

TO: Staff Senate
FROM: Pauline Palko
DATE: September 3, 2015
SUBJECT: Minutes of the August 12, 2015 Meeting

In attendance: Ms. Notarianni, Ms. Mecadon, Ms. Palko, Ms. Schofield, Mr. Barrett, Ms. Edwards, Mr. Pilger, Mr. Sakowski, Ms. Shimsky, Ms. Thomas, Ms. Butler, Ms. Densvich, Ms. Driscoll-McNulty, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Grissinger, Ms. JohnsonMr. Krzan, Mr. Wetherell, Ms. Vita.

Not in attendance: Ms. Tokash, Ms. Tucker, Ms. Cali, Ms. Klien, Mr. Fedoryk, Mr. Griguts, Mr. Hallock, Mr. Roginski, Ms. Barnoski, Ms. Bevacqua, Ms. Cook, Ms. Hollingshead, Mr. Sheehan, Ms. Strickland.

Guests: Patricia Tetreault.

Welcome:

- Mr. Wetherell called the meeting to order at 10:09 am, in the PNC Bank Board Room, Brennan Hall. Ms. Notarianni offered a short opening prayer, Ms. Vita volunteered to offer the prayer for the September 9 meeting.
- Attendance was checked, quorum met for voting purposes.

Review of June meeting minutes:

Minutes approved.

Approval of Agenda:

Agenda approved.

Liaison Report:

Facilities has reported that the new Rehabilitation Center will be named soon; Dedication is scheduled for September 18th. The building is fabulous and will be ready for start of Fall Semester. The first floor has an Einstein Bagel and that will be open to everyone.

Work continues on the lower commons upgrade, and should be ready by start of Fall Semester, but a few novenas would be welcomed.

Madison Hildebrandt

We will be using old Loyola Hall for Fall Semester Classes

Incoming class currently stands at 924, down from last year, but within our goal range.

As part of Human Resources support of Strategic Plan, all of the positions vacated by the early retirement package are being evaluated, and some departments and/or divisions are restructuring.

Cathy Schneider has left Human Resources and taken the Administrative support position in Campus Ministries. Eileen Notarianni will now answer your questions relative to benefits.

Update on Act 153: Harrisburg has reevaluated and issued an amendment to the act that exempts most of our employees from all those background checks. It also exempts matriculating college students of 17 years of age. Our Minors on Campus Policy is still valid and stringent. Because some high-school students are dually enrolled, some faculty may have to have the checks. Work study students do not need background checks, because doing them wouldn't provide the protection intended by the Act. These amendments give relief us of a great administrative and financial burden.

New format time cards will go into effect in October: Clay has begun training office managers on the use of the new time cards. He has offered to attend the September Staff Senate meeting and review the changes with the senate.

Compensation Study update: Sibson will be on campus August 19th to meet with the Senate focus group. They will be proposing salary grades and policies. There is a lot of information to go over, but we hope to present to Cabinet in September.

High Mark has purchased Blue Cross of Pennsylvania. Continue to use your current insurance card. High Mark has very good systems for processing claims and are very efficient. In response to questions raised about cost to employees, Ms. Tetreault responded that High Mark has a bigger impact on drug costs and we're not yet sure where that is going to leave us. Because we are self-funded we use different formulas for calculating our costs. She added that the University saw a significantly high number of claims, so we do not have a lot of surplus. We are operating under our worst case scenario.

Faculty negotiations are moving along. All parties appear to be working together well, but negotiations of this sort have an ebb and flow to them. Ms. Tetreault is optimistic that negotiations will soon wrap up.

Presidents Report:

Mr. Wetherell hopes to have a better handle on the exact increases in catering costs by the September meeting. He has requested a list of items most often ordered from catering along with their corresponding price increases. Mr. Wetherell reported Teri Aschenbrenner stated to him that corporate structure dictates the prices to charge, and that catering is taking a hit to their profit margins by not charging the full increases.

Senators expressed frustration with the increases coupled with smaller budgets. Mr. Wetherell suggested going back to budget supervisors to ask for relief.

Question was raised as to how long the catering contract would be in effect, and who at the University negotiates the contract. Also, if there was any way to exempt the University from being held hostage by these prices. Mr. Wetherell will continue to investigate further.

Communications Symposium dates have not yet been set. Will either be September 15 or 22. Invitations have been extended to Dr. McShea and Gerry Zaboski: both have yet to respond.

Committee Reports:

Finance: not present. Mr. Wetherell advised thinking through requests for next year.

Election and Membership: Nothing to report

Staff Development: Regarding Connexions Mentoring Program: Many faculty secretaries have retired, in some departments all of them left, leaving new hires to fend for themselves. The committee discussed pairing these new hires with secretaries in CAS to help them. Senator Schofield has offered to meet with the new hires in History and Philosophy because they are in the same building and it would not be a big inconvenience. The concern with the program is that if there aren't enough volunteer mentors, there will be mentor burnout, or it will take time away from their work, also that we may not be able to support every new hire that requests a mentor.

The mentor need only spend a total of 3 hours spread over 6 months with the new hire.

There is no mention of Staff Senate in packets for new hires and the committee would like to work with Human Resources on changing that. The resource document needs to be updated with current links but most of it is still relevant.

Human Resources recommends sending a notice to managers in departments that are hiring announcing this program as a pilot program.

Motion raised by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Ms. Scofield to approve Connexions as a pilot program for one year:

“Motion to approve running a Connexions pilot program for this coming year run by the Staff Senate Professional Development Committee in partnership with Human Resources.”

Motion voted on and approved.

Staff Development (continued): Although the BBQ in May is very popular it is also cost prohibitive given the increase in catering prices. The committee will review and may opt to do something different for 2016.

Communications: Working on Symposium. Will soon request information for the fall newsletter.

Recognition and Excellence: Kevin Stanford, KSOM Advising Center, was the most recent recipient of the Spirit Award.

Items from the Floor:

Ad hoc By-laws committee will be reviewing the Staff Handbook. Clay Nottelmann has offered to be involved. Committee will also be reviewing the Senate Constitution and By-laws as some things may need to be updated or amended.

Ms. Shimsky asked if carryover of 2 personal days had been approved, and if something could be sent to supervisors to make them aware of this new policy.

Mr. Dave Martin has been hired as the new Athletic Director. Mr. Martin has requested time on a future Staff Senate agenda to introduce himself and to share information regarding the Athletics department, current and upcoming changes in Athletics, and the integral part Athletics plays for our students and the University community.

Constituencies were instructed to convene separately immediately after adjournment to plan fall roundtables.

Motion to Adjourn:

Raised and seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:55 am