

Staff Forum Minutes

March 22, 2000

University Outreach Center

9-11am

Present: Traci Haskett, Mike Duke, Barbara Parris, Lynda McNeely, Linda Sutton, Dennis Benson, Pryde Farmer, Clifton Fisher, John Ritchie, Kathy Wong, Debbie Allison, Chuck Wooten, Marvin Wiles, Bob Orr

Absent: Peggy Eidson, Tom Frazier, Keith Stiles, John Surber, Lisa Scruggs, Daniel Barrier

Guest: Carolyn Parris, Betty Connor, Mary B. Brown, Teresa Hedden,

Special Guest: Mitch Leonard, SEANC

Welcome: Bob welcomed everyone and especially the guest and ask that the feel free to provide input into our discussions.

Minutes: The March minutes were approved as amended.

Information Items: Bob attended the Board of Trustees meeting the report was in the Reporter. One of our former members, Tammy Haskett was approved to be the Alumni Director, and we wish her well.

At the end of our last meeting as reflected in our last minutes, Dr. Judy Dowell mentioned that there was going to be ongoing discussion regarding our Infirmary services for employees. Bob Orr and Pryde Farmer will be meeting with Debbie Beck and Dean Bill Haggard on March 29 for discussion regarding the services.

The final edition of the Goals and Objections were handed out. Bob and John will be presenting these to Chancellor Bardo.

Lorri Allison has asked to resign from the forum. She wishes the forum continued success. We are sorry to see Lorri go, and thanked her for all her efforts.

The UAC Orientation Session met March 21, 2000. The meeting consisted of meeting all representatives and more understanding of the organization. There were a lot of good comments and good PR regarding the Staff Forum.

Mitch Leonard, SEANC Representative. He reported on the proposals that are being presented to the Legislative regarding salaries. This information is available at the SEANC website:
<http://www.seanc.org/>

Old Business: Lynda McNeely reported on the Handbook Committee regarding a survey to all SPA employees for their input. This survey will need to be presented to Dr. Noell Kehrberg for her approval. The emphasis needs to be made to all employees that this is a handbook, a reference guide, not an employee manual. A suggestion was made for the survey to include some general headings, example "areas to include".

John Ritchie reported on the Human Resources staff survey. We have received back 150-200 responses. Renee Corbin is going to write up the program and give us the data. Hopefully to have that to present to the Staff Forum by the next meeting. All the comments so far are very positive.

Discussion was continued regarding the salary issues. Bob, John and Chuck met with Dr. Carter. Dr. Carter is very supportive and responsive and wants feedback regarding this issue. The next step should be for the sub-committee to make specific recommendations to bring to the staff forum next month for discussion. Dr. Carter is stating that the timeline is critical, because there will be a decision made by the end of this budget year with a May timeline. It is proposed now to have a special meeting with Dr. Carter. There are a lot of positions that are below state averages in terms of salary and years of service. Questions that need to be looked at are: 1. What are the appropriate positions that need to be raised? Which ones are appropriate? 2. Which are the most compelling? Most serious cases that we need to address immediately. 3. Do we want to take the funding and spread it across a wide range of people or do we want to focus that funding on a more narrow level, to give them a bigger raise and then stair-step it. Bob stated that the Administration really wants to address this issue. They want the Staff forum to tell them how to address the issue.

Chuck highlighted on the fact that that it is not possible to bring everyone up to state averages at this time because the university does not have that kind of money. There are no special state appropriations for this type of activity. The way the money is generated is from salary reserves. Salary reserves is generated when a person at a salary level leaves state service, through retirement, resignation, etc. then the replacement is brought in at a salary level less than the previous employee, so the remaining of that salary is placed in reserves. Then it is available to the university i.e. reclassifications by state or university, in-range salary program. The state this year required that when a person retires the university has to give back to the state 30% of that person's salary.

Bob will set a date and time for a special called staff forum meeting with Dr. Carter to discuss these issues.

John requested that the confidentiality issue of making the SPA salary grades public be brought to the next staff forum meeting.

John reported that Chuck Wooten is now the chair of the governance committee. Also, John would like an email from all committee chairs of the at-large memberships.

Chuck reported on the Governance committee giving a recommendation that the at-large members of the University Advisory Counsel (UAC) be as follows: The at-large members of the UAC be included in the distribution of Staff Forum meeting notices, agenda, minutes and any other information that is provided to the forum members. At large members are welcomed; as are all staff members to attend any forum meeting however, mandatory attendance is not expected. Motion was made and accepted.

Attention was brought forward regarding Staff forum participation. The Governance committee brought forth the following: It is everyone's desire that duly elected members of the Staff forum actively participates in the forum activities include the attendance of regularly scheduled meetings. We recommend that in the event that forum members are absent for three (3) consecutive meetings, then the Governance committee recommends that the Secretary notify the chair of this absence who shall then contact the individual member and determine if problems exist that are prohibiting the person from participating.

Third issue from the Governance Committee concerns replacing members when we have exhausted all alternates within a particular classification. We recommend that when a vacancy in the Staff Forum

occurs and all alternates within the applicable federal job classification has been exhausted then the Executive committee shall appoint a replacement from said classification if possible to serve until the end of the current calendar year at which time the vacancy shall be filled through the normal election process.

A motion was made and accepted and will be reflected in the by-laws.

Barbara reported no problems or complaints were reported regarding the distribution tree. She also reported on the Campus-wide Email Committee regarding software for the University to purchase. She handed out an evaluation sheet for functions of the email and calendaring system. Please fill out the sheets and return them by campus mail to Barbara Parris.

John reported on the issues that have been presented and still pending: February, 2000: Ropes Course (completed); Request for a statement to be sent to Dr. Bardo regards State and Region salary information (HR Comm.); request to look at July 4th as a holiday (R&E Comm.); providing staff forum programs that are more accessible for second and third shifts (HR Comm.).

Lynda McNeely reported on the Connections committee. Kathy Wong has drafted a memo to go out to the V-Chancellors and Chancellor Bardo regarding comments and suggestions. Kathy reported that they basically turned all the categorizing and analyzing information into a final report in three parts. Part 1 is completed and parts 2 and 3 will be ready to go out next week. Part 1 was all the good ideas and suggestions. Part 2 deals with the complaints and issues that were brought out and part 3 reports will be specific to all the ideas brought out dealing with supervisory training. Kathy has agreed to share the reports with the forum.

Bob reported on the information series and Dr. Carter has agreed to participate and we are looking at a date in May for the town hall meeting. We also received two comments on the SF website. One from Mr. David Wilson, Water treatment plant, talking about Internet access. Research was conducted and no commitment could be made at this time for access to the water treatment plant there will be a study conducted this year. Bob wrote Mr. Wilson back and informed him to discuss the issue with his supervisor. Second, comments were received from Chris Gunn, he stated that he really liked the SF website and asked that we put the issues and the committee minutes on the website. The SF agreed to make it the Chair's call of each committee regarding taking minutes.

It was suggested that Dr. Caruso could be a next town hall meeting regarding the Day Care information.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, April 19, 2000 at 143 Outreach Center. Executive Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 12, 2000.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45am.