

**MINUTES OF THE NPASU 29TH AGM
HELD AT LECTURE THEATRE 24, Ngee ANN POLYTECHNIC
ON 18TH AUGUST 2009 AT 10.45 A.M.**

Attendance: 216 Ordinary Members attended the AGM. Also in attendance was our IR consultant Ms Rozyana Jaffar. Our Union Advisors Mr. Matthias Yao and Ms Lee Bee Wah were unable to attend.

The President Mr. Tan Kay Tiow called the meeting to order at 10.50 am.

1. **Minutes of the 28th AGM held on 10th October 2008**

The General Secretary, Mr. Koh Ting Lay led the meeting in reviewing the minutes of the 28th AGM, copies of which had been distributed to members earlier. The minutes' content was adopted without amendments with Mr. Teh Gek Huat (EE) as proposer and Mr. Oh Loke Eng (MDE) as seconder.

2. **General Secretary's Report**

The General Secretary's report was distributed to members upon registration for the AGM. The main issue highlighted by the General Secretary Mr. Koh Ting Lay was that there was a fall in membership due to staff taking the early retirement scheme and the actual retirement of members when reaching the age of 62. Mr. Koh also highlighted the fact that adjunct and special adjunct lecturers can still continue to be NPASU ordinary members.

3. **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Mr. Tan Choi Heng presented the statement of accounts which showed a decrease in total assets from \$382,834 as at 31 March 2008 to \$364,982. This was caused by the ruling to report investments at fair value, with the fair value of our investment decreasing due to low stock prices as of 31st March 2009. The motion to pass the accounts was moved by Mr. Tan Choon Sam (MDE) seconded by Mr. Vijay Chandran (FMS).

4. **Recognizing Contributions**

4.1 President announced that Dr. Iynkaran received the NTUC May Day Award for "Veteran of Labour" while the "Branch Officer Award" (in recognition of contributions by a non-office bearer) went to Mr. Chee Hock Wah.

4.2 President presented NTUC gift vouchers to 8 members who reached ten years of continuous membership in NPASU. NTUC vouchers were also presented to our administrative secretary Miss Shirley Toh who has been with NPASU for

ten years. In the category of recognizing Ex-Co members who ten years service, one only Ex-Co member qualified for this award – our President Tan Kay Tiow.

4.3 President also reminded members that in last year AGM, members agreed what in order to encourage and compensate special adjunct lecturers for maintaining their ordinary membership continuously for 12 months, NTUC vouchers will be given out to them to compensate for the 5 months that they are not receiving income from NP. AT this AGM, 8 such members were presented with \$30.00 NTUC vouchers.

5. **EXCO Election (2009 – 2012)**

President announced the line-up of the next EXCO. With Ms Sukhdev Kaur (HS) being co-opted as an EXCO member, the office bearers and committee members are as follow:

President:	Tan Kay Tiow (BA)
Vice President:	Joe Sing Thiak Wah (EE)
Gen Secretary:	Peter Tham Chee Khuan (IS)
Ass Gen Secretary:	Chee Hock Wah (BA)
Hon Treasurer:	Tan Choi Heng (BE)
Asst Hon Treasurer:	Tan Chin Chye (ECE)
Members:	Tan Lai Wan (BA)
	Tan Kee Long (ECE)
	Soh Yew Peng (FMS)
	Patrick Cheng Chuen Sim (HMS)
	Sukhdev Kaur (HS)
	Steven Tham Kheng Hoong (ICT)
	Koh Ting Lay (MDE)
	Mukherjee S N (ME)
	Wong Lee Siong (ME)

6. **President's Address**

6.1 The President started his address by thanking firstly the founders of Ngee Ann Technical College Academic Staff Union in 1980, without whom our union would not exist today. Also mentioned were contributions made by retired office bearers and office bearers who stood down.

6.2 President also disclosed that as per our Constitution, the Union Advisers will stand down with a new Ex-Co election. President will like to put on record the strong support and guidance given to NPASU by the Union Advisers, namely Mr. Matthias Yao and Ms Lee Bee Wah. President mentioned that the new Ex-Co will liaise with NTUC for the appointment of union advisors for this new term.

6.3 President next thanked our union trustees, Mrs. Esther Goh, Mr. Ng Lai Soen and Mr. Tan Cheng Hiong for their good advice and stewardship in the

custodian of financial assets for the union. The three trustees agreed to continue in the post for another term.

6.4 Addressing some members' concern about SET (Students' Evaluation of Teaching) the President reiterated that SET is one of the many tools used in the process of staff appraisal and should not be used alone.

6.5 **Re-Employment**

President announced that in year 2010, all public service organizations should implement re-employment and by 2012 the re-employment act will be passed.

6.6 **The Years Ahead**

President stated that the Ex-Co will be having a Workplan Seminar to map the work plan and program for the next 3years. Amongst the items to be discussed will be:

30th Anniversary Seminar is on either 14 or 15 April 2010. The theme of the seminar will be "*Changing Landscape of Polytechnic Education*"

Collective Agreement re-negotiation – Apr, May 2010

AMCC (ASU-Management Consultative Counsel) takes place twice per semester and is being chaired by DP Foo and President of NPASU.

Membership enlargement and grievance management will be an on-going process.

6.7 **Observed Changes**

President informed members that the outgoing Ex-Co had been discussing the following "observed changes" and its impact on members. These were namely:

- Recession :- Upturn the Downturn
- "Invasion" of Business modules into Engineering Courses
- Changing profile of the Singapore worker
- Falling productivity of Singapore Workers
- Ageing population – re-employment
- One polytechnic, two systems

6.8 **Recession – Upturn the Downturn**

President reiterated that the theme adopted by NTUC for the current economic recession is “Upturn the Downturn” and the tagline for union leaders is “I am for U”. In the strategy for upturning the downturn, NTUC wanted the labour movement to be most “pro business” and most “pro worker” with the main intention of reducing layoffs and replacing them with job retention and retraining.

6.9 **U Care – programs to help the needy**

President commented that we as workers in the public sector are very fortunate to be spared the tremors of layoffs and job lost. The labour movement understood the plight of workers adversely affected by the current downturn and have therefore NTUC set up the U-Care Committee which had raised funds and gave out food vouchers, transport vouchers and other assistance in helping worker go through this difficult period. U-Care also support and encourage unions to gave out bursaries and study aids

6.10 **NPASU Student Aid Grant 2009**

6.9.1 NPASU’s current representative to U-Care is Ex-Co member, Tan Kee Kong. During the past few Ex-Co meetings, we have discussed on ways NPASU can help the needy – especially students whose parents were badly affected by the economic downturn. Kee Long suggested that in line with the encouragement of U-Care committee’s activities, NPASU should considered giving out study aids to NP’s needy students. Many ways were discussed, including encourage every members to donate \$50 so that we end up with a sum of around \$20,000 for the study aids. In the end, in view of our healthy accumulated surpluses and the need to help out needy students, the Ex-Co has worked out with NP’s Students Services department to NPASU to donate a one time sum of \$20,000 for needy NP students with the setting up of the NPASU Student Aid Grant 2009. This scheme would be administered by NP’s Student Services, and will benefit 40 needy students in NP, each given a sum of \$500.00.

6.9.2 When sought, members present gave President and the Ex-Co a strong endorsement of this scheme with loud applause and clapping of hands.

6.11 **Business in Engineering**

President reported that based on JAE figures, in the polytechnics, business courses are getting more popular whilst engineering courses are getting less popular. The polytechnics therefore had and will packaged engineering courses with more business content and therefore a reduction in engineering content. President assured members that NPASU will ensured that this shifting of contents will not result in displacement of staff

teaching engineering modules and if need be, existing staff should be retrained so that they can stay employed.

6.12 Changing Workers Profile - PMETS

6.11.1 President reported to members that NTUC leadership is very concerned about getting PMETS (Professionals, Managers, Executives and Technicians) to join the union movement as ordinary members. This is because of the changing workers educational profile and it was projected that by the year 2020, 50% of Singapore's workers would be PMETs and by 2030, this figure could rise to 65%.

6.11.2 ASU will work closely with NTUC in getting PMETS working in the other polytechnics to join the union movement. Options include forming a new industry-based union or changing the NPASU's constitution to allow for academic staff of other polytechnics to join NPASU.

6.13 Changing Profile-Aging Population

6.13.1 President reported that there will be no extension of the retirement age. Instead, the government will introduce the Re-employment Act which will be enacted in early 2012. Under this act employers are obliged to offer re-employment. The public sector will set an example by offering offer re-employment two years earlier, i.e. by 2010. NPASU had signed with NP a memorandum of re-employment in Oct 08

6.13.2 President reported that current discussion with NP on re-employment is on-going. Till now, the impression given to NPASU is that Re-employment of lecturers in NP will be MAINLY for CET courses. NPASU's stand is that there should be a variety of choices including part-time teaching for both PET and/or CET as well as full-time teaching at re-negotiated terms.

6.14 Falling Workers Productivity

President reported that NTUC is concerned with falling workers productivity and had examined the main causes. It was felt that one of the best ways to increase worker's productivity is to equip workers with better skills and job knowledge. Hence the labour movement will promote and encourage workers to go for CET (Continuous Education and Training).

6.15 One Polytechnic - Two Systems

To give more emphasis for workers training, President mentioned that the polytechnics may have to adopt the one polytechnic with two systems of course delivery. That is one system for PET (pre-employment training) and one system for CET. President suggested that this issue be revisited when we have our 30th Anniversary Seminar on "Changing Landscape in Polytechnic Education."

6.16 Relevancies of the Labour Movement

President concluded his speech by showing a slide from the last AGM, entitled the “Relevancies of the Labour Movement”. President stress that the labour movement is spreading the “rights of labour” and called for a work environment that is fair regardless of Race, Religion, Gender, Age, Educational levels and -Family background. NPASU is fighting for a “Fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work” with proper attention given to occupational safety and medical care and to work place dignity and self esteem of lecturers.

7. Membership Retention, Constitution Amendment and Secret Ballot.

7.1 President stated that as part of the membership retention plan, the union wants to make it attractive for part-time lecturers to stay as ordinary members and also to amend the constitution to retain Deputy Directors as ordinary members. Hence there is a need to amend Article 10 (a) of our constitution to:

“The Ordinary membership of this Union is open to all employees who are academic or teaching staff employed in any capacity by the Ngee Ann Polytechnic and who are not ordinary members of any other registered trade union of employees in Singapore. **The Principal, Deputy Principals and School/Division Directors shall not be eligible for membership. Deputy Directors can join the Union subject to approval by the Executive Council; such persons shall not be eligible for election into nor hold any post in the Executive Council**

7.2 A secret ballot was held for the above constitutional amendment. The three scrutineers were:

- Mr. Wong Lee Yit (EE)
- Mr. Teh Gek Huat (EE)
- Mdm. Ang-Chia Leh Hua(EE)

7.3 The motion was passed with a majority of 166 votes with 183 members (91.5%) for the motion and 17 members (8.5%) against the motion.

8. Any other business

There being no other matters, the meeting was adjourned at 12.10 pm.

Recorded by Asst General Secretary – Sing Thiak Wah (18 August 09)

Vetted by President – Tan Kay Tiow