

UVM Staff Council Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2019
12:05-1:30 p.m.
Memorial Lounge

Members Present:

Heather Allard, Brendan Andrews, Barbara Asimwe, Bob Bolyard, Kristen Cella, Aimee Gale, Caleb Gilbert, Cheryl Herrick, Alex Howe, Mindy Kear, Cindy Lee, Stephanie Loscalzo, Stephen Lunna, Deb McAdoo, Jennifer O'Donnell, Michael O'Sullivan, Shirley Pine, Katrina Preiss, Allison Spain, Ken Viglucci, Amy Vile, Marissa Wells, Bethany Wolfe

Members Absent:

Tatiana Andrievskaya, Valerie Carzello, Laura Clayton, Nick Hall, Miriam Harrison, Holly Pedrini, Kait Rooney, Bridget Tully, Lacey Ure, Erin Wertlieb

Staff:

Elisabeth Blair, Alan Shashok

Guests:

Gary Derr, Marie Tiemann

Group Photo

A photo was taken of the Council with President Garimella on the front steps of Waterman.

Call to Order

President Stephen Lunna called the meeting to order at 12:15.

President Garimella's Address to Staff Council

The president gave brief remarks. He arrived a month ago and is just settling in. The move was smooth experience, with many people stepping in to help, and he has found everyone to be very welcoming, for which he expressed gratitude. He noted the beauty of the campus and the critical element for maintaining that beauty - UVM staff. He noted that he is very informal and glad to be stopped and asked quick questions if members happen to run into him. He also welcomes comments. He explained that students, faculty, and staff are all equally important to him, because without any one of these, the others would not function. He expressed enthusiasm for what staff do, and then took questions.

Asked about whether there were programs at Purdue he'd like to implement here that would affect staff, he said he still needs to learn about what's already going on here first, but that at Purdue he served on search committees with the leaders of staff groups. He said there was also a program which developed managers, and departments could recommend staff for it. It involved undertaking a year-long project on something of interest to them. But he emphasized he still needs to learn, and welcomes our ideas for ways to enhance our contributions to the university.

Asked about retention and the problems facing higher education in New England (high school graduation numbers in decline, and several colleges closing), he acknowledged that this is perhaps the biggest question right now - and that he is focused on it. He advised the Council representatives to engage in telling the UVM story - an overall, big-picture, positive story instead of stories of small ephemeral problems. He noted that it would be helpful to tell our story to non-UVM folks in a positive light, and celebrate what is great about UVM, whilst internally addressing our challenges.

Approve Draft Minutes from May 7, 2019

Minutes were approved.

Vote on Changes to Bylaws

A motion was made to strike proposed addition #4 - Article VII Section C #4.

A concern was raised to include mention of the Staff Survey in the Ad Hoc section and make a movement to add it, which will be voted on at a later date.

A concern was raised about the lack of specificity in the description of the Community Engagement Committee. Steve Lunna responded that the idea was for the committee itself to help to define itself, but that it's hard to fully define it before having begun. It was decided that this description be amended after the first year, to better reflect specific goals and activities.

All bylaw amendments were passed with the exception of the struck addition as noted above.

Discussion on committee topics for the year

PPD - Mamava and nursing parent initiatives were discussed, as well as the ongoing work to implement exit interviews for those who are transferring between units within the university, with the idea being we can capture important information about their reasons, the climate in their unit of origin, and so on.

Social Committee - The golf outing was imminent, and good sales of CVF tickets, Jay Peak, Smuggler's Notch Daycation tickets were all mentioned. Fall activities will probably include a creative workshop, paint night, cooking classes, Addams Family tickets in November, Escape Room, and possibly a pool night in Gutterson.

CBB

The next meeting is this week. There will be an update about the infertility health benefits, which they are working on. The last meeting identified ongoing topics to work on in the new year. Steve Lunna advised the committee to start thinking about pay increase requests sooner rather than later, considering the new UVM president.

Retreat ideas/agenda overview

Provost Prelock will be speaking. Professional Development may also come in to talk about change management. A request was made to do icebreakers and time to get to know each other. A suggestion was

made to inquire of Provost Prelock on how her vision might impact the long term goals of individual units.

If there are any further ideas or requests, please pass them along to Elisabeth and Alan.

Earlier we sent out a survey we sent out a survey - the link follows. Any questions asked in this survey will be addressed in the future.

Survey link: <https://forms.gle/WKBUvKmjCJM4b9Z59>

Officer's Update

Parking - Steve Lunna is currently working with Jim Barr to identify areas in which they can make immediate and long-term changes. A presentation is being prepared and that will be given to the Staff Council. As it stands overall though, nothing has changed - but change is on the horizon.

Parliamentarian

A call was put out to appoint a Parliamentarian, who serves for one year. Alan Shashok read out all relevant sections of the Bylaws which refer to the role of the Parliamentarian. No one volunteered so it will be sent out to the entire Staff Council, so that all members, including those not present, can consider this opportunity to serve.

Executive Board Call for Two Members-at-Large

Two Staff Council representatives need to be elected to the Executive Board. Alan read out the relevant section of the Bylaws. Brendan Andrews has volunteered, Holly Pedrini is interested, Jon Reisenweaver, Aimee Gale, and Shirley Pine, the current chair of the Social Committee, if she is not going to be the chair again.

Other Business

Recruitment for the Community Engagement Committee

Steve Lunna prefaced this by mentioning the excellent opportunity for a member of the Graduate Student Senate to have one spot on the committee. It was clarified that this will be on a trial basis and the student will act in an advisory role rather than having a vote. However, if they are both a student and a staff (which some are) then they could be an official member-at-large and would have a vote.

This committee currently has 2 members but at least 6 are needed. It was suggested that the Staff Council Office advertise this committee in the next Staffline so that at-large folks can join.

ACTION ITEM - include this in the September *Staffline*.

Other Business

A representative inquired about changes to tuition remission - will there be a follow-up presentation to the Executive Board? Steve Lunna explained that a significant roadblock was met in this issue, in that a large number of stakeholders exist, which makes it a slower process to move forward whilst including them all.

Caleb Gilbert explained that most of the work done so far was research and understanding usage, how the funding works, the administration's priorities, and outstanding issues like what happens if a staff member

takes and fails a class, or does not complete a certificate or degree program. One question is on whether tuition remission could cover non-degree certification programs that are currently offered at a 20% discount. Global Gateway is also inaccessible to staff even though there is a clear need for those classes. Another question is on whether spouses of staff could have the option to take classes for credit.

This should be handed to a committee to continue working on. Our concern is that if we don't enter the conversation, the administration will change it on their own, without our input. But to be clear, our goal is not in any way a reduction of benefits but rather an expansion.

Public Comment Period

Two staff members who are not on SC asked about whether we are working on the telecommuting policy for non-exempt employees. They would like to work on making it available for those employees. The CBB committee has discussed the telecommuting policy, but has been more engaged in research and learning about it rather than forming a goal yet. These staff were informed they could serve on the CBB if they'd like.

A suggestion was made to look at other universities and colleges and how they manage their telecommuting staff.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 pm.