PRESENT: Lisa Blanchet, Ernie Buford, Jeff Bukowski (Ex-officio), Rodman Cory, Theresa Goddard, Mark Hall, Eric Hoefel, Eileen Kristiansen, Rita Lemire, Scott Lewins, Joanne Montanye, Mary Parent, Jon Reidel (Vice-President), Nelson Sears, Todd Stewart, Marie Tiemann, Diane Trono, Beth Walsh (President), and Cat Woodward.


GUESTS: Patty Redmond - Administrative Coordinator for the Honors College, Al Turgeon – Liaison on behalf of the Office of VP Finance & Enterprise Services.

Council President Beth Walsh called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. and introduced Patty Redmond, UVM’s Athletic Advisory Board by Appointed Staff Representative, who provided an overview of the UVM’s Athletic Advisory Board (AAB).

Patty Redmond highlighted and summarized the important activities and accomplishments of the UVM athletics program in the 2009-10 academic year. The focus of her report was on matters that are most relevant to university staff. Patty was particularly proud of the AAB’s nomination for the Dan and Carole Burack President’s Distinguished Lecture Series. Their nominee, Dr. Michael Messner of the University of Southern California, is a pioneer in the scholarly study of U.S. sports culture, with a particular strong focus on gender issues. This nomination was recently approved for the coming academic year and reflects the AAB’s effort to increase and enhance connections between the academic and athletic cultures at UVM.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES
The May 4, 2010 minutes were approved as presented.

STAFF MENTOR CONNECTION RECOMMENDATION – Todd Stewart

Todd Stewart, Chair of the Education and Professional Development Committee (EPDC), explained to the Council his Committee’s recommendation for the creation and implementation of a ‘Mentor Connection for Staff Employees’. He reported that the EPDC believes that developing and implementing a mentor connection for staff at UVM would provide a very low-cost and effective professional development solution. The Committee envisions a web-based database allowing both potential mentors and mentees to input their personal data and search for potential matches. The recommendation proposes that HRS would manage and implement this initiative. Todd reported that SC President Beth Walsh and Council Administrator Jeff
Bukowski met with Associate VP for Human Resource Services Barbara Johnson where they reviewed this recommendation. He shared that VP Johnson was very enthusiastic about the Mentor Connection proposal and added that she felt it would be beneficial for HRS to consider providing training for future mentors. The Council voted to approve this recommendation and forward it on to the Office of the President.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE – Jeff Bukowski, SC Administrator

Jeff Bukowski announced the deadline for submissions for the Summer Edition of Staffline is Friday, June 18, 2010 and the publish date will be August 1st (there will be no July edition). He reported that the Staff Council Office is now selling Great Escape Tickets and Champlain Valley Fair Tickets. Registration is now underway for two events: Staff Council’s Sixth Annual Golf Tournament on July 30th and a Bus Trip to Montreal on August 14th. Information regarding all these announcements can be found in the June edition of Staffline.

PRESIDENT’S UPDATE – Beth Walsh, President

Beth Walsh initiated a discussion to explain how the Council has held no formal and/or official position regarding the United Staff (US) efforts to build interest in unionization. Since 2005, the lack of a formal and/or official Council position has been articulated as a “position of neutrality.” Unfortunately, this articulation does not accurately express the Council’s view and has caused confusion. In light of recent activities by external union organizers, questions regarding the Council’s position have been raised by several Representatives. The Council has not examined this concern since 2005 and has continued to educate Staff Council Representatives to verbalize the Council’s “position” as one neither for nor against the work of US. In addition the Council has also asked that all Council Representatives and Participants differentiate their personal opinions from those of Staff Council. Representatives present at today’s meeting suggested more education is needed to understand how the Staff Council functions in relationship to the US efforts as well as those from potential external organizations. This matter was tabled for further discussion at the August 2010 meeting.

Beth addressed President Fogel’s May 29, 2010 letter to the University Benefits Advisory Council (UBAC), and Staff Council’s letter to the President dated May 25th - in response to the Board of Trustees’ discussion regarding post-retirement medical benefits. The primary focus of the Council’s discussion stressed the importance of transparency and university-wide communication surrounding the topic of changes to post-retirement medical benefits. It was agreed that the role of Staff Council should be to advocate that the UBAC communicate regularly to employees as well as retirees about their work, to allow all meetings of the UBAC to be open to the UVM community, and to provide at least one Open Forum to allow the UVM community an opportunity to discuss possible options for solutions before the final recommendation is made on September 29, 2010.

Beth Walsh concluded today’s meeting by thanking everyone, especially Jeff Bukowski and Diane Trono, for their support during her two-year tenure as Staff Council’s president.
The next Staff Council meeting will take place in the Memorial Lounge, Waterman Building, Tuesday, August 3, 2010 at 12:05 p.m. Today’s meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.