

## Staff Association Minutes

October 11, 2017, 3:00pm

Blum JCR

**Senators Present:** Jackie Burns, Derek Evans, Jessica Frogge, Carol Hare, Barb Harris, Eric Kramer, Kathy Kelly, Christina Lund, Lisa May, Louise Mills, Fred Nessler, Jessica Poet, Hawley Rumpf, Jena Williams

**Senators Absent:** Andrea Collins-Keller, Tara Stoll,

**Staff:** Michelle Diaz

**Invited Guests:** Dr. Vartabedian, Dr. Daffron, Dr. Cale Fessler, Dr. Elise Hepworth,

### **Dr. Vartabedian Report:**

- Full steam in the semester, both academically and athletically. In athletics, some of the programs are having record breaking years.
- Enrollment is showing a very good trend, even better than expected. 16.2% increase in new freshman. Over 3% [increase] of overall enrollment.
- Important meeting with Kansas City Chiefs last Thursday – they were very reasonable. They did not ask for much at all this time around, a few small things. Part of the original contract that was if they did a scrimmage off campus, they would have to compensate us for the loss of income that we would have earned had they done that here – they would like us to work on that part of the contract.
- There is a new structure going up on the opposite side of the stadium from the score board – it is turning out bigger than anticipated. That is Mr. Craig's project, he wants to have symmetry with the scoreboard. That's going to be a two story pavilion with bbq pits and an 80 foot flag pole.
- There is an email about scheduling issues ahead. There was pretty overwhelming support for continuing Fridays off in June, something like 74% positive. For planning purposes, we are going to have those Fridays off: June 8<sup>th</sup>, June 15<sup>th</sup>, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, and June 29<sup>th</sup>. Also, we are going to extend the holiday break, Friday December 22<sup>nd</sup> and Tuesday January 2<sup>nd</sup>, so there are twelve consecutive days off.

**Question: Fred Nessler:** Was there any discussion on scheduling those four day work weeks further? More than June?

**Dr. Vartabedian:** The problem is there is a lot of overlap in May that we have to deal with, and same is true with July, a lot of things going on. So we thought for this year we'd try another year of June and see how the savings are. Doing it for the entire summer is not out of the question for the future. But not for 2018.

### **Dr. Cale Fessler:**

- Murphy Hall: We've got the ac up and running. A couple of things about that: Murphy Hall is one of the only buildings that has the possibility of being completely shut down for the whole summer, it is a completely academic building, we are having discussions with the offices there about where we could move them. We could see some significant savings if we were to shut down that entire building.
- With respect to having a back up for the ac: we only have a few buildings on campus that are only fueled by one ac chiller unit. Agenstein/Remington, Murphy and Eder. In regards to Agenstein/Remington, they have 3 chiller units but only run one at a time, so we are confident that that design is very good. In regards to residence facilities, Leaverton, Vaselakos, Scanlon and Griffon Halls only run on one chiller unit. We are looking at a purchase of one single unit that could be tied into any one of the facilities. For somewhere in the neighborhood of \$100,000, we would have a back up unit for any of these facilities. We are working on finding the best way to have a back up for this kind of situation.

- There will be a great deal of information coming out from Human Resources on insurance renewal. We started with a 30% increase from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, a little over a \$1.1 million increase. The University budgeted for the costs to go up only 10%, about \$185,000 per fiscal year. In order to get that rate down we did a couple things: we went out to market, to look at other carriers, used the responses there to drive down the renewal cost (resulted in a decrease of 9%). We are going to transition medicare-eligible retirees 65 and older off the plan; seven employees and three spouses will be affected, 1.5% of our total employees but 16% of our claims. We will work with them to transition them off the plan.
- Also looked at plan design changes. Initially, removal of the HMO offering was considered. But we want to try and maintain our four plan offerings. 78% of our employees elect coverage for only themselves. We made some changes in order to maintain those four plans: coinsurance rates stayed the same, but copays on prescriptions went up slightly. We had to increase some of the employee contributions in regards to buy up elections or dependent and spousal coverage, in particular we had to increase substantially the HMO contribution cost. We will have to continually evaluate the HMO plan to see if we can continue to offer that option as one of our four plan options. Having four plans is wholly unique to our institution compared to other state institutions, most only have two.
- Now that this has been approved by the Board of Governors, open enrollment dates and information will come out from HR. We will also set up a number of information meetings.

#### **Dr. Daffron Report:**

- Registration has started for Spring. We want to keep our enrollment success going. Retention and recruitment are very important, it's part of why we moved our registration dates earlier. Our applications are up over last year already.
- College Fair on campus yesterday that was a success. Over 1200 potential students attended. It was a really good day.
- Yesterday we also had Tournament of Champions. There were 27 bands from high schools on campus.
- Tomorrow is Art Day, there will be 1200 high school students on campus.
- This Friday starts performances for School of Rock, I encourage everyone to go see it.

**Question: Jackie Burns:** What is the deadline the Chief's have to let us know by?

**Dr. Vartabedian:** The last contract expired on the last day of training camp, so there is no official deadline, but as soon as possible. We are going to try and wrap it up within the month.

#### **Old Business**

**Kathy Kelly:** I move to approve the September minutes.

**Carol Hare:** Second.

Approved.

#### **Committee Reports**

- **Salary & Fringe** – no report
- **Constitution & By-laws** – Michelle Diaz
  - It has been updated on the website.
- **Welcoming** – Jackie Burns
  - Today we welcomed three new staff members: Jeannette Lorimor – Accounts Payable Clerk, Emily Garcia – Fitness Center Coordinator, Carol DiVilbiss – Transcript Evaluation Coordinator.

- **Election** – no report
- **Grievance** – Kathy Kelly
- **Professional Development** – Jackie Burns
  - There have been 4 applicants for professional development money since a hold was put on the funds
- **Special Events** – no report
- **Advantage** – no report

**President’s Report** – Fred Nesslage

- GAC – 2 policies presented, have moved on to the President
  - The first regarded animals, particularly pets. They have become a problem, so there will be an official policy. There are exceptions for service and support animals.

**Questions: Eric Kramer:** Does that include all of campus, including trails?

**Fred Nesslage:** No, its more within buildings. You can’t really stop the public from walking their animals on campus. This stems from nuisances and concerns about allergies. Residence Halls have a little bit different policy: there are exceptions for staff.

**Question: Jessica Frogge:** So we currently have a fish in our office?

**Fred Nesslage:** It is my understanding that that will be okay, it has been grandfathered in. But there’s the potential, if there is a complaint about it, that you could be asked to remove it.

**Question: Jessica Poet:** In my department, we have people who bring in animals for different classes: Do we need approval to bring those as part of our labs?

**Fred Nesslage:** That is part of academic instruction and there is a whole policy defined for that already. They are still allowed.

**Elise Hepworth:** This policy has come about in particular because a lot of students have pets in the dormitories. It is not because of staff or academic reasons. There have been issues with faculty too, bringing their pets, we are trying to discourage that.

**Question: Jessica Frogge:** Will this affect tailgating as well?

**Fred Nesslage:** That wasn’t address, but that would be difficult to enforce, so I don’t think so. But I don’t think they are able to bring animals into the stadium. Its going to be very open to interpretation.

The other policy presented was faculty evaluations of their Chairperson. This is universal. It doesn’t apply just to people with the Chairperson title, but also to anyone who functions as the chairperson.

- Faculty Senate Meetings – I have attended one faculty senate meeting and the [Staff Association] Executive Board also met with the Faculty Senate Executive Board to discuss what we have going on. Three things:
  - Faculty Senate is investigating proposing having fees for dependents discounted like they do tuition. They need to know what the fiscal impact of that would be.
  - They are also looking into asking for paid paternity leave.
  - Based on the experiences faculty had in regards to the problems with Murphy hall (such as moving classes, getting keys, etc), faculty would like to ask the administration to put in place a building emergency plan.

## **First Vice President's Report – Barb Harris**

- Budget Report – Operating budget for the year is \$2328.00. From the \$7000 foundation money, \$2000.00 has been allocated for professional development already.
- Constituent lists are in your email, sent right before the meeting. I will send out my verbiage for a welcome email.

\* A reminder: the last meeting we decided, in an effort to save money, to not send out postcards, but rather send a welcome email or make a phone call to introduce yourself.

## **Other Business/Open Discussion**

### **Discussion on budget allocation for Professional Development and Special Events (the points made have been summarized in an effort to encourage free discussion and shorter minutes)**

#### **Fred Nesslage:**

- Regarding the official request for an increase from Foundation, it did have verbiage requesting the increase for food cost increases and the desire to provide more professional development funding.
- We cannot make the budget change mid year, as we have in the past announced that we have this large amount for individual professional development opportunity and that expectation is still there. If we take our time to investigate what we can do differently, and announce that well ahead of next fiscal year, we would be better serving our constituents.
- I would propose that we maintain the current proposal, charge the special events and professional development committees to come up with future goals and also the bylaws committee to create some verbiage that the Executive Board creates the budget proposal and the Senate has a vote on it, with deadlines. We take our time and investigate possible sources for professional development for the constituency as a whole, to try and balance that out with individual professional development allocations

**Question: Jessica Frogge:** Last year, when Tara [Stoll] was President, we were talking about looking into some sort of online professional development opportunities in order to benefit more people. Can we look into that a little more? There are some very good online classes, and for those of us who don't get away from our desks much, it would be a way we could utilize that.

#### **Fred Nesslage:**

- In my understanding, there must be a professional development component to how we spend Foundation money.
- What we need to do is investigate what those opportunities could be. Right now, as we talk guest speaker or online opportunities, we don't know the cost or what type, we don't know. We definitely need to take the time to explore our options for professional development, there may be plenty of no or low cost options out there

#### **Elise Hepworth:**

- The Staff Association could tap local and on campus people to provide professional development sessions

**Question: Jessica Frogge:** Has anyone talked to Aramark? Maybe they would be willing to allocate so much money toward our retreats?

#### **Kathy Kelly:**

- I think the funds should stay frozen, until we can look at this, because this is not inclusive for us.
- The majority who are using the professional development money are exempt staff and its not benefitting the staff association as a whole.

**Jackie Burns:**

- You can't use operating funds for food or gift cards
- My understanding is you can use the foundation money however you want, as long as it has a professional development component. Traditionally it has been split between travel and special events.
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**Louise Mills:**

- Looking at numbers of people who are affected, its obvious more people benefit from special events than individual professional development
- There is also an inequality for how the money is being used by exempt v. nonexempt employees
- If we allocated leftover money at the end of the year to people who have already travelled, we wouldn't have to worry about losing that money

**Question: Hawley Rumpf:** I just don't understand the professional development committee. What do they do? Why do we have them?

**Jackie Burns:** They keep track of the receipts, who applies. I am the chair. When I was given this position, I was told that if HR approves an application, I can approve it and if I have any questions, I should forward them on to my committee.

**Question: Eric Kramer:** Do we know the process that HR uses?

**Jackie Burns:** No.

**Jackie Burns:**

- Budget allocation process and deadlines need to be in put in the bylaws
- It is unfair to the constituents who have applied to be left in the dark on whether or not there is funding for them

**Jessica Poet:**

- The Executive Board chose to use the same allocations for these funds as last year
- The Executive Board proposes that we unfreeze it for this year and put together a committee to put it in the bylaws how things should be decided next year.

**Jackie Burns:** I motion that we allocate money for the four applications we have (\$2800 total for the year) and the rest can be used for whatever else it needs to be.

**Jessica Frogge:** Second.

Motion passed 8-4.\*

\*This vote was overturned by President Fred Nesslage due to procedural reasons in an email on October 12, 2017.

**Mark your calendars:** Next meeting will be **Wednesday, November 8 at 3:00pm** in Junior College Room (Blum 234)