In this, my final report, I would like to begin by thanking the Members of the Board of Trustees for your earnest response and attention to the needs of the staff at the University. It has been my pleasure to work beside you these past two years on important initiatives while serving as Staff Council President.

Once again the subject of my report addresses staff concerns over Post-Retirement Medical Benefits (PRMB). The process under which the University engaged this topic was commendable and Staff Council has been diligent in remaining engaged with this matter. We had representation at every University Benefits Advisory Committee and Health Insurance Working Group meeting, read through many documents, attended and commented on presentations and proposals, and helped share information about this issue with staff. We agreed with the administration’s goal to offer one plan for all employees, and indeed, this is what we received. At this time, we would like to address the concerns from many long term UVM employees, who are disappointed by how these changes have impacted them.

We understand that a line needed to be drawn that would take into account an employee’s age and years of service to delineate who would and would not be eligible for the fully paid PRMB as of June 30, 2014. We were pleased with the two year timeframe to allow adequate time for those who are eligible to make a decision about retirement. However, we were not prepared to hear from so many staff with 25 years or more of service to UVM who found themselves close to the line, but are now just on the other side of eligibility. This benefit was viewed by many as a promise under which staff used to plan for their retirement.

Staff Council’s Executive Board has discussed these concerns and we remain conflicted over the situation. We acknowledge that this is a complex issue and Staff Council does not claim to have an answer or solution, but we recognize that employees impacted by this change have expressed feelings of anger, frustration, and an inability to trust promises made by the administration. While we recognize that changes to health care at the state or national level may impact this conversation again after 2014, it does not change the fact that many long term employees are feeling undervalued and unappreciated for all they have contributed to UVM throughout their careers.

We know that UVM has many issues to tackle in the coming years. Our new leadership and new strategic initiatives will no doubt offer solutions for many of the challenges we face. However, we encourage our leaders to reach out to this group of employees impacted by the changes to Post-Retirement Medical Benefits, to listen to them, and to consider solutions.

In the coming year, I will continue to serve as Immediate Past President, and will be here to assist the Board and the Administrators in whatever ways that I can. I look forward to seeing these relationships continue to grow and create positive change for UVM.
Staff Council President Ida Russin

Comments to the Board of Trustees, Committee of the Whole, Friday May 18, 2012

Good morning Interim President Bramley, Provost Knodell, Chair Cioffi, board members, and members of the UVM community. It was two very busy years ago, that I first met the Board at this meeting, and though Beth Walsh was by my side, I was still a little intimidated by this shared governance process. Since that time, I’ve learned much about how decisions are made at UVM and how our leaders seek input from our faculty, students, and staff. We are a richer community because of that process.

Chair Cioffi, when you assumed your leadership role, you took the initiative to reach out to Staff Council and attend one of my very first Executive Board meetings as President. This small act immediately broke down preconceived notions about the role of the Board for both me and our organization. Your leadership has fostered a more collaborative spirit that is working its way throughout UVM. For this, I want to say thank you.

Staff Council recently shared our report on Compensation, Benefits and Budget with the Board and members of UVM’s Administration. Our Committee with the same name, turned our former salary increase recommendation into a comprehensive report on these three components which support our largest and most valuable resource – the human one. We are pleased with the prospects of a balanced budget and a 2% salary increase, but remain aware that many staff are finding it difficult to make ends meet. Still we were encouraged by the response to this report sent by Interim President Bramley acknowledging the concerns and sentiments of staff as well as the importance of a decision-making process that involves the community.

We thank Vice President Richard Cate and the resources he has provided to help us to understand UVM’s complex budget; we thank Provost Jane Knodell for reaching out to us for input on the Strategic Initiatives Project, we thank Associate Vice President Barbara Johnson, who is both in spirit and title, working to keep our “human resources” strong and healthy, we thank Vice President Gary Derr who organizes everything, and we remain proud to be led by an individual who approaches hard work with a nod and a smile, Interim President John Bramley.

Later this month, Staff Council will hold elections for the new President and Vice-President of our organization. I will admit that it is bittersweet to know that my rewarding experience as Staff Council President is coming to its end. I can assure you that we have strong candidates that will continue the good work of Staff Council and maintain the positive collaborative working relationships we have established. We also look forward to working with President-Elect Thomas Sullivan on issues that are important to him as well as to staff and the UVM community.

I want to take this moment to thank Michelle Smith, who has served as Vice President alongside me for the past two years and who will also be completing her service next month. When we were elected into these leadership roles, Michelle and I hardly knew one another, but at this time, we know each other’s sense of humor, writing styles, working methods, and I know the dedicated spirit with which she approaches all projects. And of course neither of us would have been successful in our roles without the support of the Staff Council Office team. I’d like to thank Jeff Bukowski and Diane Trono for their expert guidance, and for all their help in juggling the many activities that Staff Council manages.

Thank you all for this great opportunity- and I’ll be happy to address any questions you may have at this time.
Staff Council Reports
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Audit Committee

The Audit Committee met on April 30, 2012 with a very full agenda. The Audit Committee addresses all areas across campus that oversees risk related activities. Ultimately, any area which encompasses risk would impact the overall audit.

Chief Internal Auditor Update

Chief Internal Auditor, William Harrison, provided an update on the internal audit activity and staffing. He recognized Senior Auditor, Kyle Sowles for completing his certification to become a Certified Fraud Examiner. Mr. Harrison provided the FY 2013 Internal Audit plan to the committee and noted that Senior Management Travel/Business expenses will be audited on a yearly basis. He reported that the Office of Audit Services has been working in collaboration with the Information Security Officer to develop a general IT control self-assessment questionnaire which will be distributed in an effort to increase the University’s awareness of IT controls.

Chief Compliance And Privacy Officer Update

Deputy Chief Compliance Officer, Erica Heffner, provided an update on the recent activities conducted by the Office of Compliance Service. She gave an overview of the work plan that included an assessment of compliance training provided by the University. The purpose of the project was to assess existing training against requirements for potential gap areas and to assess how training is delivered from an institutional perspective. Following the April 17th President’s Senior Leadership team meeting, Interim President Bramley indicated that he intends to charge a subset of senior staff responsible for compliance-intensive programs to develop training implementation plans.

Ms. Heffner noted the Compliance Office continues the work on The Department of Education’s Program Integrity Rules and the Department of Health and Human Services new conflict of interest rule to meet new requirements.

The Office of Compliance Services continues to provide compliance and privacy consultations upon request or in response to new regulatory requirements. To date, the Office has provided 180 consultations and several outreach activities across campus. Additionally, the Office is working with the Chief Internal Auditor, General Counsel, and the Vice President for Executive Operations to review and fine-tune the Ethics and Compliance Reporting Help Line protocols and processes. A revised protocol will be shared with the Presidents Senior Leadership group and the Audit Committee when completed. The Office also responds to issues surrounding the Privacy Policy. Ms. Heffner concluded her report by notifying the committee that the Office has enhanced its website with testimonials. The intent is to promote the Office as a safe place for individuals to turn to when seeking assistance or guidance on compliance or privacy matters. Included in the update is a video presentation by the National Institute of Health which explains the “dual use” concept for export controls compliance in research activities. Here is the link to view the testimonials and the NIH video:
http://www.uvm.edu/~complian/.

Information Security Officer Update

The Information Security Operations Team works in collaboration with Audit Services, Compliance and Privacy Services, and other departments in Enterprise Technology Services. Recent work has been focused on payment card security requirements, information security education and support for investigations. Information Security Officer, Dean Williams, also noted that efforts are being spent on protection of University information in a variety of academic, research, clinical, and administrative endeavors. The ISO Team is continuing their work surrounding Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard regarding the secure network and associated monitoring that is required for merchants that store credit card information. Mr. Williams also reported on the various educational opportunities provided during the semester by invited guest speakers who addressed security of information in the technology world. Mr. Williams further noted the ongoing opportunities, challenges and concerns surrounding information security due to the innovations and advances in
information technology. He particularly brought attention to the use of personal devices, such as IPads and smart phones used for work purposes. An inquiry arose about digital preservation of research documents and Mr. Williams responded that he would ask the Institutional Review Board to include this topic on their agenda.

**Presentation by Vice President for Finance and Administration**

The Committee then heard from Vice President Mr. Richard Cate, whose purview includes Laboratory Safety across campus. Mr. Cate reported on the responses to the laboratory safety issues which arose from the Chief Compliance Officer and Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) inspection. He noted that the DEC inspection results resulted in a $19,660 fine to the University. Mr. Cate also noted that since the designation of his office to oversee laboratory safety issues, he has been communicating with deans, directors, department chairs and principal investigators to bring clarity and address the issues surrounding the safety of laboratories. He also reported on the progress across campus in the buildings which are receiving some physical modifications to be in compliance with the safety standards. Mr. Cate emphasized that the only way to fully address the Cook Lab facilities needs would be a complete renovation of the building or construction of a new chemistry laboratory facility. This project is ranked very high on the Strategic Capital Plan. In the meantime modest investments in additional personnel and resources are being made to address the physical needs across campus.

**Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Update**

Next on the agenda, was a report submitted by Al Turgeon, Senior Strategist for Enterprise Risk and Planning. Mr. Turgeon has compiled the “Preliminary Risk Inventory” and that it has been submitted for the review process. Currently, the ERM staff is developing materials for informational workshops to prepare responsible officials for conducting risk assessments.

**Controller Update**

Controller, Claire Burlingham, provided the Committee with an update on the status of the Travel and Expense Report recommendations. The travel training and invoice approval for Sodexo catered events are two processes which are being developed. She also updated the Committee on modifications to University purchasing cards. As of March 1, 2012, monthly spending limits on most cards had been reduced to $10,000 and approximately 260 inactive cards have been closed. She further explained that each card has a two year limit and each cardholder must complete a require training to renew their cards. Ms Burlingham noted that other protective measures have been put in place for purcard transactions. Ms. Burlingham reported that an outside agent, Grant Thornton, has been contracted to review the University’s purchasing card program. They will be on campus in August to conduct the review.

The Committee also reviewed the Work Plan for KPMG for the upcoming annual audit.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Tiemann, University Financial Services

Staff Representative on the Audit Committee

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**Committee on Budget, Finance, and Investment (BFI)**

The BFI committee met on May 18, 2012. The meeting agenda included:

- FY 13 budget resolutions
- Authorization to proceed with bond refunding
- Contract approvals
**Budget resolutions:**

The following budget resolutions were passed by the Committee:

- FY 13 tuition, room/meal rates, and student fees
- FY 13 general fund

The general fund as approved included a 2% raise for non-represented staff. The general fund budget proposal presented on May 18th differed from the version presented at the April 16th meeting in one noticeable way: the line for salaries and wages originally showed a $3.7 million increase over FY 12 – in the May 18th version, the salaries and wages line reflected a $6.6 million decrease from FY 12. This change was caused by moving funds supporting the UVM Foundation (including salaries and wages) to its own line in the budget.

**Bond refunding:**

The BFI Committee passed a resolution authorizing the administration to proceed on the groundwork necessary to refinance bonds originally issued in 1998 and 2002. With bond rates at near historic lows, refinancing could save $6.5 million ($4 million in present value) over the next 27 years. Refinancing will not change the original maturity dates of the bonds. Due to the volatile nature of the bond markets, the final decision to refinance will be made by the Board or its Executive Committee when the final proposal is ready, likely over the course of the summer, and before the October full Board meeting. There were no objections when this information was related during the afternoon Full Board session.

**Contract approvals:**

The Committee approved a number of contracts:

- Apple, Inc. – Computer Depot equipment
- Presidio Networked Solutions – network equipment
- Sodexo Inc. – renewal of food services contract
- Staples, Inc. – general office supplies
- Phillips Medical Capital – MRI equipment lease
- TIAA-CREFF – benefit plan management

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric J. Hoefel, Business Process Reengineering Team
Michelle M. Smith, Green Building Coordinator, VP, Staff Council

Staff Representatives to the BFI Committee

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**Committee on Educational Policy and Institutional Resources (EPIR)**

On May 18, 2012 the Educational Policies and Institutional Resources (EPIR) Committee was called to order by Chair Donna Sweaney.

The meeting convened with approval of minutes from the February 3rd meeting, followed by the report by Cathy Paris, Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee Chair. The **Curricular Affairs Committee** proposed three resolutions: Approval of an On-Line Post-Baccalaureate Academic Certificate of Study for Speech-Language Pathology Assistants, Approval of an On-Line Certificate of Graduate Study in Public Health, and Approval of a Minor in Astrology. Questions were raised about resource availability, need, competition and marketing of the certificates, and the value of the Astrology Minor. Course work is already in place for the minor and the certificates, resulting in no need for new resources. The
Astrology Minor will be of particular interest to students due to its interdisciplinary nature, and the certificates are building block to higher level certificates or degrees. All three resolutions were approved.

Dean of Extension Doug Lantagne then presented the resolution to approve the Vermont State 4-H Foundation as an Affiliated Organization. EPIR approved.

EPIR reaffirmed (as it does annually) the EEO/AAEO Policy Statement, and Equal Opportunity in Educational Programs and Activities and Non-Harassment Policies. The only changes this year were that the definition of veteran was broadened and more clearly defined.

Associate Dean of the Graduate College Cynthia Forehand led a discussion on Standardizing Graduate Education Credit Requirements Practice. The update outlined decreasing fulltime graduate student status from 12 credits to 9 credits, in an effort to ensure compliance with federal regulations related to financial aid. Currently, UVM have multiple definitions of full time status for graduate students.

Associate Provost Brian Reed provided brief updates on Program Viability Review, Vermonter’s Access to UVM and the Collegiate Learning Assessment. Program Viability Review, was designed to streamline Academic Program Review, which was used determine which academic programs to sunset, consolidate or continue. Currently, Program Viability Review has been put on hold.

The Collegiate Learning Assessment, standardized testing designed to show learning outcomes of UVM students did not go according to plan. They were unable to recruit the requisite sample of students to provide any value in the results, and the few students who participated performed exceptionally well, meaning that comparison data would likely show a decline in learning outcomes. Despite this, Associate Provost Reed indicated satisfaction that a good faith effort was made. He also briefly summarized his report which details UVM’s efforts to attract and retain Vermont Students. Efforts have been extensive, particularly with the growing concern over the declining high school graduate population in the state. Additionally, efforts have been successful – UVM has attracted top Vermont candidates and through UVM’s financial aid model, UVM is an affordable option for many in state students. Overall, the larger concern among EPIR was about the Vermonter’s perception about the ability of instate students to afford UVM. It was determined that information such as what was provided to EPIR needs to go out to the public so Vermonters are aware that many people are choosing UVM without having to take on exorbitant debt.

Professors Julie Roberts and Char Mehrtens presented an update on General Education. Writing and information literacy were chosen as the first focus of the General Education requirement and they have been working on how to measure learning outcomes, how to assess the program and are developing the pilot for the foundational writing course that will be required of all first year students. The coming year will focus on developing courses that will follow undergraduates through all four years.

Provost Knodell provided a brief SIP and TRI update, however, the majority of SIP was discussed in the meeting of the Whole. Dean Grasso was available to answer any TRI related questions. He shared that multiple events have been held to increase engagement, and they are continuing work to meet all of the first year goals and metrics. This includes developing and sharing new knowledge, and developing and sustaining leaders. President Bramley provided a plug for the upcoming Food Summit on June 28th, a conference dedicated to the Food Systems spire, which will bring participants from around the world.

Finally, Bob Vaughan, Director of Capital Planning and Management was available to answer questions about the Capital Projects Progress Report. The Board inquired about setbacks in the progress of development on campus as a result of UVM declining the State appropriations for Capital Improvements this year. Vaughan said that it doesn’t set back any new development on campus as all funds this year are going toward deferred maintenance.

Chair Sweaney then reviewed the EPIR work plan for the next several meetings, which includes continued focus on the Strategic Initiative Project. The meeting was then adjourned.
Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda McIntire, Human Resource Services
Lesley Boucher, Dana Medical Library

Staff Representatives to the EPIR Committee