

Staff Council Meeting Minutes August 7, 2007

Members in Attendance: Millie Brence-Austin, Lee Doughty, Karl Greis, Dave Reed, Matt Reuer, Kristi Salkil, David Ziemba

Issues from last year

Reviewed issues from last year that we set out to tackle. Some notable ones that will require ongoing effort include:

- ❖ *Vacation and sick leave for Part time and nine-month employees* – was not approved again this year; Kristi & Dave will be meeting with Tom Nycum on a regular basis and will discuss how we can make this happen. Matt suggested we might consider a compromise if the full proposal keeps failing to be approved.
- ❖ *Greater involvement and communication with campus committees; may include asking for reports from each committee and asking committees representatives to attend Staff Council meetings* – Cindy and Joan made good headway on this last year; we hope to do more this year, particularly having committee members attend meetings and report on their work.
- ❖ *Clarify the college's policy on committee service (some employees have been told they can only serve on a committee on their own time)* – we didn't do much with this last year; Kristi will communicate to HR that we'd like to see a policy in the handbook; all agreed it was important to have communication with, if not approval of, the supervisor; Karl noted that some jobs simply wouldn't lend themselves to committee service so a blanket policy based on willingness to serve might not be appropriate.
- ❖ *Change committee structure within Faculty Handbook (all committees are under faculty purview, some committees would be more appropriately reclassified as "all campus committees" since the issues these committees address are "all campus" issues)* - Kristi and Dave will meet with the new FEC chair and breach this topic; we all agreed it's worth mentioning but feel it's more important to maintain faculty support and alliance; Matt noted this will take a lot of political capital and we could use those resources in better ways that might provide a more immediate benefit to staff.
- ❖ *Employee recognition program* – proposed the following on April 11, 2007 . We are still waiting for confirmation from HR that our proposal was approved by the president:

Staff Council would like to suggest that a permanent committee on staff recognition be formed. As you know, the group you recently formed to discuss this topic has met and made some recommendations. We'd like to suggest that the members of this group be asked to sit on a permanent committee on staff recognition, follow up on the recommendations already made, and continue their work on an ongoing basis. To the best of our recollection, the members of the "informal" committee are Nancy Luther, Chad Schonewill, Lee Doughty, Courtney Arnstein, Teri Stebbins, Lynnette DiRaddo, Keith Emmons, and Kevin Ford. We would recommend that the committee be structured as follows:

Composition: 6-8 members total, consisting of:

At least one exempt and one non-exempt staff member

At least one Staff Council member

At least one Human Resources representative

Term: 2 years (staggered - half of initial members serve 1-year term)

Scope/Charge:

- Follow-up on recommendations made previously
- Ongoing Staff Recognition, to include:
 - Years of Service
 - Performance/Special Recognition
 - Recognition of all staff categories, including full-time, part-time and temporary
 - Celebrations/Events

Issues for upcoming year (2007-2008)

Discussion of what we'd like to accomplish this year; notable items include:

- ❖ *Cost-of-Living Metric in Staff salary administration process* – Kristi and Dave should also talk with Tom about this, probably on an ongoing basis; Dick Celeste has publicly committed to trying to make this happen.
- ❖ *Self-Sufficiency wage* – also a topic to work with Tom on
- ❖ *Vacation and sick leave for Part time and nine-month employees* – see notes above
- ❖ *Employee Recognition* – see notes above
- ❖ *Committee structure in Faculty Handbook* – see notes above
- ❖ *Tuition Remission/Assistance* – a lot is up in the air, we need to follow this issue closely
- ❖ *All Staff Meeting* – All agree it's worth trying this fall; Kristi and Millie will work together on it; some concerns were expressed about whether staff members will really feel comfortable asking questions in this kind of forum and that perhaps SC members could collect them at the aisles. Also discussed how we can make it relevant and worthwhile. It was suggested that refreshments should be served. Karl suggested that we need a model; **we all agreed to contact colleagues at other institutions to see if they have something like this and how it's done; send your feedback to Kristi & Millie**, they will review this along with comments on the climate survey and come to the next meeting with suggestions about content/agenda, etc. Tentative date is Oct. 25 or 26, but will depend on Dick Celeste's schedule.
- ❖ *Payroll/Pay Stubs (idea from David)* – Recently a staff member did not receive their pay stub; the ensuing investigation raised some questions about why paper paystubs are necessary, the security of our process, the ease with which someone could view or steal your paystub... Discussion ensued about whether most employees would rather get the information online (all present agreed they would rather *not* get a paper pay stub). Questions were raised about those without an account for direct deposit, those who like to receive the paper paystub. David agreed to look into the issue further; beyond the security issues moving away from paper paystubs could save the college a significant amount of money and would contribute to sustainability. Questions David will try to get answered include:
 - Is it all or nothing, or could *some* employees opt-out of receiving paper?
 - What is the cost per month to generate the printed payroll?
 - Is there a way we can determine how many people want a paper stub?
 - Could the paystub be output to pdf and emailed to individuals instead of printed?

Congrats to David Ziemba on his new son, Chase!

Meet the Staff Council party – Courtney has done a fabulous job of heading this up the last couple of years; Kristi will ask her to do so again. Tentatively set a date for Sep. 28th. Karl offered to help, and work on getting some door prizes from vendors.

Children's Center concerns – David is continuing to explore the rate issues; he reported that the rates just increased, the committee is looking into the rates concerns, and the move won't happen anytime soon.

Staff Council Representation update - Karl & Lee have been working on dividing up the staff; will have a more solid breakdown by next month.

Mentoring program update - Lee reported that HR has received applications from 6 volunteers to be mentors, they will be pushing for more. **A reminder to all that we should apply to be mentors if we can!** Barbara is still working on the training piece, likely won't start until fall.

Reaccreditation report update – Joan is communicating with Libby regarding the changes we'd like to see in the reaccreditation report before we endorse it. Kristi mentioned the Fair Labor Practices Committee Report from December 2002, which Joan dug up as a resource in this conversation. Let Kristi know if you'd like a copy – it's a good read!

9-Month Parking Premiums – Parking Manager Nicholas Calkins asked for feedback on a proposal for 9-month parking premiums. Essentially, there was some confusion this year because parking deductions were spaced out over a 12 month period, even though parking permits were only enforced for 9 months. HR, Payroll, and Nick agree that in order to remove this confusion and to simplify the process, we should do away with the 12 month deduction, and have all faculty/staff parking deductions spaced out over a 9 month cycle. There was general support for the proposal.

Kristi noted that this would make the process consistent for all employees, since 9-month employee fees can only be deducted over the 9 months they receive paychecks. All agreed that paying over 12 months without enforcement was causing not only confusion, but anger. While this will increase the monthly amount, Kristi noted that the absence of parking fees in the summer will be nice for employees who work reduced hours, since their paychecks are now smaller.

There was further discussion about the critical need for good communication, that the change needs to be announced in a way that is clear, and that everyone is sure to see. We'd recommend a FLASH message, at the minimum, and it needs to be explained clearly so people don't think the fees are going up. Kristi will communicate this back to Nick.

Anonymous Feedback

We received anonymous feedback regarding a summer schedule question; specifically, there was a concern about an individual in a 12-month position who was allowed to take the summer off. Kristi inquired to Human Resources about the situation and learned that the college has always operated on a policy/practice that allows employees to request leaves of absences without pay for personal reasons, as well initiating communication with one's supervisor to discuss a modified work schedule. HR does not view the decision in this case to be special treatment. If requests like this were made on an ongoing basis for the same position, the position would be reviewed with HR to determine if a permanent change should be made to reduce the number of months, if this would meet the needs of the department, or to re-affirm the position is to remain 12 months.