be accurately assessed.

**Sean Mitchell, Ironworkers 402**, moved that each resolution be voted on separately. Ellis Canty seconded the motion, stressing that he also wanted to ensure a standing vote. The motion passed with a voice.

**Seth Sklarey, IUPAT 1175** made a motion to call for a standing vote. The motion was seconded by Ellis Canty. The motion carried by a voice vote.

Steve Williams moved that resolution 3 be postponed until later in the day. The motion was withdrawn.

**Robert Ray, West Central Florida Federation of Labor** spoke in support of resolution 3 arguing that defining the roles and duties of our officers is a prudent step that will help them understand what is expected of them.

Kimberly Bowles spoke in support of the resolution and thanked the committee for their difficult work.

Sean Mitchell spoke against the resolution arguing that this resolution reduced vacation time for the officers and that was not something the labor movement should do.

Steve Williams spoke in favor of the resolution.

**Resolution 3 was approved by the convention with the required 2/3 vote.**

**Resolution 4 was approved by the convention with the required 2/3 vote.**

**Resolution 5 was approved by the convention with the required 2/3 vote.**

#### **Legislative Committee**

**JB Clark, Florida Electrical Workers**, co-chair of the committee delivered the following report. The committee recommended that the following resolutions be approved by the convention as submitted. Resolution #1 – Motion Picture & Television Production Incentives. Resolution #7 – H-2B Visas. Resolution # 8 – Davis Bacon Act Compliance. Motion made to approve as written. Motion seconded and passed. Resolution # 9 – The Future of NASA and other Space Activities. Resolution # 10 – Prohibition of Public

Construction Project Labor Agreements. Resolution # 11 – Apprenticeship Education and Funding. Resolution # 12 – Journeyman Craftsman Certification and Enforcement. Resolution # 13 – Best Value Contracting. Resolution # 14 – Unemployment Compensation. Resolution # 21 – Employee Free Choice Act. Resolution #28 – CSX – Florida Department of Transportation, Central Florida Commuter Rail.

The committee recommended that the following resolution be approved by the convention as amended in committee.

Resolution # 20 – Health Care Reform. Motion made to have one substantive vote on all the amendments as follows: In the 4<sup>th</sup> Whereas, second line insert “to” after the word “solution”. Delete the 6<sup>th</sup> Whereas in its entirety. In the 7<sup>th</sup> Whereas, strike “H.R 676” and insert “Single Payer and/or Public Option”. In the 8<sup>th</sup> Whereas, fourth line, strike “(like H.R. 676)” and insert “(like single payer and/or public option)”. Delete the 9<sup>th</sup> whereas in its entirety. In the 10<sup>th</sup> Whereas, strike “H.R. 676” and insert “single payer and/or public option”. In the 18<sup>th</sup> Whereas, delete the space between “22” and the “%” symbol. In Now, Therefore Be it Resolved” strike “reaffirms its support for Congressman Conyers’ bill H.R. 676, The National Health Insurance Act,” and insert “affirms its support for a single payer” and add “and/or public option” after “a single payer”. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Be It Further Resolved, line 3, strike “and H.R 676” and insert “single payer and/or public option”.

Resolution # 26 – Modernizing Florida’s Tax System. Motion to accept as amended: In Whereas #3 – strike the word “tax” after the word “current” and before “antiquated”. Resolution # 27 – Protecting Citizen Access to the Constitution. Motion made to accept as amended. In Now, Therefore Be it Resolved, “strike the semi-colon” and insert “and affirms their ability to redress their grievances; and”.

Gail-Marie Perry, CWA State Council suggested that the title of resolution 20 should also be changed to Single Payer and/or Public Option National Healthcare Reform. Andy Ford, AFT 3326 seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The report as amended was approved by the convention.

### **Constituency and Coalition Committee**

Mike D. Payne, ILA 1526 co-chair of the committee, delivered the report.

#### **Resolutions 18 and 25 were considered by the committee.**

Eddie Acosta, AFL-CIO National, explained the fair adjustment of status for current undocumented workers. Brother Tony Fransetta stated that trade practices should be addressed in the resolution. He stated that in 1986, undocumented workers were forgiven and noted that we are at the same place again with immigration reform and this should be the final time we address the issue of amnesty of undocumented workers. Sister Monica O’Neal spoke on the issue of undocumented workers paying taxes and not being able to file their income tax returns because of the fear of deportation. After much discussion, Brother Tony Fransetta moved to propose a written amendment for possible action on the floor. Mr. Acosta stated that he would be happy to assist with the language. Resolution 25 was recommended for passage as amended by the committee. Sister Phyllis Hancock moved that all constituency groups recognized by the national AFL-CIO be accepted at the local level. Brother Fransetta, President of Florida Alliance for Retired Americans, gave a detailed update on FLARA’s progress and appealed to all in attendance to go back to their respective locals and encourage membership and support for FLARA. Co-Chair LeBeau spoke on the need for greater unity between

constituency groups. It was suggested that these groups regularly hold town hall meetings to address current issues. Several members echoed her concerns that locals don't support constituency groups enough. Sister O'Neal spoke to the need for more media attention, and that the State AFL-CIO's website needs to be more informative about union/American made products, and provide a clearinghouse for different goods and services. The motion was made that the convention concur with this report. That motion was seconded by Ellis Canty and approved by the convention.

### **Nominations**

The following people were nominated to serve as officers and executive board members. Each nominee will be reviewed by the elections committee to ensure their eligibility to hold these offices.

#### **President**

Mike Williams

#### **Secretary-Treasurer**

Brian Dempsey

#### **District Vice Presidents**

- South Florida AFL-CIO – Vivienne Dixon-Shim, Ellis Canty, Luis Meurice, Walter Ilcyszyn
- West Central Florida AFL-CIO – Robert Prunn, Robert Ray, Gerry Showers, Lynne Webb
- Central Florida AFL-CIO – Paul Wilson, Jennifer Kenny, Stacy Stepanovich
- Broward County AFL-CIO – Walter Crosson, Patrick Santeramo
- North Florida CLC –Russell Harper, Karen Hazlett
- Northwest Florida Federation of Labor – Robert Wood, Ralph Hill
- Palm Beach/Treasure Coast CLC – Pat Emmert, William Sauers
- North Central Florida CLC – Jean Robinson, Carol Westman
- Space Coast AFL-CIO – Claudie Pouncey

#### **Union Vice Presidents**

- AFT (13) Andy Ford, Clara Cook, Joanne McCall, Andrew Spar, Sheryl Daniels, Terrie Brady, Roy Weatherford, Victoria Rodriguez, David Pittman, Luiz Perez, Fedrick Ingram, Damon Davis, Kathy Donato
- AFSCME – Jeanette Wynn
- IBEW – J B Clark & Steve Williams
- IUPAT – Steve Hall
- IAMAW – Frank Ortis
- AFGE – Lorraine Tuliano
- CWA – Gail Marie Perry
- FOPE – Dan Reynolds

#### **Constituency Group Vice Presidents**

- APRI – Charles Spencer
- CLUW – Josephine LeBeau
- CBTU – Darryl Payne
- FLARA – Tony Fransetta

#### **Vice Presidents-at-Large**

Kimberly Bowles, Martha Stevens, Archie Ware, John Parker, Sean Mitchell

**The convention went into recess at 12:18 until Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup>.**