UVM STAFF COUNCIL  
August 5, 2008  
Memorial Lounge  
Waterman Building  
MINUTES

PRESENT: Marilyn Baker, Renee Berteau, Ernie Buford, Jeff Bukowski (Ex-officio), Rodman Cory, Eileen Kristiansen, Jennifer Larsen, Rita Lemire, Aliza Mansolino, Joanne Montanye, Michelle Smith-Mullarkey, Mary Parent, Morgan Phillips, Jon Reidel (Vice-President), Mary Reilly, Anne-Marie Resnik, Rob Rohr, Ida Russin, Catherine Symans, Diane Trono, Beth Walsh (President).

ABSENT: Erica Caloiiero, David Ebenstein, Eric Hoefel, Shari Langlois, Thi Nguyen, Todd Stewart, Cat Woodward.

GUESTS: Erin St. John, Al Turgeon

President Beth Walsh called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS – Beth Walsh

Beth welcomed both Jon Reidel – the newly elected vice-president, and Jeff Bukowski – the newly hired Council Administrator. She then welcomed our newly elected Council members, both those who were reelected and new members including: Eric Hoefel, representing the VP Finance and Enterprise Services unit; Rita Lemire, representing the College of Medicine unit; Anne-Marie Resnik, representing the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences unit. All members of today’s audience, representatives, guests and office staff were asked to then introduce themselves.

Beth acknowledged our guests: Al Turgeon, the designated representative for the VP Finance and Enterprise Services, and Erin St. John, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Trustees.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES – June 3, 2008

The minutes were approved as presented.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE – Jeff Bukowski

The location of the next Staff Council Meeting on September 2nd is the Silver Maple Ballroom, in the Davis Student Center. The September Staffline deadline for submissions is August 15th; submission deadlines for future issues are posted on our website and are also available in the August edition. UVM’s Office of the Associate Provost for Multicultural Affairs through the UVM President’s Initiative for Diversity and the Flynn Center are offering specially priced tickets to the UVM Community for several performances. The best way to get more information is to go to the Flynn Center’s website, www.flynncenter.org and click on Flynn Center/UVM Diversity Partnership.
PRESIDENT’S UPDATE— Beth Walsh

Beth has attended two Board of Trustees executive committee meetings since taking office on July 1st. At the August 4th meeting, President Fogel reported enrollment and retention numbers are above the target level, and there’s a lot of effort going into fiscal management on campus. This latter issue will be addressed at the upcoming BOT meeting in September. Beth also learned the Center for College Affordability and Productivity rated UVM #1 among public universities in New England, #18 among public universities nationally, and #60 among all universities in the United States. This information is also available on UVM’s website.

Corinne Thompson, the BOT administrator, has volunteered to provide an orientation session for all BOT Staff Representatives and Beth, as SC President. Corinne will focus on expectations and protocol. Beth will attend her first monthly meeting with President Fogel on August 18th and intends to discuss initiatives and challenges before the Council. She’ll attend the upcoming Campus Leadership Forum along with several campus governance group leaders. She is also scheduled in September to meet with Richard Cate, Interim Vice President for Finance and Enterprise Services who oversees the Staff Council Office.

Council initiatives that Beth would like to see pursued this year include having campus leaders and topical speakers address the Council at our monthly meetings. President Fogel has agreed to speak at the September Council meeting, Interim Vice President Cate at the October meeting, Associate Vice President Johnson at the November meeting, and Provost Hughes at the January meeting. Beth invited Council members to send their suggestions for guest speakers the Staff Council Office at staff.council@uvm.edu.

Additional initiatives Beth suggested included a) the issue of equity when it comes to UVM’s Staff Handbook policy on Release Time, where supervisors are encouraged to provide reasonable, paid release time for employees to serve on UVM committees and in governance groups such as Staff Council; b) outreach, for the purpose of promoting awareness and staff engagement.

Participation in campus-wide elections for president and vice president was outstanding. Of the approximately 2,200 staff members, 30% or 675 individuals voted in this election. The Staff Council office reached out to Custodial Services and with the help of their director and two translators, they met with the majority of staff in this department and provided paper ballots to those who didn’t have access to online ballots. As a result, this department had the greatest election participation or 78%, with six online ballots being cast.

The Staff Council now has informational brochures. The brochures, along with a letter from the Beth as Staff Council President, are being mailed to all staff, directors, deans and administrators this week. The letter gives credit to our Communications Committee for the creation of the brochure and also encourages staff members to consider serving on the Council as a representative or committee member. Brochures will also be distributed at new employee orientation sessions. The funding for these brochures was provided by the Office of the President and we are grateful for their support.

Annual staff recognition events are scheduled for the week of September 15th. The 10-Year Luncheon is scheduled for Monday, September 15th; the Staff Appreciation Luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, September 17th; the Staff Appreciation Dinner for staff with 25 years or more is scheduled
for the evening of Friday, September 19th. Details regarding time and location will be posted shortly by the Staff Recognition Committee.

Beth will address the BOT on Thursday, September 4th. She welcomed ideas from Council members regarding her address. Additionally, she will walk at Convocation on Labor Day, but she will not be speaking.

Student Move-In Day is Friday, August 29th for first-year students. Sunday, August 31st is for all other students. Those interested in volunteering should contact the Office of Student Life as soon as possible, preferably by Friday August 8th.

Erin St. John suggested that the Staff Council Office promote our monthly meetings with an all-staff announcement and include the agenda.

Jon Reidel suggested the Council promote membership on committees in addition to representatives serving on the Council. He looks forward to working with committee chairs and helping promote Council-wide initiatives.

Marilyn Baker asked if the Council by-laws could be changed to increase department representation. She explained she knows of two staff members interested in serving as representatives in AFS, but they are employed in sub-divisions/departments that already have Council representation. AFS is short several Council representatives, yet these interested staff who are shut out for two or three years or until positions in their sub-divisions open up. Beth responded by agreeing that two or three years is a long time to wait to serve as a representative, but she encouraged Marilyn and others to recommend employee involvement through committee membership and participation if representative positions are not currently available. Participation on a committee provides just as much voice as serving on the Council.

Rodman Cory asked Beth, as president, if she would welcome suggestions for discussion at her monthly meetings with President Fogel. She welcomed all ideas.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS – Diane Trono, Beth Walsh

By the end of first week in May 2008, all units with Staff Council representative vacancies were notified. Each vice-president, dean, director, and supervisor was provided a unit census report, sample letter to distribute to staff, and the option to either hold their own election or to have the Staff Council office manage it for them. Of the ten units that were notified, four held elections, six have not. Three of the six units have sent multiple notices to staff. To the best of our knowledge, the remaining three units have yet to notify or encourage staff regarding Council representative vacancies.

President Fogel and Provost Hughes intend on sending a letter this week to all staff and faculty, promoting participation by employees and support from supervisors for Council involvement and service. The Council brochure mailing will also include a letter of encouragement for Council participation through elections. The August Staffline also listed units that have vacancies and invited staff to come forward and volunteer.

Diane offered to assist with Council outreach efforts to build awareness and encourage involvement. The Staff Council Office will follow-up with the six units that need to hold elections once they are in
receipt of the two letters referenced above. The number of vacancies was 26 on May 1st. There remain 21 vacancies.

Diane explained some election problems as bad timing. She suggested the Council amend their election by-laws to have the census pulled on March 15th instead of April 15th. This way, elections would take place in April.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Recreation Committee (Ida Russin) – No comments or questions were put forth.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Staff Council orientation will be scheduled in the next few weeks for new members only. All future orientation session will be held on an as needed basis.

Beth Walsh is researching the idea of a Council retreat in mid-September.

Each standing committee’s former chair will be contacted and asked to hold an August meeting for the purpose of choosing a committee chair. If the committee feels they should wait until September, when membership increases, the committee should elect an interim chair. The Council will vote to approve the new chairs at the September meeting. Since there can be no Staff Council Executive Board until committees have chairs, this request is important. At each committee’s August meeting, logistics including dates, place and time for the entire year should be discussed. It is the responsibility of the chair to find meeting space. The SCO may assist by providing directions. There is also, sometimes, meeting space available in the SCO. As Ex-officio, Jeff Bukowski attends all standing committee and executive board meetings (or sends his designee).

Beth reported receiving several e-mails and telephone calls with concerns about parking at Gutterson. Since committees haven’t been fully formed yet, Beth will follow-up on this matter personally.

The Staff Council Office and Beth have received several reports from employees regarding changes in our BCBS policy, effective July 1st, that were not communicated (very well, if at all) to staff. Beth and the SCO have followed up with both BCBS and UVM’s Human Resources department. All follow-up will be shared with Council members at the September meeting.

AUDIENCE COMMENT

None was offered.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.