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Correspondence; Series I; File 51

Juanita Hunter

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M. OUR CORRESPONDENCE

1. Issues for Discussion

- What do clients understand from our report?
- Why has climate changed?

2. Why did STAFF RESIGN - WHAT HAS BEEN SAID

- Role of inaction, leadership, ED in setting climate.
- Emphasis on non-discrimination.
- Investigating conflict resolution, addressing issues with support.

3. WE BELIEVE ED HAS RESPONSIBILITY

WE WANT THIS STUFF TO STOP

- Staff & Volunteer relations
- Support / appreciation, ongoing expectations, staff
- Stabilization of Volunteers

- Trust in a sense of improved relations
  - Why did ED initially share opinions after discussion but then about staff, without engaging staff?
  - ED to agree to the use limited contact of letter in question because ASKED YOU NOT TO MAIL LETTER COMPOUNDED ISSUES.
- Need to reach Executive Committee & key stuff

Achieving Goals:

- Making Your Mark as a Board Member
1.

Achieving Goals:

Making Your Mark as a Board Member

As a member of your organization's Board of Directors, you have been chosen by your peers as a leader in your field. You may have been just elected or you may have been invited in a leadership position for special reasons.

In either case, your job is an important, responsible one.

The function of the board of directors is to approve and review major policy and plans of the association. Board members bear specific legal and fiscal responsibilities to the members of the organization.

As a board member, you will be asked to:

- cooperate with your chair and other officers.
- develop board committees.
- participate in association and your membership.

This handbook is designed to help you fulfill your responsibilities and make your mark as a member of the board.
Representing Your Membership

As a member of your association, you have the opportunity to be represented on the board of directors. This board acts as the government of your association. The main functions of your board are to:

- Establish policies and programs to guide the organization.
- Make decisions on organizational matters.
- Set fees and dues for membership.
- Hire and fire employees.
- Ensure the financial stability of the organization.
- Set goals and objectives for the association.

As a member, you can play a significant role in these decisions by attending meetings and expressing your opinions. The following are some tips on how to be an effective representative:

- Attend meetings regularly and prepare beforehand.
- Be knowledgeable about the issues and have an opinion.
- Share your ideas and concerns with the board.
- Work with other members to promote the goals of the association.

Working with your Chief Elected Officer

The chief elected officer is the leader of your association. It is important to have a good relationship with them. Here are some tips on how to do this:

- Communicate regularly with the chief elected officer.
- Keep them informed about your concerns and ideas.
- Attend meetings and participate actively.
- Support the chief elected officer in their work.
- Thank them for their efforts.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to ask. Your feedback is important to us.
CORRESPONDENCE

Working with your Association Executive

As you review the operational policies of your association, it is important to recognize the role of your executive. The executive is responsible for the smooth operation of the organization, ensuring that policies and procedures are in place to support the goals and objectives of the organization. In addition, the executive is responsible for communicating with members, stakeholders, and other external parties. It is important to work closely with your executive, providing feedback and support as needed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to remember that your association is a complex organization with many stakeholders and goals. By working closely with your executive, you can help ensure that the organization is operating effectively and efficiently. It is important to stay informed about the policies and procedures, and to take an active role in supporting the goals of the organization. Through effective communication and collaboration, you can help ensure the success of your association.
May 9, 1988

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D
President
The New York State Nurses Association
127 Shirley Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14215

Dear Dr. Hunter:

As requested by the Board of Directors and communicated to me in our meeting of March 18 and in your letter to me on April 14th, I would like to respond to issues you raised related to the working relationship between NYSNA staff and the Board of Directors.

As I understood your communication to me, these issues were generally described as follows:

1. Some staff appear to be resistant to the input of the Board. Examples cited were related to the reorganization of the Convention program and schedule.

2. Some staff appear to be angry during Board meetings.

3. Staff are not perceived as facilitative of the Board's work. Examples cited related to the duplication of effort involved in the preparation of the bibliography for the Consortium's activities.

4. The Board believes the Association's work is "staff driven" rather than "volunteer driven" and believes this must be changed.

5. The Board questions the effectiveness of certain staff members.

6. The Board is concerned about the effectiveness of the Legislative Program.

As I indicated to you in my letter of March 24, I view these perceptions and concerns as quite serious in nature and I intend to be fully responsive. I believe the issues embedded in these concerns are critical to the effective functioning of the Association.

I also believe that these issues must be resolved as expeditiously as possible. As you know, the Association is again involved in extensive hearings concerning our status as a labor organization. These hearings have involved detailed investigation into the relationship between the Board and staff, and I do still expect that Board members will be required to testify.

Therefore, I again respectfully but urgently request that I be given an opportunity to discuss these issues with the full Board of Directors, at the Board meeting of May 18th.

Although I clearly understand that the Board felt this discussion could be confined to the two of us, I do not believe the Board understands the possible impact of this situation on the ongoing litigation. As Executive Director, I feel that it is my absolute obligation to completely inform the entire Board of the scope of the National Labor Relations Board's inquiry and the relationship of the inquiry to the concerns expressed by the Board.

I have, as you requested, held several meetings with the professional staff to explore the concerns of the Board. I will share with you that, in general, the staff are genuinely concerned at the scope and magnitude of the issues raised. They, and I, believe that the staff has always enjoyed a positive and productive relationship with the Board of Directors. We are all committed to maintenance of that relationship.

However, insofar as it is possible to address each of the expressed concerns in a letter, I will respond specifically to each:

1. Staff appear to be resistant to input of the Board. As you know, it is critically important that all directions to the staff be communicated through the Executive Director. If this is not the case, we will be terribly compromised in our ability to demonstrate that the Board of Directors is completely insulated from the conduct of the Economic and General Welfare Program, which is the position we have taken in all litigation before the National Labor Relations Board.

From the viewpoint of efficient operations of the Association, it is also imperative that the Executive Director be fully responsible for the directions given the staff.

Therefore, when substantive issues of policy and direction for the programs or departments are raised at Board meetings, the staff role should be to provide all information required by the
Board to reach its decisions. By virtue of their responsibilities and their expertise, staff may express their opinions on particular matters, but they clearly understand that the decisions of the Board are determinative.

2. Some staff appear angry at Board meetings: The staff and I certainly regret that the Board has this perception. They and I feel that there is some natural tendency to express concern or perhaps even frustration when their work and that of their organizational units is being critiqued. However, in an environment of mutual trust and respect, this should not be a problem. Staff will try to be very sensitive to this issue in the future.

3. Staff are not perceived as facilitative of the Board's work: The example given appeared to be a matter of simple missed communication. Staff and I believe that no effort is spared to be as facilitative as possible. We all regret when slips occur, but there was and is every intention to accommodate any Board need.

4. The Board believes that the work of the Association is "staff driven" rather than "volunteer driven." This is a concern which is much more complex and difficult to address. It also goes to the heart of the partnership role of the staff and volunteers of the Association. The Board of Directors and the Voting Body clearly determine the broad policies and directions for the Association. Positions of the Association may only be adopted by those authorities. Program directions are derived from those authorities. In other words, the nature and scope of the work of NYSNA spring from decisions of its members and elected leaders.

However, the implementation of the policies, programs, and directions of the Association requires a special kind of relationship between the volunteers and the Association's staff. The magnitude and complexity of the organization's responsibilities require daily, systematic input of time, effort, and the expertise of staff. A highly qualified, professional staff is employed for the express purpose of providing continuity of operations and programs. The professional staff must exercise judgment and, to a certain degree, professional autonomy in carrying out their responsibilities. They do this with full knowledge and respect for the basic nature of the staff role: to implement the policies, programs, and directions of the Association as determined by its membership and elected leadership.

5. The Board questions the effectiveness of certain staff members: The Board has employed me as Executive Director, and I must be responsible and accountable for the performance of all staff. We do have a professional staff performance appraisal process which is built around each staff member's position description. I appreciate knowing of the Board's concern about any staff member, and will certainly consider such concerns as part of the information relevant to the performance appraisal process. However, I must stress again that any Board involvement in the selection, evaluation, assignments, or other matters pertinent to any staff other than the Executive Director would inevitably compromise the position we have taken in litigation about the insulation process.

6. The Board is concerned about the effectiveness of our Legislative Program: I believe the Board's concerns about the legislative program stem from frustration over our progress on the Association's legislative agenda. I would ask the Board to consider the extraordinary difficulty of achieving an agenda which is so vigorously attacked from both within the profession and externally to it. The fact that entry into practice legislation has not yet been achieved in any State should be evidence of this.

As you know, the legislative program is subject to three different levels of volunteer direction: (1) the Legislative Council generates the proposed program; (2) the Board of Directors approves the program; and (3) the Voting Body adopts the program. NYSNA has a very long history of selecting legislative objectives which are complex, difficult to achieve, and of critical importance to the profession. Achievement of these objectives will be similarly complex, difficult to achieve, and probably long term in their accomplishment. The Board may
J. Hunter
May 9, 1988
Page Five

I wish to consider what appropriate outcome criteria should be taken as reflective of "success" of our legislative program. I have reviewed the plan of action adopted by the Board with respect to the current legislative program, and believe that with one or two exceptions, the plan has been implemented.

I sincerely hope that this letter will be responsive to the Board's concerns. However, I feel I must reiterate the concern I expressed in my earlier letter to you; the broad scope of the issues raised by the Board suggests to me that a full discussion of staff and volunteer roles is urgently needed.

We must all be very clear and unanimous in agreement as to the nature of the staff role, the lines of accountability, the process of decision-making in the Association, and the parameters of the Board - staff relationship. Absent this clarity, the mutual partnership of the Board and staff will be eroded and the effectiveness of all of our efforts will be diminished.

Finally, I stress the urgency of resolving these issues prior to further proceedings in the on-going Long Beach case. More than 80% of the Association's membership is represented by us through the Economic and General Welfare Program. An extraordinary challenge to our ability to represent these nurses has been in operation for several years. The membership and Board of Directors have affirmed repeatedly the Association's intent to retain a multi-purpose professional association and to satisfy all requirements of applicable labor laws through an insular process. This process is dependent on a clear and demonstrable understanding of and execution of the staff role and our ability to communicate that role to the Labor Board and the Courts.

I sincerely hope that I have responded to the general and specific concerns and perceptions of the Board.

Sincerely,

Martha L. Orr
Executive Director

cc: Maggie Jacobs
   Secretary
J. Hunter  
May 9, 1988  
Page Two

consider membership. I believe this to be appropriate practice of the Executive Director and good public relations.

My letter to Lucille Joel, a copy of which is attached, represents the execution of a Board decision. It is my understanding that the implementation of Board actions is a primary responsibility of the Executive Director. As you know, I read this letter to you on the telephone to secure your approval. Again, in the interests of efficient communications, it has always been the practice of the Association that the Executive Director transmits communications implementing Board actions.

If the Board wishes to consider a formal policy on organizational communications, I would urge that this not be constructed in such a manner as to limit the Executive Director's opportunities for interaction with members.

Your third letter informs me of your intent to request an executive session of the Board of Directors during the May 18-19 Board meeting. You indicate that the agenda of the meeting need not be shared with the Executive Director. Clearly this is the Board's prerogative. However, I urge you to consider the need to keep the Executive Director informed of all Board of Directors' discussion and actions.

Because the Board serves as the corporate agent of the Association, the deliberations of the Board of Directors, even those conducted in executive session, are subject to subpoena and testimony before the National Labor Relations Board and the Courts. In fact, these minutes have been subpoenaed by legal counsel in the Long Beach hearing. Although our legal counsel has asked that this portion of the subpoena be quashed, no decision has been rendered to date. I must stress that formal minutes of these sessions are required and must be kept on file with the Association. In the past, a summary of the Board's deliberations in Executive Session and a report of the actions taken have been recorded within the minutes of the meeting of the full Board. For the protection of the Association and the Board, I urge you to reconsider your decision to exclude me from these sessions.

Finally, you have called to my attention that some communications from you to the staff appear to have been handled inefficiently. I was unaware of this concern until your letter arrived. I have discussed the matter of your April 24th communication to Kim Roberts with her. To the best of her knowledge, the list of names you cited was not included with other items in the envelope. I assure you that all of your communications to us are treated as priority items. I do regret when any such communication is not handled to your satisfaction and will try to assure that the flow of your communications is always managed with great care.

I appreciate and respect your concern for efficient and effective communications within the Association. I will be pleased to discuss this issue with you and the Board.

Sincerely,

Martha L. Orr  
Executive Director  
cc: Board of Directors
NEW YORK STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION
2113 Western Avenue, Guilderland, N.Y. 12084, (518) 456-5371

April 26, 1988

Lucille Joel
254 Gettysburg Way
Lincoln Park, NJ 07035

Dear Dr. Joel:

Thank you for sending your position statement and biographical sketch to The New York State Nurses Association in connection with your candidacy for the position of President of The American Nurses Association.

At its most recent meeting, the NYSNA Board of Directors determined that official endorsements of any candidates would not be made this year. However, candidates will be interviewed by representatives of our delegation to ascertain the candidates' positions on membership and other issues of importance to the profession and the organization.

Dr. Juanita Hunter will be making interview assignments among our delegates in the near future. At this point, I am unable to suggest preferred meeting times; however, our designated representative will be in touch with you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Martha L. Orr
Executive Director

NEW YORK STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION
2113 Western Avenue, Guilderland, N.Y. 12084, (518) 456-5371

April 4, 1988

Denise Deppoliti
602 Valley Drive East
Chittenango, NY 13037

Dear Ms. Deppoliti:

First, I want to extend my sincere congratulations for the powerful and touching paper you wrote for the ANA "Proud to Care" essay contest. I have many times experienced the feelings that you wrote about so well; reading your paper reminded me of the pain and frustration being experienced by so many of our colleagues in practice.

I would like your permission to use your essay in some of the communications the Association is currently producing in relation to the nursing shortage. I would particularly like to send the paper to Dr. Axelrod and Lorna McBarnette, both of whom are responsible for the Labor-Health Industry Task Force on Health Personnel. Please let me know if this will be acceptable to you.

Also, I would appreciate your sending me a brief biographical statement about yourself.

Thank you again for writing such a beautiful expression about our profession.

Sincerely,

Martha L. Orr
Executive Director
MEMO: Dr. Juanita Hunter  
President

FROM: Martha L. Orr  
Executive Director

May 6, 1988

As you know, Wendy Burbank has been called away for several days because of the sudden acute illness of her father. I have checked with Kim Roberts concerning the mailing to you of the delegate list. We do keep a log of the mailing dates of all material mailed to you and/or the Board of Directors. The log indicates that the delegate listing was sent to you on May 3rd. If you have not yet received the list, please let me know and I will express mail another copy.

Enclosed is the draft agenda of the Board of Director's May 18-19 meeting. We have received no suggested agenda items from members of the Board. The first Board mailing was sent today, and we will do a second mailing Monday or Tuesday of next week. If you will call in your revisions of the agenda, we could include that in the next mailing.

I expect to be in the office this weekend and on Monday, so am reachable at your convenience.

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D., President
THE NEW YORK STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION
2113 Western Avenue, Guilderland, N.Y. 12084, (518) 456-5371

May 10, 1988

Martha L. Orr, M.N., R.N.
Executive Director
New York State Nurses Association
2113 Western Avenue
Guilderland, New York 12084

Dear Marty,

Some months ago we agreed to have regular conference calls to ensure that we both have an opportunity to communicate necessary and current information to each other. That system has worked well when it has been operational.

Last week however, when I was speaking at District 8 on May 5, I was confronted with questions related to the nurse practitioner bill. Information came forth that I did not have about the status of last year's bill. Upon checking with staff on Friday, May 6 I discovered that there had been new developments regarding the bill which had not been shared with me.

This brings to mind a concern which I raised with you several months ago. That concern related to the responsibility of the executive director to keep the president updated on major association activities. We both agreed that this information sharing was important to effective administration of each of our roles.

It has become apparent to me that I assume most of the responsibility for these regular scheduled conference calls. While we do discuss issues, these discussions are spontaneous and tend to address an immediate pressing issue. I believe it is more likely that complete information will be communicated when pre-planned calls are regularly scheduled.

I share these thoughts with you to reinforce my views on this matter.

Sincerely,

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D.
President

cc: Board of Directors
May 2, 1988

Martha L. Orr, M.N., RN
Executive Director
New York State Nurses Association
2113 Western Avenue
Guilderland, NY 12084

Dear Martha,

I have become conscious of the fact that NYSNA stationery does not include the name of the current president. This awareness has occurred as NYSNA members have asked me for a reason for this omission. I have also noted that ANA stationery as well as other SSA stationery does acknowledge the current president.

I believe that member identification with the volunteer leadership of their organization is vital to their support and involvement in that organization. Therefore, I will be bringing this matter to the attention of the board of directors at their May 17-18 meeting. In preparation for that discussion I am requesting from you the approximate cost of adding the president's name to the NYSNA stationery every two years.

Thank you for consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D.
President

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D., President
THE NEW YORK STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION
2113 Western Avenue, Guilderland, N.Y. 12084, (518)456-5371

May 3, 1988

Martha Orr, R.N., M.N., Executive Director
New York State Nurses Association
2113 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12084

Dear Martha,

During our March 18 meeting as directed by the board of directors, I requested you to distinguish between the mail which should appropriately be answered by the president and that which should be answered by the executive director. You have responded positively to that request.

However, I continue to receive copies of correspondence already mailed which for me has continued to raise the question of appropriate signatory. Two examples are the April 4 letter to Denise Bepoliti and the April 26 letter to Dr. Lucille Joell.

As per our agreement, even before the board meeting, correspondence which relates to staff matters, financial and administrative issues of the organization and collective bargaining are to be acknowledged and responded to by the executive director. Letters which relate to professional issues or volunteer to volunteer matters are to be answered by the president. We further agreed that discussion would occur between us when questions arise regarding implementation of this verbal policy. It may now be appropriate for the board to consider a written policy on official communications. I would appreciate your response to this idea.

Thank you for consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D.
President

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D., President
THE NEW YORK STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION
2113 Western Avenue, Guilderland, N.Y. 12084, (518)456-5371

CC: Members of the Board of Directors
May 3, 1988

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D., President
The New York State Nurses Association
2113 Western Avenue, Guilderland, N.Y. 12084, (518) 456-5371

Martha L. Orr, M.N., R.N., Executive Director
New York State Nurses Association
2113 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12084

Dear Martha:

As you are aware, one of my goals for this first year of my presidency is to improve communication with the membership. However, achievement of this goal depends upon expeditious transfer of official communications from the president to NYSNA staff.

There have been several occasions when letters I have sent for typing and other messages have not been received by the responsible persons. The latest incident involved several important items which I mailed on April 24 and received at NYSNA on April 27. Each important item was clearly marked for a specific staff person. The envelope was addressed with attention to Kim Roberts.

On Friday, April 27 Karen Maune informed me that she had not received a list of names which she urgently needed to complete preparation of award certificates for the May 6 Reception at the Hyatt Regency. That list was in the envelope.

I do appreciate all of the efforts which staff expend for the effective functioning of the association. I do however, feel this matter requires some attention. I request a response.

Sincerely,

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D.
President

cc: Maggie Jacobs, Secretary
Madeleine A. Naegle, President-Elect

May 11, 1988

Martha L. Orr, M.N., R.N.
Executive Director
New York State Nurses Association
2113 Western Avenue
Guilderland, NY 12084

Dear Marty:

It has been brought to my attention that some staff continue to be unclear about my activities and the effect of those activities on the association's programs. In the past, we have discussed role differentiation between the chief elected officer and chief executive officer on several occasions and most recently at the ASAE conference. It seems apparent however, that the perceptions of some staff need clarification.

Therefore, I will include the agenda item president/staff working relationship to our pre-board meeting.

Sincerely,

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D.
President

cc: Madeleine A. Naegle, President-Elect
Maggie Jacobs, Secretary, Board of Directors
May 11, 1988

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Executive Director
New York State Nurses Association
2113 Western Avenue
Guilderland, NY 12084

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Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D.
President

cc:
Madeline A. Naegle, President-Elect
Maggie Jacobs, Secretary, Board of Directors
May 11, 1988

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Executive Director
New York State Nurses Association
2113 Western Avenue
Guilderland, NY 12084

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Sincerely,

Juanita K. Hunter, R.N., Ed.D.
President

UKH:mm

cc:
Madeline A. Naegle, President-Elect
Maggie Jacobs, Secretary, Board of Directors