UVM STAFF COUNCIL
October 7, 2008
Livak Ballroom #417- 419
Davis Center
12:05 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Ernie Buford, Jeff Bukowski (Ex-officio), Deb Bryan (designee for Mary Schliecker-Brigham), Erica Caloiero, Rodman Cory, David Ebenstein, Patricia Forguites, Mark Hall, Eileen Hanerfeld (Past President), Eileen Kristiansen, Jennifer Larsen, Rita Lemire, Shannel Martelle, Joanne Montanye, Michelle Smith-Mullarkey, Thi Nguyen, Mary Parent, Jon Reidel (Vice-President), Mary Reilly, Anne-Marie Resnik, Rob Rohr, Ida Russin, Catherine Symans, Diane Trono, Beth Walsh (President), Cat Woodward.


GUESTS: Michael Breiner, Richard Cate, Gary Derr, Larry Dubois, Al Turgeon

President Beth Walsh called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT RICHARD CATE ADDRESSES THE COUNCIL

Beth Walsh welcomed and introduced our guest speaker, Richard Cate, Interim VP for Finance and Administration and Interim Treasurer.

Cate began by addressing the most recent memorandum from President Fogel, sent to everyone on Wednesday, October 1st. The memo titled, UVM and the Financial Markets, explained that Wachovia had frozen 90% of the assets in its Short Term Fund. UVM has deposited the majority of its operating cash in this fund over the past several years. Cate found ways to deal with this, but the newspaper made it sound a little more of an issue than it was.

Another focus of late has been PeopleSoft. It has come to our attention that we may be asking the software to conform to outdated business practices. Julia Russell, Director of Business Practices and Planning and her team are preparing recommendations for improvements to existing practices that for the most part remain due to history. The team wants to make certain that future adjustments to PeopleSoft follow best business practices. These changes may be as mundane as streamlining payroll to pay everyone on the same dates instead of some employees being paid twice per month other’s being paid every two weeks (24 v. 26 payments per year). Other questions raised include the necessity for the length of our current chart-strings.

Most of the time since Cate arrived, has been spent determining where we are fiscally. He and his staff began the process over, by rebuilding the FY09 budget with new information, and presented a balanced budget to the Board of Trustees. It called for some budget cuts (mostly administrative) without severely impacting the operation of the university and utilized $12.8 million in one-time
revenue. Cate said we must get to a point, in the next couple of years, where we no longer rely on one-time funds to balance our budget.

Work on the FY10, FY11 and FY 12 budgets (simultaneously) is currently underway. Cate is meeting with all the deans and vice-presidents reviewing the detail in their budgets. The goal is for his office to be prepared to present this information at the Board of Trustees budget hearing in December.

At the request of Jon Reidel, Richard Cate explained how he arrived at UVM, and shared that he’s always been intrigued by Higher Education and wanted the job he’s in for some time. He explained that he loves the challenges that he is faced with here at UVM and enjoys education, but more so the enabling side of education.

After brief discussion, Cate thanked the Council for this opportunity and invited members contact him with future questions.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES** – September 2, 2008

The motion was made to approve the minutes with minor word choice and grammatical corrections as explained by Jeff Bukowski. The motion was moved and approved.

**INTRODUCTIONS AND APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS** – Beth Walsh

Beth both introduced and welcomed the following new Council representatives and the units they represent: Marty Burrows, VP Enrollment Management; Patricia Forguites, College of Medicine; Mark Hall, College of Arts and Sciences; Sharnel Martelle and Sharon Mone, VP Student and Campus Life; Diane Pontecorvo, VP Finance & Enterprise Services AFS Unit; Mary Schliecker-Brigham, VP Development and Alumni Relations. Beth also explained that Jon Reidel, in addition his role as Staff Council Vice President, has agreed to serve as one of Student and Campus Life’s Council Representatives. Total current membership is now 31 and as of this announcement, there remain 13 vacant seats on the Council.

It was announced that Rita Lemire’s name has been put forth as the Benefits Committee recommendation for their new chair. The Council unanimously approved this recommendation.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE** – Jeff Bukowski

The next Staff Council Meeting is Tuesday, November 4th, in the Livak Ballroom. The deadline for submissions to the November edition of Staffline is extended this deadline to October 17th.

President Fogel’s Annual Staff Council Luncheon (for both elected Council representatives and committee members) is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9th, 2009.

There are two discounted season ski-pass programs still in place. Jay Peak’s deadline is Monday, October 13th and Smugglers’ Notch is Friday, October 31st.

**PRESIDENT’S UPDATE** – Beth Walsh
Beth presented a report to the Board of Trustees that appeared in the October Staffline. She also met with President Fogel, Gary Derr, Jon Reidel and Jeff Bukowski on September 26th. Gary reminded that the recent improvements to lighting on the south-side entrance to Waterman are the result of work initiated by Staff Council’s Employee Environment & Facilities’ last year. And during winter break, Staff also now receives more information about the operating hours of facilities across campus. This is another example of recent work by the Staff Council EE&F Committee. Contact sheet matters and follow-up were also discussed.

At the Campus Leadership Forum, Beth asked for input on how to address the fact that grant-funded employees who are not given paid-release time to participate on UVM committees or governance groups such as Staff Council, because their grants don’t allow. Beth will be meeting with Ruth Farrell, Director of OSP, Fran Carr, Russ Tracy in the College of Medicine (the largest employer of grant-funded staff) in order to find a more equitable way to involve more employees to serve on UVM committees.

The Staff Council Office recently held orientation sessions for new Council members and committee chairs.

Recent outreach efforts by Beth and a couple of Council members include an information table in the Davis Center Atrium as well as the HSRF Gallery. Beth has scheduled use of the information desk (opposite the Registrar) in front of the Memorial Lounge in Waterman Bldg. on Thursday, October 30th.

Beth reminded Council representatives and Committee chairs to inform the Staff Council Office when they receive contact sheets. She announced that Barbara Johnson has agreed to be our guest speaker at the November 4th Council meeting and the topic will be Human Resource Services and their “reinvention.” Beth reminded everyone that November 4th is both Election Day as well as our meeting date, and she hopes everyone will be able to do both.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS – Beth Walsh

Beth explained that there remain five openings within the College of Medicine, five within the Administrative and Facility Services, one from University Financial Services, and two from Student and Campus Life.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

No comments or questions were put forth.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Beth announced two recommendations for Staff Council Representatives for Executive Board. They included Rodman Cory and Catherine Symans. Both Rodman and Catherine had agreed prior to this meeting to serve.

- Jeff explained that the Campus Master Planning Committee is seeking a nominee, who must be a Staff Council Representative. More information will be e-mailed out to everyone by Wednesday, October 8th.
Beth announced she has appointed Pam Carter and Marianne Incerpi Brunetto to serve on the Transportation and Parking Services Advisory Committee (TAPSAC). She also announced the recent appointment of Sam Abair to the Traffic Board of Appeals.

The Council’s By-Laws state that the Executive Board shall include the immediate past president. Since Eileen Hanerfeld was elected to her position before the new Bylaws were put into place, she asked for a vote of approval to invite Eileen to serve on the Executive Board. A motion was made and the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation that Eileen serve in her capacity as Past-President on the Council’s Executive Board, as per the Council Bylaws.

Beth explained that, in accordance with the new Bylaws, the Executive Board requires two additional members be elected annually by the Staff Council from among its regular membership. Beth welcomed nominations from the floor, and announced she had requested nominations via e-mail (as of yesterday) as well. She announced that she had two nominations, one for Rodman Cory and the other for Catherine Symans. She asked them one last time to confirm their willingness to serve and both agreed. With that, a motion was made and the Council voted unanimously to accept both Rodman and Catherine as new members of the Council’s Executive Board.

AUDIENCE COMMENT

Eileen Kristiansen asked if the Council was willing to discuss a contingency approach when endeavoring to fill vacant seats. Although the Bylaws stipulate there may only be a certain number of representatives per unit, perhaps there should be some flexibility to allow staff from the general population to participate.

Diane Trono explained that it may not simply be a lack of interest, but other issues affecting recruitment. The two units with the greatest number of vacancies include the College of Medicine (COM) and Administrative and Facility Services (AFS). Sixty-six percent of COM’s staff are grant-funded and don’t receive paid release time to participate in or attend Staff Council meetings. The majority of AFS employees are members of collective bargaining units and UVM’s legal counsel is working on language that will better define this population’s participation. This leaves only three openings among the other two groups, Student and Campus Life and University Financial Services. The Council office staff recently learned that the unit, Student and Campus Life, experiences a 50 to 100 person turn-over during the month of May each year – when Staff Council is holding its elections for new representatives. Diane suggested that there is work-in-progress in each of these three units that is moving the Council toward filling its vacant seats.

Jon Reidel reminded everyone the number of 33, would be record setting for Staff Council.

Eileen Hanerfeld added that the original goal wasn’t to merely increase representation with greater membership, but to have a more representative body. It’s not so much numbers as providing the opportunity for broad representation across campus.

Several suggestions about how to entice greater involvement were made, including changes to the Council’s website and Staffline. These changes were noted.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.