Summary of Staff Council Meeting

March 2, 2010

March's meeting focused on the review, re-drafting and adoption of the Staff Council’s first mission statement, the approval of a second representative to serve on the Council's Nominating Committee, as well as several announcements by Beth Walsh, Council President and Jeff Bukowski, Council Administrator.

In follow-up to the Staff Council’s 2009 retreat, the Council decided it needed to create a mission statement that provided clarity about its purpose. At today’s meeting, Council members reviewed the original draft mission statement put forth by Jon Reidel, and revisions as recommended by Joanne Montayne, and by the Council’s Executive Board. After much discussion, the following mission statement was drawn and adopted.

The UVM Staff Council serves as an advocate for staff by seeking out and responding to their ideas and concerns, representing them to the University administration, and keeping staff informed of University initiatives. Staff Council works to create a cohesive community, have a positive impact on staff culture, and promote the betterment of all.

Beth Walsh, Council President, noted that this is the Council’s first mission statement in almost 40 years.

Michelle Smith, Employee Environment and Facilities Chair, reported that restriping of the Given and Jeffords parking lots is scheduled to take place after commencement. Future announcements regarding this work will appear in Staffline.

Staff Council bylaws stipulate the Council must nominate and approve two representatives to the Nominating Committee. This Committee is charged with overseeing the Council’s presidential elections this spring. Mary Reilly was nominated and approved at the Council’s January 2010 meeting. Rob Rohr announced that a second nominee, Michelle Smith, had agreed to serve as the Council’s representative pending the Council’s approval. The Council voted and approved the nomination of Michelle Smith.

Jeff Bukowski announced the deadline for submissions for the April Edition of Staffline is Friday, March 19th, ski vouchers and discount coupons continue to be available in the Staff Council Office.

Beth Walsh encouraged Council members to sign up to participate in MAZE. She reported attending the Leadership Forum on February 12th, where she added a number of items to their agenda. She encouraged regular communication from vice-presidents and other campus leaders; she expressed the opinion that Staff should be seen as a resource when budgets are being built; she talked about UVM’s website and its lack of intuitiveness and suggested that when websites
are updated, links should be corrected and language should be consistent; she suggested that customer service should be emphasized more across campus in an effort to make certain we are all helpful to the people we work with and for.

Beth reported that the Board of Trustees recently discussed a proposal to establish a UVM Foundation – a body whose primary function will be fund-raising. This organization would promote greater involvement by alumni and community members.

Beth’s meetings with UVM’s president, both February and March, are taking place with Gary Derr as President Fogel is on the road on development-related business. The focus of these discussions continues to be the Council’s recommendation for the FY 11 Salary Pool Increase, budget concerns, and paid-release time for grant-funded employees. Beth reported that the topic of paid release time for grant-funded employees is moving forward and she sees this as significant, given it affects approximately 60% of the College of Medicine’s non-represented staff. This effort would provide funding to allow grant-funded employees the opportunity to participate in and serve on Staff Council, affecting as many as six to nine representative positions on the Council.

The next Staff Council meeting will take place in the Davis Center Livak Ballrooms, Tuesday April 6, 2010 at 12:05 p.m.