

SVFT Executive Council Meeting

March 11th, 2026

Vinal Tech

President Makenzi Hurtado called the meeting to order.

Motion to approve February's minutes. M/S/V

Emily DelPiano Treasurer's Report:

Total Income for the month was \$114,003.48

- **Item 4200 Rebate Income \$11,369.09**

AFT-CT Rebate for Jan.

- **Item 4355 Rental Income \$325.00**

Rent from one tenant

Total Expenses for the month were \$103,672.36

Line items of note included

- **Item 5300 Local Labor Council - \$288.75**

Payment to Eastern and Western Councils for members for months Sept. through February

- **Items 6005 through 6025**

Quarterly stipend for officers, 6010 was a partial payment since VP retired Jan. 1

- **Item 6030 Salary Reimbursement - \$14,457.91**

Lower than usual, only needed to reimburse for two fulltime officers

- **Item 6095 Grievances - \$395.00**

Filing fee for arbitration

- **Item 6097 Negotiations - \$2,720.25**

Legal fees for ongoing negotiations work

- **Item 6110 Electronic Communications - \$237.42**

Lower than usual, payment to AT&T was made twice last month

- **Item 6120 Office Supplies \$4,186.16**

Purchase of laptops for EUR and Secretary

- **Item 6200 Office Maintenance \$2,584.30**

Snow removal

- **Net operating income for the year to date is \$119,272.19**

Reminders:

Mileage reimbursement \$0.725

Attached an updated School Allotment Chart

Motion to approve Treasurer's Report, pending audit. M/S/V

Questions for Treasurer: None

Melanie Perry's Executive Union Rep Report:

Administrative Leave (6)

- Do not contact members on Administrative Leave.
- If they contact you, tell them to call Mel. Do not engage.

Terminations for the Year (11)

- 2 Tenured Teachers

- 6 non-tenured
- 3 Subs

Arbitrations (5)

- Night Event Comp Time-Waiting for arbitrator's decision.
- Vinal Website Coordinator-Arbitration April 1st.
- Wrongful Termination-May 5th arbitration.
- Masonry Silica Air Quality-Filed for arbitration, waiting for AAA to assign an arbitrator.
- ECE Payment- Filed for arbitration, waiting for AAA to assign an arbitrator.

FOIA/SERA (2)

- Evidence for wrongful discipline.
- All investigations and disciplines for all administrators against whom we have filed complaints.

Board Charge (0)

- None

Grievances (0)

- None

Complaints (8)

- SVFT v Goodwin Principal for Unprofessional Behavior—Investigation complete and being reviewed by Leadership.
- Wilcox FAA—Investigation complete and being reviewed by Leadership.
- CTECS Consultant being unprofessional in front of students— Investigation complete and being reviewed by Leadership.
- 3 Kaynor Administration for Unprofessional behavior--FOI filed to get status
- Grasso—Retaliation complaint rejected by Affirmative Action and is now being reviewed by Labor Relations.
- Bullard—Unprofessional behavior (peer and administration) Interviews pending.

Fact-Findings – DCF/Police (1)

- Gun on State Property—Investigation complete and being reviewed by Leadership.

Fact-Findings – HR/School Level (5)

- Refusing to speak to staff or students, NEW. Investigation has just started.
- DSAP expired and the member did not take the courses needed for certification-- Investigation completed and being reviewed by Leadership.
- Accused of putting hands on a student—Investigation in progress.
- Failure to Report—Waiting for a stipulated agreement.
- Aggressive behavior and questionable social media posts—Investigation completed and being reviewed by Leadership.

Fact-Findings – Affirmative Action (3)

- Student accusations of racial comments—Early stages of investigation.
- Inappropriate comments to a student—Investigation complete, waiting for Leadership's decision.
- Lack of Classroom Supervision—Investigation complete, waiting for Leadership's decision.

SVFT Investigations (14)

- LMS scheduled a study hall
- MLL teaching ELA (Only reading teachers and SPED can be scheduled in Tier 3)
- Preparing for a vacancy
- Payroll
- New building issues at Bullard

Loudermills (0)

- None

Stipulated Agreements (0)

- Parent and student complaints about unprofessional conduct in class. We are awaiting a stipulated agreement.

Other (3)

- **Lost April break days (and February, for future notice.)**
 - Admin is limited on how many PL days they can approve
 - Sick time can be investigated for wage theft or if the member has a pattern of behavior if they have reasonable suspicion that it is being misused.
- **Payroll**
 - If you are underpaid, let payroll and us know.
 - If you are overpaid, report it. You will have to pay it back one way or another.
- **Mel's Contact Info:**
 - eur@svft.org
 - Phone number 203-317-9022

Questions for EUR:

- Q – Our LMS was told that due to 180 days of English that she would be teaching English next year
A – That is not happening. Our contract language is very clear on LMS responsibilities and we will bring this up at our next leadership meeting
- Q – When my members hear about 2 tenured teachers have been let go, they are going to ask what they did for that to happen. Is there anything you can tell me so I can pass it along?
A – I can't give specifics but here are some rules of thumb: Don't touch the children, be careful of conversations and always ensure it is on a professional level and don't engage a student on social media and be careful what you post on social media.
- Q – Is the gun issue something new or is this part of an old issue with an administrator?
A – This is a new issue with a SVFT member
- Q – In our building Administration is always trying to schedule ELL and Reading teachers with English classes to get the 180 days to work. I think there will be a problem with this in our building next year.
A – Unfortunately, this is another unfunded scheduling mandate. They don't have the proper staffing. This will be at the top of my list at the next meeting
- Q – We have 2 reading teachers and 1 of them were brought into a meeting with Administration and was told that they would be teaching English next year.
A – If they do we will grieve it.
- Q – A couple of our ELL teachers are being used to teach enrichment classes. They are wondering if this should happen if they now don't get to see their students.
A – If they are having an issue where they are not able to serve their students then they need to contact Margaret.

Bob Riccitelli's Vice President Report:

Committee Reports

- Budget Committee – Met on March 5 and recommended the proposed budget.
- Contract Negotiations Committee – Met on March 3 to debrief the committee and again with CTECS on March 5. The committee will meet again on March 11.
- Grievance & Arbitration Committee – Ongoing review of current matters.
- Health & Safety Committee – Conducted visits at Vinal and Stratford. The committee will be at Norwich on March 12.
- Sick Bank Committee – Met to review two Sick Bank applications.

Miscellaneous

- Upper Parking Lot Legal Issue
- Talking with the bank about possibly switching our savings account to a high yield savings account.
- Office Roof Condition

- Building & Grounds Maintenance Plan

I am developing a 1-, 5-, and 10-year office building and ground maintenance plan to assist the Budget Committee with future financial planning and projections.

- **Union Office Phone Usage**

All full-time officers have Union cell phones, and since we are rarely in the office and most calls go directly to our mobile phones, we ask that building representatives inform members at this month's meetings to use our cell phone numbers rather than the office phone.

- **Teacher of the Year Process**

Voting for School-Based Teacher of the Year has been completed. We will soon begin collecting candidate information sheets. The district will also be sending out their questionnaire to begin the process of selecting the District Teacher of the Year.

Questions for Vice President: None

Makenzi Hurtado's President Report:

Scholarships

- SVFT-R: SVFT Retirees awards two \$500 awards to CTECS seniors. The application has been shared with all Counseling DHs. It is due by 3pm on April 16, 2026.
- AFT Connecticut Scholarships are available for members' spouses, domestic partners, children, or grandchildren. There are also scholarships available for members. Applications are due by April 1, 2026.
- SVFT Scholarships and Mini Grants are available on our website and your packets. Applications are due May 15, 2026.

This year we are offering twelve (12) \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors who are children of members. We are offering a total of \$6,000 in Mini Grants to members. Mini Grant funds are for members to grow professionally, outside of the activities funded by CTS-43 or tuition reimbursement.

Legislative Update

- I have begun testifying on issues that affect SVFT and education in Connecticut. So far, I have offered testimony on the CTECS budget. I will be working closely with AFT Connecticut's Legislative Advocates, Teri Merisotis and Jim Vigue, on the issues that affect us.
- There are three Legislative Meetings scheduled. The first is this weekend (3/14) in New Haven. There are two next weekend. One will be in Southington (3/21) and one in East Hartford (3/21). We are working on getting a list of issues ahead of time, but I encourage members to attend to discuss the CTECS budget and special education concerns.
- Tomorrow is our SEBAC Event. We will be meeting at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford to show the Governor and legislators that we need fair contracts. Once we have a ratified contract, it still needs to be passed by the General Assembly. Please meet us there at 5:00 p.m.

Negotiations

- Today we ended negotiations. We are happy with the results. We will be having a virtual meeting to present the new contract and changes on Monday March 30th. We will have a questions and answers virtual meeting on Tuesday March 31st. We will have a ratification vote on Wednesday April 1st.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The officers will be meeting on March 19th to finalize roles and responsibilities for officers and building representatives. We will also develop a strategic plan for the rest of this school year. We will share at the April Executive Council Meeting and again at General Membership in May. We are very excited to have Mel on our team.

First Cut Forum – Meeting on March 16th at 6pm

Solidari-TEA – Meeting on March 30th at 4pm

App

- We have joined several AFT Connecticut locals who are working with app developers. This app will be available to all members. It will be an easier way to access information and for us to share important information.

Questions for President:

- Q - With the committees, didn't we have someone leave a committee and we filled their position based on what school they were from? Why aren't we doing that now?
A – Dan was already on the Constitution and By-Laws committee. The President can name a chair of the committee. We haven't decided if we will be filling any of the vacant positions on the committees.
- Q – Do you know if the SRO has the authority to give citations on school grounds? Some of us received warnings about parking too close to a fire hydrant that is 400 feet away and we were told that any shop teacher that opens a shop door with the gate closed and locked will be arrested.
A – I know the SROs don't work for CTECs and have a boss with the State Police. They are allowed to make arrests. I am not sure what their problem is but I will bring it up.
- Q – If someone leaves State service before the end of the school year, would they get the retro pay if we get it?
A – They have to be an employee when the General Assembly votes on the contract.
- Q – What is the expected timeline if we vote in favor of the contract?
A – If we ratify the contract, they have 10 days to present it to the General Assembly. We are hoping by the end of April or mid-May.
- Q – If you reassigned the day of the vote can you vote in the building you are reassigned to?
A – No, you must vote the day before at your building
- Q – If a sub doesn't get called in the day of the vote can they still come in and vote?
A – Yes.
- Q – What is the threshold in order for us to ratify?
A – We need a majority

Old Business:

Schools reported back about if they decided to be a part of the petition for teachers to be able to use the fitness centers at our buildings.

New Business:

26-27 Proposed Budget Report

Reviewed the Budget Assumptions, Dues Calculations, and Salary Reimbursement Sheets

Reviewed line items that were changed from the current budget

- **Item 4000 Member Dues Income \$1,380,568**
- **Item 5000 AFT Per Caps \$305,126**
- **Item 5100 AFT-CT Per Caps \$340,821**
- **Item 5200 AFL-CIO Per Caps \$16,429**

All decreased Budgeting for less members than previous year which impacts all these line items

- **Item 5300 Local Labor Council - \$4,094**
Increased – rectified under payment of members
- **Item 6055 Office Insurance - \$6,000**
Increased – anticipated rise in cost, 2024-2025 was over budget

- **Item 6080 Dues reimbursement – \$41,206**
Increased – dues have increased and full amount will be allocated to this line item
- **Item 6095 Grievances – \$20,000**
Increased – CO less likely to **settle**
- **Item 6097 Negotiations – \$5,000**
Decreased – expected to be completed but left some finding in **case**
- **Item 6112 Utilities – \$12,000**
Increased – anticipate an increase in costs due to inflation
- **Item 6115 Postage - \$2,000**
Increased – retiree chapter is working to get more involved, and we would like to allow them to use our postage meter
- **Item 6125 Printing – \$10,000**
Decreased but still higher than normal – may have some residual printing expenses after negotiations
- **Item 6155 Legal – \$20,000**
Increased – anticipate that there will be more need
- **Item 6159 Accounting - \$10,000**
Increased - Previous years have been over budget, additional cost for tax filing
- **Item 6165 Miscellaneous General Account - \$20,000**
Increased – would like to award more money to SkillsUSA chaperones to offset their expenses
- **Item 6170 Scholarship- \$28,000**
Increased – Addition of a new award for students enrolled in continuing education
- **Item 6171 Teacher of the Year - \$11,000**
Increased – Increased check to \$100, inflation costs for TOY dinner and teacher appreciation gift supplies
- **Item 6173 Service and Recognition – \$13,500**
Decreased because dues reimbursement will no longer use this line item for a gift card but did allocate more money for teacher appreciation gifts
- **Item 6205 New Building Repairs – \$30,000**
Increased – There is a need for various building improvements – roof, furnace, siding, etc.

Motion to approve Budget. M/S/V

Good and Welfare: None