UVM Staff Council  
January 4, 2011  
Livak Ballroom, Davis Center  
12:05 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Deb Bryan (Designee for Mary Schliecker-Brigham), Marty Burrows, Jeff Bukowski (Ex-Officio), Michelle Chapman, Isis Erb, Carol Gross, Scott Hipko, Karen Lemire, Eric Hoefel, Allen Josey, Shelly Jurkiewicz, Eileen Kristiansen, Sharon Mone, Joanne Montanye, Mary Parent, Ida Russin (President), Nelson Sears, Michelle Smith (Vice President), Todd Stewart, Marie Tiemann, Diane Trono, Beth Walsh (Immediate Past President), and Susan Williford.

ABSENT: Yulia Cruz, Naima Dennis, Anthony Fouche, Patricia Forguites, Theresa Goddard, Mark Hall, Molly Hubbell, Rita Lemire, Sharnel Martelle, Tracey Maurer, Julia Paradiso, and Mary Schliecker-Brigham.

GUESTS: Corinne Thompson – BOT Coordinator, Rodman Cory – Constituent Relations Team Lead.

Council President Ida Russin called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The December 7, 2010 minutes were approved with minor changes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Council Survey - Chair Eric Hoefel reported the Executive Board had reviewed and approved the first draft SC Survey. The draft has been sent on to Human Resource Services and Institutional Research for further review. A preliminary survey will be tested on the full Council before it goes out to the non-represented staff community.

Benefits Committee – President Ida Russin began by stating she hopes that UVM’s administration will share their timeline for planned discussions and negotiations regarding post-retirement medical benefits (PRMB) with Staff Council before any formal announcements are made regarding negotiations with represented employees. Benefits Committee Chair Nelson Sears expressed his concern that Staff Council be provided an opportunity to review any communications from administration regarding PRMB restructuring to make certain there are resources available to address any and all questions that are bound to come up. Ida reminded everyone that the University Benefits Advisory Council, assigned with responsibility with making recommendations for PRMB restructuring, and President Fogel recommended that there be plenty of resources and time provided to educate employees about the pending changes to PRMB. Lastly, Nelson informed Council members that his committee received a contact sheet regarding recent changes to our prescription plan. Apparently changes were implemented without notification to UVM staff and he believes the issue of notification may be with Blue Cross/Blue Shield. He plans to investigate this further and has asked that Ida Russin take this matter up at her quarterly Human Resources Services meeting with Associate Vice President Barbara Johnson. Meanwhile, he asked that Council members invite their coworkers to forward prescription coverage concerns to either the Staff Council Office or Nelson directly.
Education and Professional Development Committee – President Ida Russin asked Chair Todd Stewart if his committee was involved in the planning this year’s Staff Development event known previously as “Mastering the Maze”. Todd replied they were not involved in this year’s planning, however Rodman Cory, Coordinator of “Maze” and a guest at today’s meeting, announced that input is always welcome. Per Rodman, the renaming of this event is still pending approval. Todd also reported that his committee did not meet in December.

Employee Environment and Facilities Committee – Chair Michelle Smith reported that her committee did not meet in December and then asked SC members if they or their coworkers were experiencing any winter-break scheduling problems with campus shuttles. None being heard, she asked Council members to forward any concerns to her attention.

Rules and Elections Committee – Chair Beth Walsh reported that although her committee did not officially meet, due to some confusion with communication around the meeting time of the meeting, those who were present discussed the impact of the possible restructuring of Staff Council’s eight standing committees on the current Council bylaws.

Salary and Budget Committee – Chair Carol Gross reported her committee met twice in December. The additional meeting in December focused on reviewing the information from administration that is integral to the S&B Committee’s Salary increase recommendation they are preparing. They intend to submit their recommendation for Executive Board’s review in January with hope that it will go before the full Council on February 1st. In addition to formalizing their salary increase recommendation, the S&B Committee is scheduled to meet in January with Barbara Johnson to discuss concerns regarding UVM’s Performance Evaluation process as it relates to merit based pay increases. The S&B Committee has also been invited to attend the Leadership Forum on January 11th which will focus on FY 2012 budgetary discussions.

Social Committee – Chair Marie Tiemann reported proceeds from the Staff Council’s Holiday Bazaar were more than $1,700 and that bake sales and raffle ticket sales exceeded all previous efforts. She attributed the success of this year’s fundraiser to greater awareness of the event and a greater number of vendors. She recognized the many staff and retirees who volunteered to help make this event successful and acknowledged the Davis Center for its assistance in helping make this a flawless event. Discussion at the Social Committee’s December meeting included extending the Holiday Bazaar to 4:00 p.m. to better accommodate both students and staff members’ schedules. The Committee is also working to update their Community Service Program awards to improve awareness of this program that matches a staff member’s (documented) volunteer efforts with an monetary award to the non-profit or charity where the service was performed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jeff Bukowski, Council Administrator, announced the submissions deadline for the February edition of Staffline is Friday, January 14, 2011. Discounted Ski Vouchers (day passes) for Jay Peak and Smugglers’ Notch, and discount coupons for Bolton Valley are available in the Staff Council Office. The Social Committee has a bus trip to the Montreal Casino on Presidents’ Day, February 21st. Registration forms were included in the January issue of Staffline. Registration, risk and release forms are available on the Staff Council’s website.

PRESIDENT’S UPDATE

Ida Russin reported that she was pleased that the Council’s Executive Board had been able to participate in the recent search for Provost and Sr. Vice President. She was happy for Jane Knodell, who was chosen after her role as Interim Provost. Ida also stated she was disappointed to learn that Dean Eleanor Miller (a
Provost candidate) had chosen to step down as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. An announcement regarding the search to fill Dean Miller’s post was announced in a campus-email today. Ida said it was both a pleasure and honor to have participated in UVM’s December Graduates’ Recognition Ceremony in the Patrick Gymnasium. December’s Board of Trustees’ Executive Committee meeting was conducted almost entirely in executive session, so there was nothing to report on. The Campus Leadership Forum will meet in January. The Council’s leadership team is scheduled to meet with Barbara Johnson in January as well.

OTHER BUSINESS

Board of Trustees’ Audit Committee – Representative Marie Tiemann reported the Audit Committee met on December 15, 2010. Chief Compliance Officer, Anna Drummond, noted that the University is ahead in compliance in relation to the Federal changes in the Health Care Reform. The Compliance Office will be reaching out to the University community in the near future to raise awareness of the culture of compliance and the Compliance Help Line. The University Financial Services office has been reviewing and revising financial policies and procedures in order to have better internal controls. Some procedures will change the way in which we do business, which the Committee feels are in the best interest of the University as a whole.

Committee Restructure Initiative – Ida Russin provided an overview of the Executive Board’s discussions and work to date on the possible restructuring of Staff Council’s eight standing committees. She reviewed the overarching goals referenced in this process and explained that they applied to all committees. The next step taken by the Board was to group similar current duties and responsibilities. The outcome, as detailed on the handout “Table of Restructure Steps,” is four areas (possible future committees) with bulleted responsibilities. Ida asked each Council member to share concerns and/or support for the Table’s 12-13-10 Model One. She also asked for the Council’s thoughts regarding the possible expansion of the current 60-minute meetings to either longer meetings or additional monthly meetings by committee.

A few Council members felt strongly that the charges grouped in Area #1 were unmanageable and perhaps should be divided to create another “Area” or committee. For the most part, the Council supported the idea of restructuring the Council’s eight standing committees allowing them to focus their charges to alleviate the overlapping of several committees’ purviews and create efficiency. Several specific recommendations made by both Council members and the audience were noted and will be brought forth to the Executive Board as they continue to work on their restructuring proposal.

Council members almost unanimously agreed that meetings should not be extended beyond 60 minutes. Several suggestions were made to promote the use of email, conference calling, and/or Sharepoint to do any necessary work outside of the regular scheduled monthly meetings.

The Council adjourned at 1:30 p.m. The next Staff Council meeting will take place in the Livak Ballroom, 4th Floor Davis Center, Tuesday, February 1, 2011 at 12:05 p.m.