

UVM Staff Council
September 4, 2018
12:05-1:30 p.m.
338 Waterman

Members Present: President Steve Lunna, Vice President Caleb Gilbert, Heather Allard, Brendan Andrews, Tatiana Andrievskaya, Bob Bolyard, Holly Brevent, Kristen Cella, Cindy Fonseca, Aimee Gale, Miriam Harrison, Cheryl Herrick, Mindy Kear, Jessica Lalime, Anita Lavoie, Cindy Lee, Stephanie Loscalzo, Noël McCann, Michael O’Sullivan, Becky Swem, Holly Pedrini, Shirley Pine, Parvin Pothiawala, Katrina Preiss, Jon Reisenweaver, Sherri Rigby, Alan Shashok, Bridget Tully, Amy Vile, Lacey Ure, Erin Wertlieb

Ex-officio: Meryl St. John, Staff Council Administrator

Members Absent: Kait Bedell, Valerie Carzello, Jen Cournoyer, Nick Hall, Alex Howe, Deb McAdoo, Travis Perry, Marissa Wells

Also Participating: Gary Derr, Vice President for Executive Operations

E. Thomas Sullivan, President of the University of Vermont

Call to Order

Steve Lunna called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

President Sullivan’s Address to Staff Council Representatives

President Sullivan recently met with Steve and Caleb. He briefly discussed ongoing Council initiatives and the status of the university’s fundraising campaign. This was President Sullivan’s final address to the Council as he will depart the role sometime this year after his successor is identified.

This is the final year of the Move Mountains campaign, with an end-of-year gala planned to celebrate it on May 17th. Campaign achievements include 78 million dollars for new student scholarships, 63 million dollars for faculty endowed chairs and professorships (helpful for recruitment of students), 64 million dollars for new facilities, and funding for numerous new academic programs including the Gunn Institute for the Environment. This final year of fundraising will be used primarily to shore up goal areas that are slightly short of where they should be, but over 70,000 donors have contributed so far. Post-campaign strategies for the alumni association and the campaign itself will be assessed later this year.

Regarding facilities, there are 21 new construction or additions, 3 of which opened this past summer. Ifsham Hall will open in October. The major renovations to Larner School of Medicine which will integrate teaching and research spaces are ongoing - 70% of research dollars currently come from medical school faculty. Torrey Hall is also being renovated following the fire.

The new Athletic Facility is technically a “multipurpose center.” Gutterson is in need of severe renovations, especially the hockey facilities and locker rooms, and the facility itself is not easy to

navigate. The university proposes to modernize Gutterson and bring it up to code, but the rink itself is well-liked nationally. The parking lot next to Gutterson will become a new event center for men's and women's basketball, adjacent to which will be a reception center for concerts, social gatherings, culture events, et cetera. There will also be health and wellness services that will be convenient for students living in University Heights.

Parking at Gutterson hasn't been perceived as a problem because collegiate sports attendance is going down nationwide. However, it is also an image issue –trying to have a pedestrian residential campus is seen as incongruent with adding parking infrastructure. Two of the large capital planning projects underway right now involve eliminating even more parking with no plans to replace them, but President Sullivan acknowledged this as a concern.

A memo will be released in September updating the campus community on the student protests that occurred last year and the ongoing work that is happening with the student leaders and the progress and discussions toward their demands.

After his departure from UVM, President Sullivan will finish his book, "Speech and Expression on Campus Under the First Amendment."

Officer's Update

Steve and Caleb provided a brief update of their activities over the preceding month. These included a Staff Council Leadership meeting with Gary Derr and one with President Sullivan. One of Steve's primary goals for this year is increasing staff representation and the "voice" of staff around campus and he is currently working on identifying ways to do that. Another issue that was brought forth was that of whether non-exempt staff may at some point be more regularly permitted to telecommute.

Telecommuting is highly in demand for work-life balance, as office space is scarce in some areas, and because it may be a potential partial solution to the parking issue. The President was firm that individual decisions on telecommuting will remain at the supervisor level. At the leadership level, the telecommuting issue has been nested in a larger conversation about mitigating parking problems so far, but CBB is also fielding the telecommuting issue as a policy issue with regards to non-exempt staff. The bus coming more frequently, or additional transportation for staff, would be helpful in ensuring that staff can get to and from their offices in a timely fashion.

Goals for the 27th President of the University of Vermont

David Daigle and Ron Lumbr, co-chairs of the Presidential Search Committee, have sent out a list of five questions regarding opportunities and challenges facing the University of Vermont in the next ten years as well as desirable attributes of the next President. The Council discussed some suggestions for a response to these questions, and staff members are also welcome to submit individual responses on the online survey that was distributed recently.

Council topics included:

- How will our incoming leader look at the importance and value of staff as a part of the university community?
- Highlight the fact that staff engagement is at an all-time high, the new president has an opportunity to reach more and make more impact on us and for us through the Staff Council.
- Diversity and inclusion
- Administrative emphasis
- Looking beyond the standard model of what leadership looks like
- Experience with the shared governance model
- Visions for a sustainable campus, environmental initiatives, ways we as a community can continue to positively impact the environment

Other Business

The Staff Council Retreat will take place on October 2nd (this was later changed to December 4th).

There was an update about the proceedings of the Presidential Search Committee. Meryl updated the Council on the office hiring process and notified the representatives that new name tags have been ordered across the board. In addition, staff are needed to help with the Benefits Fair (October 31st) and the Social on the Green table (September 10th).

Caleb shared that he is interested in furthering the goal of ESOL instruction that is currently offered by the university, but which is inaccessible to staff. He is interested in clarifying how tuition remission works, and why academic classes for credit are eligible but professional classes such as leadership development are not. He will continue this conversation and leadership will determine whether this is a committee issue or something that should be handled at the leadership level.

Noel offers info that credit courses are tuition remission eligible while non-credit are not, but are eligible for a 20% discount. Continuing Ed has always advocated for these classes to be eligible, but have been told there is no “mechanism” for funding.

Steve hopes to attend some committee meetings soon to participate in conversations and goal setting.

Public Comment Period

No public comments were made.

Adjournment

Steve asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:18 pm.