UVM Staff Council
May 3, 2011
Livak Ballroom, Davis Center
12:05 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Jeff Bukowski (Ex-Officio), Michelle Chapman, Naima Dennis, Carol Gross, Mark Hall, Scott Hipko, Eric Hoefel, Molly Hubbell, Allen Josey, Shelly Jurkiewicz, Eileen Kristiansen, Karen Lemire, Rita Lemire, Joanne Montanye, Mary Parent, Ida Russin (President), Mary Schliecker-Brigham, Todd Stewart, Marie Tiemann, Diane Trono, Beth Walsh (Immediate Past President), and Susan Williford.

ABSENT: Isis Erb, Patricia Forguites, Anthony Fouche, Theresa Goddard, Sharnel Martelle, Tracey Maurer, Sharon Mone, Nelson Sears, and Michelle Smith (Vice President).

GUESTS: Renee Berteau - Biology Department Business Manager, Rodman Cory - HRS Constituent Relations Team Lead, Rebecca DeLaricheliere – HRS Customer Service Specialist, and Jennifer Sheridan – Audit Services Sr. Analyst.

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

STAFF COUNCIL’S CAMPUS SURVEY

Eric Hoefel, chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Council Survey reported a 44% response rate. Of the 1,938 invitations sent to non-represented staff, 846 surveys were completed and 112 surveys were submitted as incomplete. The 44% response rate is for completed surveys only. With the incomplete surveys included (958 total), the response rate is 49%. Eric will be including incomplete surveys in the overall analysis.

The top seven ranking issues were: 1) Annual salary recommendation, 2) Benefits, 3) Parking and Transportation, 4) Standard performance evaluation process, 5) Environmental sustainability, 6) Diversity, and 7) Deferred maintenance.

The following six benefits where all rated as “very important” or “important” by more than 60% of the survey respondents: 1) Dental Insurance, 2) Health Insurance, 3) Retirement Savings (403b), 4) Post-retirement Benefits, 5) Tuition Remission, and 6) Long-term Disability. Group life, access to UVM services, and free CCTA bus fare were in a cluster from 47 to 58%. Flex spending, UVM perks & discounts, and recreational opportunities all were in the 30 to 39% range.

These are but a few of the initial findings. More time is needed for further and detailed analysis.

BYLAW CHANGE

The Council approved changing the language in its Bylaws Article V. B. Membership Qualifications. It replaced the word “permanent” to “regular” when referencing those individuals qualified to serve on the Staff Council.
STANDING COMMITTEE RESTRUCTURING INITIATIVE

The Executive Board has all but concluded its work on the Standing Committee Restructuring Initiative. The Council will be asked to vote to approve the Board’s Standing Committee Restructuring proposal at the Council’s June 14th meeting. Since this proposal will constitute a recommendation to change the current Staff Council Bylaws, the proposal will be distributed two weeks prior to the June 14th meeting, or by May 31st.

STAFF COUNCIL ELECTIONS UPDATE

As of May 3rd, thirteen of the 23 open seats have been filled with new Staff Council Representatives. There remain ten vacant seats in the following areas: College of Education (1); College of Medicine (5); Human Resource Services (1); Provost’s Office (1); Student and Campus Life (2). The Council Office will work with each unit, encouraging them to identify staff to fill the remaining vacant seats. A list of the newly elected representatives is provided in the May issue of Staffline.

GRIEVANCE AND MEDIATION POLICY – STAFF (Non-Represented)

Staff Council Administrator Jeff Bukowski participated in the Grievance Policy review process these past few months, and reported that it proved to be a very positive experience. He believes the result is an improved policy that is designed to create more opportunities to resolve conflicts in the workplace. It also provides more guidance and direction on how the process works that makes it easier to understand. The most notable differences are the following: creation of a Mediation Process; changing of Staff Advocates to Peer Advisor volunteers; creation of Mediator volunteers; creation of a more formal and larger Staff Grievance Committee with a chair and vice chair from which a Grievance Panel can be formed; creation of a Grievance process with easy to understand steps; changing from calendar days to business days (defined as a business day in Waterman); formalizing the implementation of Grievance outcomes; and the creation of a Grievance Flow Chart. Other implications that will result from the implementation of the updated policy are as follows: formalized selection and training process for peer advisors, mediators, and committee members; and more transparency on where a non-represented staff member can seek help or assistance. The updated policy is currently going through the university-wide review process.

UVM PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

Ida reviewed the Board of Trustees Chair Robert Cioffi’s April 4th letter to Staff Council, requesting answers to five questions in report form to be used by the Presidential Search Committee in its efforts to identify the 26th President of the University of Vermont. Council members contributed several responses for each question. The final report will be a governance body response only. It will not seek to include information from staff at large. Online survey tools have been created for this purpose as communicated in the May Staffline.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jeff Bukowski, Council Administrator, announced the submissions deadline for the June edition of Staffline is Friday, May 13, 2011. The Social Committee’s annual Golf Outing is scheduled for Friday, August 5th.
Discounted season passes to Great Escape will be available for a limited amount of time, or until June 10th through the Staff Council Office. The cost is $72.00 and it pays for itself in less than three visits. Day tickets to Great Escape will be available in late May. Discounted Champlain Valley Fair Tickets will be available again this year. A formal announcement will appear in the June issue of Staffline. The deadline for May’s monthly committee reports is May 27th and the End of Year (EOY) Committee Summaries are due no later than May 31st. EOY Summaries will become part of the briefing material provided to President Fogel in anticipation of the End of Year Luncheon he is hosting for Staff Council on Tuesday, June 7th. Invitations to this luncheon will be sent shortly by the Office to the President to all Staff Council Representatives, Standing Committee Members, and those appointed by Staff Council to University Committees.

**MEDIA REPORTS & UVM’S FY 2012 BUDGET/JOBS**

Recent media reports regarding UVM’s FY 2012 $5M budget shortfall and possible resulting layoffs were discussed. Members of the Executive Board and the Salary and Budget Committee shared how at their March 10th meeting with Vice President Richard Cate and Provost Jane Knodel, a few budget scenarios were presented. They were told that a budget shortfall of $3 million would not likely impact current employees’ jobs. However, if the budget gap were larger (the $6M scenario) it would most likely impact jobs. Those Council members who attended this meeting understood the scenarios and targets discussed to be proposals only. Council members’ expressed both astonishment and dismay to learn about layoffs/job eliminations in conjunction with a zero percent increase for non-represented staff on Vermont Public Radio on Thursday, April 21st, as opposed to a university-wide communication. It was agreed that the Staff Council would continue to request ‘prior notification’ of future public announcements planned for the UVM community, as the Council endeavors to promote an “open, honest and transparent” information exchange with senior leadership.

**PRESIDENT’S UPDATE**

Ida reported attending the recent Campus Leadership Forum, where she shared that staff are feeling they’re in limbo, waiting to hear the outcome of ongoing collective bargaining unit efforts before non-represented staff learn about possible salary increases. She also reported meeting with newly elected leadership for both UVM’s Student Government Association and the Graduate Student Senate.

The Council adjourned at 1:30 p.m. The Staff Council End of Year Luncheon will take place Tuesday, June 7th at Billings Library Great Hall/Apse, 48 University Place at 12:00 p.m. The next monthly Staff Council meeting will take place in Waterman’s Memorial Lounge on Tuesday, June 14, 2011 at 12:05 p.m.