UVM Staff Council
February 7, 2017
12:05-1:30 p.m.
Livak Ballroom, Davis Center
Minutes

Members Present: President Karmen Swim, Vice President Bethany Wolfe, Brendan Andrews, Jeremy Arenos, Laura Clayton, Nick Hall, Gwen Landis, Anita Lavoie, Lyndelle LeBruin, Cindy Lee, Stephanie Loscalzo, Steve Lunna, Noël McCann, Gabriela Mora-Klepeis, Michael O’Sullivan, Holly Pedrini, Shirley Pine, Parvin Pothiawala, Katrina Preiss, Bill Valliere, Amy Vile

Ex-officio: Meryl St. John, Staff Council Administrator

Members Absent: Nancy Bercaw, Bob Bolyard, Valerie Carzello, Kristen Cella, Jen Cournoyer, JoAnne Dearborn, Jessica Deaette, Mary Dunne, Jean Evans, Caleb Gilbert, Jeanna Page

Also Participating: Gary Derr, Vice President for Executive Operations and Amy Gilman, Staff Council Assistant

Call to Order

Karmen Swim called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

Call for New Topics

None were brought up at this time.

Approve Draft Minutes from January 3, 2017 Council Meeting

A motion was made to approve the January 3, 2017 Council minutes. With no edits and no discussion, the minutes were adopted.

Officer’s Update

The full Officer’s Report will be located online on the President of Staff Council’s webpage when available.

Karmen discussed recent discussions with HRDMA regarding the CBB submission regarding FY18 staff increases and a special Executive Board session that was scheduled to produce rapid input HRDMA requested regarding the salary process.

Committee Updates

CBB –The January meeting included Greg Paradiso, Assistant Director of Benefits from HRDMA. The agenda included conversations and suggestions around how the FY18 Salary & Merit memo, when determined, would be communicated to staff and whether the Council will have an opportunity to review and provide feedback. Also discussed was lessons learned from last year, as well as defining what constitutes “merit” at UVM. It is currently unknown what the salary increase structure will be in FY18,
so the Committee has attempted to provide recommendations for multiple scenarios. More information will be shared when known.

**Outreach** – This committee is exploring organizing an event using the forum or focus group format for Spring 2017. There was also discussion that HRDMA has formed a working group on the Staff Handbook. This group is looking to understand what resources and manpower would be needed to undertake the Staff Handbook project, and whether the Council could assist in any way. They will brainstorm about how Outreach might help support HRDMA with the large undertaking or perhaps have a staff representative on the working group.

**PPD** - This committee last met in January and reviewed a list of potential recommendations regarding employee parking and commuting at UVM. The Committee requested additional information on several items before making a final decision on which recommendations to endorse. Jim Barr and Mary Provost of Transportation and Parking provided the requested additional data and the PPD Committee will be prepared to finalize these recommendations at their February meeting. Committee leadership will present these recommendations to the full Council for discussion next month. In addition, TAPSAC, Transportation & Parking’s advisory group, recently met and additional information from this group will be incorporated in the final recommendations. Also discussed was continued work around the centralized professional development fund, which will take precedence following the completion and submission of the parking proposal.

**Social** – This committee has established dates for a few events happening over the next few months. Skate Night, a free event, will be happening again this year on March 24th, 6-8pm. Discounted Lyric Theatre tickets for April 8th matinee show of “9-5” will be sold through March 10th and Corporate Cup teams will be formed soon (registration is not yet open). The Committee also selected a date for this summer’s UVM Night at Lake Monsters.

**Report from Transportation & Parking’s Advisory Committee (TAPSAC) – Anita Lavoie**

Anita Lavoie, Vice Chair of the Compensation, Benefits and Budget Committee, is a staff rep member of this group (one of three Staff Council representatives on TAPSAC). Staff Council’s PPD committee has been working with this group on parking issues and last year had brought forward consideration for parking for pregnant women prior to giving birth and up to their first month back from leave. This concern is apparently already being addressed by Transportation and Parking, so will not be addressed in PPD’s upcoming recommendations. Anita highlighted a few other issues that were discussed at this group. Most of these are already known concerns (including such items as the 5-8 year wait for a green permit) that will be addressed by PPD’s recommendations. Also of note, there is currently no master plan for parking at UVM.

**FY17/FY18 Salary & Merit Discussion – CBB leadership**

Karmen presented the main points of recommendations submitted to HRDMA on Jan. 27, 2017. HRDMA asked CBB and Staff Council to help define and form guidelines as the FY18 Salary & Merit process is underway. A representative asked ‘will the merit piece push the supervisor reviews to perhaps be graded lower if high reviews warrant merit or justification?’ Karmen reported her recent discovery that all money encumbered for salaries must be spent on salaries, and in FY17 this was indeed the case.
No money earmarked for salary purposes was rerouted toward operating budgets in FY17. This was a significant concern of some staff, but it has been confirmed that all funds were spent as intended and salary money could not be repurposed in a budget for any other purpose.

The initial points developed by the Executive Board and CBB included:

- Performance reviews should be part of the salary & merit process (if there is a merit process)
- Supervisory Training is encouraged to take the courses offered at UVM as to how to properly conduct performance reviews.
- Justification must be provided to departmental leadership if no merit is given or if merit is given above the normal amount
- Switch to a “total compensation package” format for salary communications, where the yearly letter received by employees include all compensation. Current letters include salary only, but other institutions use communications that include healthcare costs (both the employee and UVM), retirement contributions (both the employee and UVM) and tuition remission expenses (if applicable, etc…) This would better illustrate the significant financial contributions of UVM toward employees outside of actual salary dollars.
- Develop and communicate information on a merit strategy by defining what shows “exceptional” work to support supervisor decision-making
- Leave compression out of the merit guidelines entirely and address it separately.

A question was asked about making Supervisory training mandatory. Gary said it’s been looked at but certain jobs require certain training to do the job (i.e. Hazardous Materials, PurCard Training) and that many people in supervisory roles have external training, or training from previous roles outside UVM, that would render additional training unnecessary.

The Council discussed what “exceptional performance” looks like in representatives’ various areas, concerns about how defining excellent performance would work across the range of positions, duties and responsibility levels, at the university, and what differential between across the board and merit feels appropriate given the current financial situation and not having real numbers at this point.

Karmen was able to provide early feedback on the Executive Board/CBB salary process recommendations that were sent to HRDMA. These were received well and were helpful to the early stages of salary increase guideline development.

**Staff Women’s Forum Announcement & Brainstorm**

After receiving a request of interest in Women’s Forum for staff, Staff Council will share this new event that will be held the morning of Tuesday, April 11, 2017. Focus will be around empowerment and support in the workplace, networking, and women’s issues in the workplace. We are still taking suggestions on any other ideas or areas of focus. One suggestion at the meeting was to talk about all types of identities that women might feel - not just gender but others as well. Another thought was
mentor work (how to be a mentor or find one). Other thoughts were to have a short meditation to open the session. Registration for this event will open through the Staff Council Office in March.

**Other Business**

A representative brought forth questions regarding late last year’s change in a handful of positions that were due to undergo changes stimulated by FLSA. Out of the people affected, some employees had their titles changed. In such cases salaries were not impacted, but there is concern from some of those affected that the new titles might not as accurately represent the body of work performed by the employee as before, and that these employees may be professionally affected in the future.

A representative asked has the electronic performance reviews section of Peoplesoft been made available yet. Meryl indicated she had checked with HRDMA recently. The answer was not yet but very soon.

**Adjournment**

Karmen asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:25pm.