



CONVENTION REPORTER

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

Wednesday, October 07, 2009

President Cindy Hall called the meeting to order at 9:12 AM. She spoke about the importance of today's National Call-In Day for health care reform and announced that the convention would participate later in the day's program.

Elections Committee

C-Chair **Claudie Pouncey**, Space Coast AFL-CIO, delivered the report. The elections committee met to review the qualifications for the following candidates to serve as the Executive Officers and members of the Executive Board of the Florida AFL-CIO.

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 committee reported that all of the above nominated candidates were eligible to serve as outlined in Article VII of the Florida AFL-CIO Constitution. The committee report included a motion that the Secretary-Treasurer cast a single vote in favor of these candidates and that they be elected by acclamation of the delegates to the 2009 Biennial Convention. The motion was seconded by Greg Blackman, OPEIU 100. The motion carried by a voice vote.

Announcements

President Hall announced that there would be a meeting of the newly elected Executive Board at 8:30 am on Thursday, October 8th.

Andy Ford, President of the Florida Education Association, officially thanked Cindy Hall and Dwayne Sealy for their service to the Florida AFL-CIO, Florida's working families and our state's teachers and students. They presented each with gifts as tangible representations of their gratitude.

President Hall announced that **Lovette McGill, ILA 1416** and **Kimberly Bowles, IATSE 631** had been recognized as "**Heroes**" of the **2008 political program** by the National AFL-CIO at the 2009 convention in Pittsburgh.

Lew Jamison, IAM 2061 rose for a Point of Personal Privilege. He offered, on behalf of the Space Coast AFL-CIO, thanks and congratulations to Cindy Hall and best wishes for a well earned retirement. **He offered special thanks to Secretary-Treasurer, Dwayne Sealy for his efforts on the New Alliance program.** Dwayne was credited for helping the Space Coast AFL-CIO survive the transition. He said Dwayne kept his word that if we showed leadership; we would prosper under the New Alliance. "It is an honor and a privilege on behalf of the Space Coast AFL-CIO to thank Dwayne for your honor, your commitment to your word and to our labor council. We wish you great success on all of your future endeavors," Brother Jamison said.

Credentials Committee

Co-Chair Dan Reynolds, President, Federation of Public Employees, reported that **12 pre-registered credentials** that were received **prior** to the September 15th on-time deadline were reviewed and found to be in good order; **3 pre-registered credentials** that were received **after** the September 15th deadline were reviewed and found to be in good order and **3 on-site credentials** were reviewed and found to be in good order.

The committee moved that **17 voting delegates** be seated. The motion was seconded by **Martha Shunn-King, APWU 1073** and it carried by a voice vote.

There are currently 200 delegates.

Karen Woodall, Coalition for Fair and Comprehensive Tax Reform

Karen Woodall is a long-time advocate for working family issues, especially for disaffected groups in the state such as farm workers, low-income families, children and injured workers struggling for benefits in the workers' compensation system. She is a valuable ally of the Florida AFL-CIO. She offered a presentation about the real reasons for the state's current budget problems and outlined some solutions that would modernize Florida's tax structure and generate the necessary revenue the state needs to adequately meet the needs of its social services. She spoke at length about the fact that high rates of growth have traditionally funded Florida's budget needs and the implications that a dramatic reduction in growth has on the state. She offered several suggestions of ways that Florida can modernize its tax structure so that big, out-of-state corporations and Florida's wealthiest pay their fair share so that the tax burden on small businesses and working families could be reduced while simultaneously improving education, health care and other vital services. **A copy of her presentation is available. If you would like a copy, please notify Rich Templin in our office at rtemplin@flaflcio.org or call (850) 224-6926.**

Political Action Committee

C-chair Bill Sauers, OPEIU 100 delivered the report. The following resolutions were reviewed by the committee with changes as noted.

Resolution #2—Amendment 1 Ballot Referendum - Approved after amending the third line of the resolution, striking the word "feel" and inserting the word "know" and amending the fourth line of the resolution by striking the word "felt" and inserting "have experienced."

Resolution #6—Early Endorsement for Curtis Richardson, SD 6 - Approved as submitted.

Resolution #15— Early Endorsements for House Dists. 52 & 69 - Approved as submitted.

Resolution #19—This resolution was removed in favor of Resolution 24 that dealt with the same subject matter.

Resolution #24—Support for Fair Redistricting Constitutional Amendment - This resolution was approved after amending the sixth "Whereas" clause of the resolution by striking the words "one of the least politically competitive states in the country" and inserting language from Resolution 19 "making Florida the second least politically competitive state in the country."

A discussion on best practices from Labor 2008 was moderated by Josh Anijar, Zone 2 Coordinator and Aaron Carmella, Zone 3 Coordinator. Committee

members listed reasons for success during Labor 2008 and identified areas where work is needed. Resources from the National AFL-CIO, such as the Labor Action Network and the Working Families Toolkit were agreed to be of great value during the campaign. The statewide Labor Walk held in Polk County was discussed as having a great impact on building momentum and recruiting new activists.

The motion to approve the committee report was seconded by **Seth Sklarey, IUPAT 1175**. The motion carried with a voice vote.

Organizing Committee

Tim Maitland, IUPAT District Council 78, co-chair of the committee presented the report.

Resolution #23- AFGE Organizing Campaign/ TSA - Adopted without amendment.

The committee discussed obstacles and strategies for organizing in the state of Florida. This discussion led to ways for the State Federation to better facilitate local union organizing efforts. The organizing committee presented the following recommendations to the Executive Board of the Florida AFL-CIO.

- Developing a standardized form to keep up to date on organizing efforts from affiliates.
- Creating an organizing committee to create a strategic plan for organizing before the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act.
- Developing a better networking/communication structure between the state fed, CLCs and local unions.
- Investigating ways to market/advertise Florida unions to potential members

The motion to accept the committee report was seconded by **Kimberly Bowles, IATSE 631**. The motion carried with a voice vote.

Resolutions Committee

Co-chair Steve Williams, IBEW 756 presented the report.

The Resolutions Committee met to consider five resolutions. President Hall informed the delegates that all of these resolutions were late-filed under the Florida AFL-CIO rules for the convention and would require a 2/3 vote for consideration. She also reported that all resolutions dealing with endorsements required a 2/3 vote for passage.

Andrew Spar, AFT 1605 moved that the resolutions be considered individually rather than as a single committee report. The motion was seconded from the floor and carried with a voice vote.

Resolution 29 – Opposition to the Hometown Democracy constitutional amendment. The committee moved that this late filed resolution be considered and adopted by the Convention. The motion was seconded by **Wally Ilcyszyn, IUPAT 2301**. A lengthy discussion as to whether or not the resolution should be considered ensued. Resolution 29 failed to garner the appropriate number of votes and was **NOT CONSIDERED** by the Convention.

Resolution 30 – Early endorsement for Representatives Kiar and Jenne. The committee recommended that this late filed resolution be considered and adopted by the Convention. The motion was seconded by **Pat Emmert, Palm Beach-Treasure Coast AFL-CIO**. The motion was approved by a voice vote.

Resolution 31 – Early endorsement for Christ Craft for Congressional District 16. The committee report for this resolution carried a motion to adopt. The motion was seconded by **Pat Emmert, Palm Beach-Treasure Coast AFL-CIO**. The motion carried with a voice vote.

Resolution 32 – Early endorsement in the Democratic Primary for Congressman Kendrick Meek for U.S. Senate. The committee report carried a motion to consider and adopt. The motion to consider was seconded by **Tim Maitland, IUPAT District Council 78**. During debate over consideration, Russell Harper IBEW 177 asked that the record reflect the North Florida Central Labor Council and several local unions abstained from considering or voting on this resolution due to their positive relationship with Congresswoman Corrine Brown, who at the time was considering a run for the nomination. **The unions placed in the record were: AFT 3326, CWA 3106, BCTGM 103, Sheet Metal Workers 435, Boilermakers 199, AFSCME 1279, IBEW 177, Machinists 731, Machinists District Lodge 121 and Ironworkers 597**. The motion to consider carried with a voice vote.

Mike Williams, IBEW 177 seconded the motion to endorse Congressman Meek. Williams spoke in favor of the endorsement as did **Lovette McGill, ILA 1416**. The motion carried with a voice vote.

Resolution 17 – Use of Union Hotels and Resorts. The committee recommended passage of this resolution with the following amendment in the second line of the resolve. After the word resort, the following was added: whenever and wherever practical. **Dan Reynolds, Broward AFL-CIO** seconded the motion. Several members spoke in favor while cautioning that non-union hotels are where organizing should take place and urging the delegates to work to unionize those hotels that are not organized.

Brother Reynolds reminded the delegates that UNITE-HERE rejoined the AFL-CIO at the National Convention in Pittsburgh.

The resolution carried with a voice vote.

Union Label Committee

Co-chair Ellis Canty ILA 1416, introduced **Rich Kline, President of the Union Label and Service Trades Department**. He spoke to the delegates about the demise of the Union Industry Show due to loss of membership and funding, largely impacted because of the withdrawal of the Change to Win Unions. Union Label Newsletter is still mailed out with a lot of help from the Steelworkers. The Department has a “Union Flash” newsletter that goes out regularly. The Union Bug has been degraded by anti-union – right wing movements on the internet. So the campaign to Rebrand the Union Bug, Put A Union Label On It” spotlights everyday members and events and not so ordinary events like the union member pilot of the plane that went down in the Hudson River. Local activities could be submitted to the Label Letter. Also, in Florida, the events could be spotlighted in local newspapers, newsletters and through the Florida AFL-CIO newsletters and messengers. “Walk a Mile in My Shoes” spotlights members in their jobs and can be sent in via email or by mail to:

Walk a Mile in My Shoes

c/o Union Label & Service Trades Dept, AFL-CIO

815 16th Street NW

Washington DC 20005

Co-chair Karen Hazlett, CWA 3106, delivered the report of the committee. This report included a recap of the above information and additional announcements. She reported that 10 million jobs need to be created in order to get our economy back on track and we need to make sure they are union jobs. And we need to make sure that all unions make sure they buy union, instead of trying to go on the cheap. She reminded the delegates that the day after Thanksgiving is the start Buy Union Week and that this year marks the 100th Anniversary of the Union Label & Service Trades Dept, created in 1909.

Walt Crosson, IBEW 759 reminded the delegates to make sure that AV support and other service be provided by IATSE unions or other union labor.

Ellis Canty reported that the union label day program netted \$267 for the Florida AFL-CIO COPE fund.

The motion to approve the report was seconded by **Russell Harper**. The motion carried with a voice vote.

Health Care Call-In Day Activity

Phyllis Garrett, Florida AFL-CIO explained the importance of calling on Senator Bill Nelson and members of Congress to support meaningful health care reform. She distributed information with call-in numbers and instructions and the delegates used their cell phones to make the calls.

Florida Chief Financial Officer, Alex Sink

CFO Sink brought greetings from her husband, Bill McBride, Labor's endorsed candidate for Governor against Jeb Bush. She praised Dwayne and Cindy for their service to Florida's working families and pledged to work with our new leadership team on important issues. She announced that her gubernatorial campaign's fundraising had topped any previous Democratic campaign for Governor of Florida. She stated that, in comparison to the announced candidate for the Republican Party, that they had really "kicked some...stuff, doubling the amount our supposed opponent was able to raise. This means we have a lot of momentum going and that is thanks in large part to all of you and your members. Thanks so much for your early endorsement. Brothers and sisters, I am here with a simple message. For those who think Florida has had its day in the sun, for those who have given up hope, for those who think that working families do not have a voice in Tallahassee - It doesn't have to be this way and working together we can change it!"

She spoke of her time as a child in North Carolina and thinking of Florida as a dream...as an ideal. As people passed her town on the way to Florida from all over the country she knew they were going to land of promise. The promise was sand, sun, water and fun but also opportunity. That opportunity has been squandered, she said. "We have the best hard working people in the world. We have natural beauty, entrepreneurial spirit; we have a lot to be proud of. Why are we at the bottom in so many important areas? To be sure this is no garden variety recession. This is going to take more than garden variety leadership, or a politician. Our problems are connected to the national economy, but at its core are problems with our leadership, not our people. The career politicians refuse to confront the reality of our problems and that is unacceptable. We need real leadership and together we will bring that back to Florida. Political leadership is more about worrying about other people's jobs than worrying about your own...that is why I am running for Governor." She spoke about her plans to diversify Florida's economy and ways to bring back the small businesses that have always been at the heart of our economy. She pledged to make Florida a state where our children can be proud to stay and raise their families. She spoke about the "sandy foundation" of Florida's economy which has been "tourists, retirees and the next get rich quick real estate scheme." She pledged to look beyond this and build an economy that works for everyone and builds our state for the future. "I pledge to help re-build our economy on a rock solid foundation," she said. She talked about solar and renewable energy, space industry, creative arts and entertainment. She spoke about pressing forward with new programs to maximize these areas in which Florida should be leading the nation.

She spoke at length about her successful banking background and her determination to take her experiences and use them to both help rebuild Florida's economy and to safeguard Florida's retirement fund for the 21st Century. She

spoke about expanding the board to include a representative from someone who is a beneficiary of that fund.

“The career politicians who control Tallahassee act like politicians. They delay looking at the problem, they bury the problem, they hide the problem and they ignore the problem. You need someone in Tallahassee to solve the problem and that is what I will do as your governor.”

Ed Dees of the Gulf Coast Building Trades thanked Cindy and Dwayne for their leadership and pledged to help the new leadership team keep things moving forward. “We are as strong as we are together. We need to push this organization, love it and move it forward. God bless the outgoing and incoming leaders” he said.

Jackie Lee – Campaign Manger - Fair Districts Florida

Jackie Lee discussed the importance of changing the way Florida draws its districts and thanked everyone for their dedication to this cause. She thanked everyone for their financial support and the complete unity the Labor movement has shown to this effort. “We have in hand 97% of the petitions we need to get this incredibly important issue on the ballot. We will reach our goal very shortly.” She spoke about the fact that every major newspaper in the state is supporting the issue in their editorial pages. She said that \$1.25 million must be raised before Thanksgiving in order to process the collected signatures and get them on the ballot. She pleaded with the Labor Movement to dig deep and make this happen.

Executive Board Report

The Executive Board report was delivered by Mike Williams, IBEW 177. The report included a budget for the next two years. The budget was approved by a voice vote.

A. Phillip Randolph Award

President Hall reminded the delegates about the A. Phillip Randolph Award which was posthumously awarded to Danny Givens, IAM 2777. The actual award had been damaged and was not available at the Labor Hall of Fame Gala. The award was presented to Jeremy Lau, IAM 2777 to pass it on to Brother Givens’ family. Brother Lau recognized Bunny Baker for nominating Danny for the award. Brother Givens will now be added to the Florida Labor Hall of Fame.

Health Care Reform Letter Writing Activity

Phyllis Garrett, Florida AFL-CIO discussed the importance of writing original letters to their leaders in Washington D.C. Sample letters were distributed as well as blank paper so that delegates could write their letters in the convention hall and turn them in to Florida AFL-CIO staff for mailing to D.C.

Installation of Officers and the New Executive Board

Brother Ken Johnson, AFL-CIO Southern Regional Director administered the oath of office. A listing of the new board can be found in the Elections Committee Report in this document and will be posted on the Florida AFL-CIO website and www.flafcio.org.

Brother Brian Dempsey – Secretary-Treasurer, Florida AFL-CIO

Brain Dempsey presented his first address to the delegates of the 2009 Biennial Convention as the new Secretary-Treasurer for the Florida AFL-CIO. Brother Dempsey spoke about the importance of individuals rising to the challenge as leaders of our movement and the fact that our leaders are only as effective as the people they engage and help work together for the common good of our movement and the workers we represent. He said, “I was raised in a family where we were taught, to whom much is given, much is expected. I have been very blessed to have a strong, loving, caring family. That is part of who I am. I was born into that family. When I became a worker and started at Lockheed-Martin and joined the UAW, that became my family. When I understood that there was a much larger world out there... about all that was going on with this movement, I became part of the AFL-CIO family. That is what brought me to this point, that family. I want to help people. When you want to help people and you put positive energy out there, it comes back. I see positive energy, people out there who want to get the job done; people who also want to help people. Let’s do it!” He discussed the prospects of working with Mike Williams, a person he respects greatly and who has such a strong vision for our movement. He introduced the President of the Florida AFL-CIO.

Brother Mike Williams – President, Florida AFL-CIO

Mike Williams addressed the delegates. What a great day for the House of Labor and for me personally. Within six months you will not recognize the face of the Florida AFL-CIO as it has existed over the past 20 years. I am humbled and honored by the faith you have shown in me and look forward to working with all of you and I can start by promising each and every one of you that I will not let you down!” President Williams discussed the opportunity his election meant to him and to the workers he will tirelessly represent. He spoke about his family, growing up in a small mill town and all of the opportunities his life in the IBEW have afforded. He spoke at length about the need to organize and bring all workers into the House of Labor, promising to focus on the 100,000 workers currently not affiliated. He said, I know how to do that, I have shown that, as many of us working together took the Florida Building Trades from a membership of zero to over 50,000 strong in ten years and together we are going to bring similar results to the Florida AFL-CIO.” He also spoke about the incredible opportunity to organize the un-organized, promising that this will be the source of our power for the future. “Growth brings strength and we are going to grow. I know how to organize and we are going to help each and every one of you grow your numbers, grow your power and better represent all of Florida’s workers.” He spoke at length about an aggressive plan to bring more workers into the movement, increase the power of the federation’s electoral program and build an

unprecedented advocacy operation in the legislature to ensure that the interests of Florida's workers are placed above those of the corporate special interests. "I promise to work tirelessly to ensure that all of Florida's workers are given the same opportunities that most of us have been given by the labor movement. Decent pay for a decent day's work, jobs with dignity, access to a quality education for our children and grandchildren and the promise that if we work hard, the American dream will be there for us and future generations." He also pledged, as the son of a working mother, that gender equity would be a priority for his time as president. He thanked Cindy Hall and Dwayne Sealy for all of their hard working and dedication and for building a strong foundation for the new leadership team to build on. He presented a comprehensive plan for new committees and new ways for people to get involved so that the Florida AFL-CIO could maximize the energy and talents of all of our leaders and members across the state. Working with everyone he promised to build a strategy that ensures that the programs and services of this state federation are the very best in the country. He also spoke about his determination to build a stronger political and legislative program, one that places accountability for elected officials at its core. He said, "We have responsibilities in the Florida Legislature...I can't wait. They don't understand accountability yet, but they will. I will ensure that all of our elected officials do what is in the best interests of ALL Florida's working families and if they don't, we will take on each and every one and they will not be returning to office!" He spoke about the many plans he has for the Florida AFL-CIO and asked everyone to help him formulate the specifics of those plans and bring them to fruition. "When you get my call...say yes. I have heard from each of you about how you will do anything you can to help us in these endeavors. I am going to call you. It is no longer about what the Florida AFL-CIO can do for you...from now on it is going to be all about what you can do to make us the strongest, most viable state federation in America. I am excited to be here, I am humbled by the faith and confidence you have shown in me and let me say one more time...I will not let you down!"

Announcements for the Good of the Order

John Gaige, Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen Local 16, thanked the officers and staff of the Florida AFL-CIO for all of their help in defeating the bad CSX deal and asked for everyone's continued support because this is a beaten horse that just will not die. He talked about some of the misconceptions that have been spread by the Orlando press and Mayor Buddy Dyer.

Paul Wilson, President of the Central Florida AFL-CIO spoke about an upcoming activist training and pledged to work hard with the new administration. He thanked and recognized the Florida AFL-CIO for all of their hard work in planning and executing this convention.

Gail Marie Perry, CWA State Council spoke about the importance of the upcoming United States Census and the fact that this activity is what determines

much of the federal tax dollars come to Florida. She also spoke about the coming jobs associated with doing the work of the census.

Dan Reynolds, President, Broward County AFL-CIO spoke about the importance of leadership for building the next generation of labor leaders and activists. He spoke about his first days of his leadership and the indispensable role that Cindy Hall played with his development and called her his mentor.

Lorraine Tuliano, AFGE 507 congratulated the new leadership and spoke about the AFGE effort to organize the Transportation Security Officers at the airports and that with everybody's help, thousands of new members would affiliate with the Florida AFL-CIO.

President Mike Williams adjourned the 2009 Biennial Convention.