

**UVM Staff Council Meeting Minutes**  
**September 1, 2020**  
**12:05-1:30 p.m.**  
**Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting**

**Members Present:**

Heather Allard, Tatiana Andrievskaya, Barbara Asimwe, April Berteau, Amanda Broder, Kristen Cella, Laura Clayton, Stephen DeVoe, Jenna Emerson, Bech Evans, Stephanie Glock, Christa Hagan-Howe, Katherine McGinn Hall, Nichole Hathaway, Alex Howe, Rejeanne Jalbert, Jilliene Johnson, Mindy Kear, Jay LaShombe, Cindy Lee, Stephanie Loscalzo, Stephen Lunna, Deb McAdoo, Claire McCollough, Jen O'Donnell, Michael O'Sullivan, Holly Pedrini, Katrina Preiss, Jon Reisenweaver, Allison Spain, Joe Speidel, Katherine Spence, Emily Taylor, Bridget Tully, Kenneth Viglucci, Erin Wertlieb, Bethany Wolfe

**Staff:** Elisabeth Blair, Alan Shashok

**Call to Order:** President Stephen Lunna called the meeting to order at 12:05.

**Approve Draft Minutes:** Both June and August meeting minutes were discussed and approved.

**Public Comment Period:** No public comments were made.

**Vote on Standing Committee Leadership:** Standing Committee co-chairs were approved.

**Standing Committee Updates**

**Social Committee:** They elected co-chairs, discussed the possibility of having a virtual Holiday Bazaar, and other options for online or virtual events. It was noted by a representative that they could potentially look for another role they could play during the pandemic; they took this feedback and will add it to their next agenda.

**Community Engagement:** They elected co-chairs and examined last year's activities. For the coming year, they looked at possibly focusing on food insecurity issues, the idea of connecting volunteers into a UVM network, finding ways to amplify staff voices, and enhancing translation services.

**Personal and Professional Development:** They elected co-chairs and discussed ongoing work on Staff awards, telecommuting, and partnering with Joel in PD&T.

**Compensation, Benefits, and Budget:** They elected co-chairs, discussed previous work and upcoming goals, and voted on creating a Hazard Pay working group.

**Officer Updates**

**HRS Meeting:** Hazard pay was discussed – and the fact that many staff are experiencing more work with corresponding less pay. HR doesn't have much control over pay inequities. Nonrepresented staff at UVM are the only group that are taking any kind of salary or wage cut. United Academics is in negotiations and there is a possibility that they will take a cut, but we won't know for sure until December or later. United Electrical Workers primarily earn \$45k or

less so don't really play into this discussion. The Teamsters, which represent the UVM Police, renegotiated their contract in summer 2019 which included a 2% pay raise for each of fiscal years 2020 and 2021.

Class and compensation were also discussed, including having more clarity of communication about these things. A survey is being designed right now that will go out to all members of the UVM community to assess a broad range of topics around childcare, including pre-COVID and COVID-impacted childcare issues. The next step will be analyzing that data to get a sense of what the needs and wants of staff are. Caleb Gilbert spoke about translation services, such as for getting assistance to fill in forms, or to help Extension with services for their migrant farming program. Right now translation services are arranged individually and at the departmental level, not the institutional level. He noted that Jes Kraus reports to Richard Cate, who has expressed some interest in getting an institutional license for interpreter services – which would also assist folks reaching out to a family member or a new student. It might not be paid for through a central budget, but it would be available and individual departments could be billed for usage.

If you have topics for Staff Council leadership to bring to future HRS meetings, please let them know. We have a good working relationship right now with them and Jes Kraus has proven to be an open and willing partner to Staff Council.

**Q:** What can we do about non-represented staff being the only folks receiving a salary cut?

**A:** This will be a topic of discussion in our leadership meeting with President Garimella on 9/17, and may well be the only item on the agenda for that 30-minute meeting. Steve will make it clear how inequitable the cuts are, and also that UVM senior administration needs to do a better job of communicating about these issues, and of replying to our written communications. They need to be willing to accept us as partners, and include us in decisions that have a huge effect on everyday lives of our staff.

**Q:** What does “permanent” mean, with regards to the salary cuts? Also, just a note that the cost of living is increasing but we are not receiving a COL increase, so that our cuts amount to more like a 6-9% loss, rather than 2.5%.

**A:** Steve will ask about this. CBB is working on a FY22 salary recommendation letter and also another letter asking about these issues and asking for HRS to share their analysis of the impact of the salary cuts on women and BIPOC staff. It would be great if we could require them to submit their future salary changes to us first and then have us submit our feedback. We should expect them to have conversations with all relevant stakeholders before sending out communications or making a policy change.

Caleb noted that the College of Medicine (COM) non-represented faculty have been afforded the right to vote. It was again noted that when CBB/Staff Council responded to the salary cuts with a different reduction model that focused on heavier reductions for the higher salaried staff, UVM senior administration didn't even counter, or respond, as if their percentage was perfect and no movement was possible. Why won't they work with us in a back-and-forth process? It was suggested that maybe we should stop submitting proposals until we begin to see cooperation.

Further discussion was had about the feeling that staff are not being listened to and that Staff Council Committees are simply talking to themselves.

**Monthly Meeting with Gary Derr:** In this meeting, SC leadership discussed the “Town Gown relationship” regarding the return to campus – i.e. how UVM interacts with local leadership in Burlington. Gary was confident that the information in the press was not accurate and could be misleading; that the working relationship is continuing and positive; that UVM is doing everything in its power to make sure students – especially those living off-campus – are being respectful and upholding their Gold and Green agreements; and that they are representative of UVM, not just of themselves. Suspensions and terminations have now been included in the possible consequences.

Staff and faculty were also asked to sign their own Gold and Green agreement. Information about staff testing was in Gary Derr’s campus-wide email but you had to scroll way down. Staff may make an appointment and go over and be tested if they’re on campus. There has been no response yet to the Executive Board’s letter to Gary regarding the Black Lives Matter (BLM) flag, though there was a letter from Suresh the next day to the campus community saying that the flag would be displayed in the BIPOC student center. Efforts are ongoing by various groups on campus to urge the raising of the flag outdoors.

### **Staff Council Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Updates**

A suggestion from the antiracist working group came that DEI or Racism should be added to the agenda at each SC meeting. This group is also looking at the bylaws and the mission statement, and discussing ways to amplify training. It was suggested that we have a way to match donations to nonprofits. Alan Shashok explained the currently-existing Community Service Award, which provides \$25 to any nonpolitical, nonreligious nonprofit that a staff member volunteers with. Elisabeth will feature this in the next SC office newsletter.

It was suggested that Staff Council could potentially devote a Professional Development Fund quarter specifically to folks looking to get training in DEI related topics. Caleb discussed possibly putting out an extra call, to use the extra money from the lost quarter and put it towards this specifically. He will call a meeting to discuss this.

Captioning was brought up, and that best practice is to have captioning services in large meetings. The captioning provided by YouTube and Teams are insufficient but UVM provides services. Alan will look into this issue. A representative praised the agility demonstrated in getting a letter out so quickly on re-raising the BLM flag so quickly, noting that the moment we are in requires this responsiveness and agility. Thank you to those who did the work to write and send that.

Students and faculty are holding a die-in on Thursday Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> – the Facebook event link was shared in the chat. It was noted that the bureaucracy of SC is slow and that we should look into an informal network among SC to start sharing events and ideas more rapidly. A representative shared that there is a faculty and staff of color retreat opportunity – with not just UVM but other institutions in our region. It is an affinity-based opportunity. Details will be shared in the near future.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 1:19 PM.