

STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
Meeting #149 *Face-to-face
Friday, 12 December 2003
8:45 - 11:00 A.M.
Wood Center Carol Brown Ballroom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present:

*Reyne Athanas	Chris Lace	Maya Salganek
Annette Chism	Angela Linn	Josh Steadman
Linda cook	Denise Ringhand for Michelle	Christine Truncali
Jean Crews	Littell	Julie Wegner
Scott Culbertson	Gary Newman	LaJuana Williams
Liam Forbes	Rory O'Neill	
*Gabrielle Hazelton	*Barbara Oleson	

Members Absent:

Joyce Allen-Luopa	Michelle Littell	Ramona Pierce
Frances Bedel	Paula Long	Jeannette Skrob
Jennifer Collier	Andrew Martinez	DeShana York
Diane Gray	Nici Murawsky	

Guests Present

Marshall Lind	Mark Neumayr	Todd Paris
Mike Humphrey	Thomas Walker	

Others Present

Lynette Washington

- A. The agenda for Staff Council meeting #149, Friday, 12 December was adopted as distributed via email
- B. The Staff Council Minutes for Staff Council meeting #147, 17 October was approved as distributed by e-mail. The Minutes to Staff Council meeting #148, 12 November amended to change the comments attributed to Angela Camos to Angela Linn.

INFORMATION

2. Officer's Reports

A. President's Report - Rory O'Neill

Rory O'Neill asked the Election, Membership, and Rules committee to bring forth a proposed Bylaw change to allow Staff Council members to participate in Governance Coordinating committees.

Rory O'Neill thanked the Advocacy and Staff Affairs committees for their work to get volunteers to handle the web pages for each Staff Council committee.

Rory O'Neill reiterated to the Council the Chancellor's remarks that the Governance bodies should be careful with how budget money is spent. He stated the calendar is not a critical item and that we will not move forward with the 2004 Staff calendar.

Rory O'Neill informed the committee that Vice Chancellor Mark Neumayr placed the UAF Operational Review for FY03 in the Governance office. Mark Neumayr also offered to place a copy of the FY02 Operational Review with the Governance office. Rory O'Neill invited Council members to review the budget if interested. Rory O'Neill stated that the Health Benefits Resolution and Compensation position statement approved by the Administrative Committee in July were recently signed and distributed to the appropriate list of UAF administrators.

Rory O'Neill said that a number of issues are honed at the statewide level, but that the Chancellor's Cabinet endorses or advocates for these changes. He said that it is important that we work with UAF administration in everything that we are trying to achieve.

Rory O'Neill stated that the even-numbered unit's election results look solid, but that there are one or two spots not filled in terms of representation. He stated that Gary Newman would give a report about the election results later in this meeting.

Rory O'Neill stated that the UAF Chancellor's selection committee is officially off the ground. He said that the committee is made up of faculty, staff, students, and members from the Fairbank's community.

Rory O'Neill stated that the UA Staff Compensation Task Force, with Jim Johnsen, Vice President for Faculty and Staff Relations will meet in late January, and plans to meet two hours per month for six-months. Rory said that he is currently working to get a commitment from Jim Johnsen about how the results of the task force efforts would be utilized. He said that Governance also needs to respond to how the task's force results will be utilized.

Rory O'Neill stated that the UA President's Sustainability and Accountability Task Force is looking at how to move forward during tough fiscal times and will be meeting in January. He said that Vice President Joe Beedle is establishing the framework and goals for this task force.

Rory O'Neill stated that the Pete Pinney, Faculty Senate President, Provost Reichardt, Chancellor Lind, and himself, met with University Relations regarding the faculty and staff giving campaign at UAF. He said that the University of Alaska as compared to other systems is not doing that well in terms of giving to the institution and supporting ourselves. He said that there would be a planning meeting towards late January, as well as a campaign in March.

Rory O'Neill stated that he sent out an announcement for the Administrative committee vacancy; as DeShana York is unable to continue her role as Chair of the Elections, Membership, and Rules Committee.

Rory O'Neill informed the Council that Maya Salganek, Jean Crews, and himself composed a letter to the Provost regarding the Staff Council Recognition Award. He said that a motion would be brought before the Council clarifying the structure of that program.

Rory O'Neill stated that he attended a Board of Regents' meeting in December on behalf of Staff Alliance to provide public testimony regarding the role of Governance. He said that policy suggests that the constitutions of staff, student, and faculty governance bodies upon being created are to be promulgated as University regulation, and that never occurred. He said that throughout the whole system an effort is being made to remove the anxiety of volunteering for this activity. He said that we are trying to help the University articulate how it protects and respects the role of Governance, something as simple as release time. He stated that the Staff Alliance level will work hard to convince President Hamilton that the regulations in that regard are worthwhile.

B. President-Elect's Report - Josh Steadman

Josh Steadman stated that the effort to improve the audio-conference equipment is still in progress

Maya Salganek asked about a wireless system.

Josh Steadman stated that it is going to be a regular polycom and there will be a few microphones that will pick up at least 25 feet away.

GOVERNANCE REPORTS

A. ASUAF Report - Thomas Walker

Thomas Walker said that the students are holding their legislative kick off today. He invited the Council members to attend. He said that the glass recycling project funding was approved by the ASUAF Senate. He said that in glass recycling would take place in late January.

5. Guest Speakers

A. Marshall Lind

Chancellor Lind updated the Council on the Taku Road closure and other campus changes. He asked Council members to let him know about concerns and complaints, and asked that suggestions and comments for improvement be sent to Kathleen Schedler, Associate Vice Chancellor, Facilities Services.

The Chancellor said that he is sorry that the staff calendar will not be published, because of budget constraints. He stated that every \$1,200- \$1,500 dollars will be important next year, so every piece of the money that we can hang on to will be very important.

The Chancellor stated that the budget forum held on December 11 had a good turn out. The hour was spent discussing where our money comes from, how we are spending it, and some of the challenges that we are looking at for FY05. The information is available on the Chancellors web site at <http://www.uaf.edu/chancellor/budget/index.html>. The Chancellor said the latest version of the Strategic Plan for 2009 and the Academic Plan may be viewed at this site. The Chancellor stated that the Governor's budget would be revealed by Monday, December 15.

The Chancellor informed the committee that he had received the Council's letter regarding compensation and the salary grid. He stated that one of the key areas of concern expressed by the Council is communication. He stated that the University Relations office is doing a number of things to improve that area. He said that statewide is also concerned with improving the communications link. He said that we are looking at using an outside expert to conduct a communication's audit.

The Chancellor said that the All Campus Day issue is still being worked on by the students and the Faculty Senate. The Chancellor stated that his inclination at this point is to retain the day as it has been, but to take a whole new look at it to see what can be done to broaden the participation, provide different options, do some creative things, including changing the name of the day. He said that students are looking at a completely new view of how this day should be used and to how to make this day more productive.

The Chancellor stated that Wood Center would be made into a more attractive place for activities. He stated that the bowling alley has been redone. He stated that we would have the latest in equipment upgrades and a grand opening will be held in either late January or early February.

B. Mark Neumayr - Financial Review Follow-up

Mark Neumayr reported to the Council about various financial reviews that take place at UAF campuses. He said that in the spring, it is called a management review and in the fall, it is called an operational review. He reiterated that the FY03 Operation review could be found on the Financial Services web page. He said that the review is a five-year snapshot of the finances and operations of UAF. It gives a good idea of what we are doing programmatically and operationally, where money is coming from, and where it is being spent.

Mark Neumayr said that within the next year we should hear about something called "My UA Portal". He stated that it is an attempt from statewide to make a more easier/seamless way for students to do business electronically with the University. He stated that UA and UAF are behind the times nationally when compared with other universities. He stated that a committee is in the process of looking at hiring a consultant to undertake the improving Lola Tilly Commons and the UAF Bookstore.

Mark Neumayr directed the Council's attention to a handout of UAF's construction overview.

C. Mike Humphrey - Staff Council Healthcare Resolution

Mike Humphrey stated that the open enrollment period occurred with out any major catastrophes. The concept of shifting from a calendar year to a fiscal year for our accrual appears to be working. The only little wrinkle we had with open enrollment is that communications sent out about the flexible spending gave the wrong number of payroll cycles. The correct number of payroll cycles is thirteen not fourteen.

Mike Humphrey said that Rory O'Neill shared the July 9 Staff Council Healthcare Resolution draft with him to be considered during the review of the UA Healthcare planning phase. After reading through the recommendations in the Resolution from Staff Council, he concluded that the Councils objectives were met. Staff Council members agreed and applauded Mike Humphrey.

Mike Humphrey said that a new committee is being formed to examine the university's total compensation plans, including direct compensation salaries and indirect compensation, such as our benefits program. The committee is looking at ways to make it integrate better and ways to make it more flexible.

One of the areas being looked at is the UAF Pension Plan - is there a way that we can make that more flexible? He said not so much that it would be going away, but it would be changing in its ability to serve our needs.

Rory O'Neill stated that it is an effort to give employees more control over the employer's contributions towards compensation, such as how do you want to receive it and where do you want to utilize it.

Gary Newman stated that one change in the healthcare plan concerned him saying that if you have a lot of kids you are rewarded under the new plan, because the single dependent charge is not based on how many kids you have, so if you only have one kid presumably somewhere in the actuarial lines they all align.

Mike Humphrey responded that when you look at the healthcare cost to the plan and identify where the costs are coming from having a spouse on the plan is more expensive than having children on the plan. He stated that the spouse charge needs to be a little higher than the child charge. He said that if you look at the industry and try to extract from the knowledge base what the practices are out there, such as the best models, or what the typical models of charging for dependents are, or at what plan most children are on you find that most of the structures out there appear to be employee plus spouse - no kids on the plan; employee plus children - no spouse on the plan; or employee plus full family. Mike Humphrey said that relying on the experts and the knowledge that is available allows you to find a better structure.

One of the issues was single parents that have several kids on the plan and what rate increases was doing to single parents. He said that the new plan helps single parents, because they will see their rate come down.

Linda Cook asked if this type of explanation available on the web, so that constituents can better understand the figures. Mike Humphrey stated that there is nothing on the web now, but he would write something. Rory O'Neill stated that Staff Alliance discussed this same issue at a recent meeting, but that he would leave it to Mike to explain it in expert language.

Jean Crews stated that it is important as a group that we ask about what we accomplish. She said that this is a perfect example of what we accomplish.

Mike Humphrey stated that it is a commitment towards communication. He said that statewide is committed to getting information out and taking information back in. He said that this is your benefits program and that a lot of money was spent on it. If there are parts not valued by employees, we need to change it.

Maya Salganek inquired about the tuition waiver.

Mike Humphrey stated that the tuition waiver is a valuable benefit for attracting and retaining employees. He said that displacing paying customers must be considered. There might have to be some slight modifications to it. The other thing that might be looked at is an employee's grade; you have to pass a course with at least a 'C'.

Rory O'Neill stated that the November 12, Fairbanks Daily News Miner published an article about the tuition waiver benefits being adjusted. He said that there is talk throughout the system at the Alliance level about turning on BANNER'S prerequisite checks. He said that is an item that he would like the Council to weigh in on through Staff Affairs.

6. Committee Reports

A. Staff Affairs - G. Hazelton

Gabby Hazelton stated that the committee last met on November 17. She said that the committee is looking to rework the Community Service Leave Program as being a no cost program at UAF only. She reported that after talking with Jennifer

Youngberg, Human Resource, Benefits Coordinator that statistics show that staff members were not denied advancement opportunities because of retired staff returning to their jobs. She stated that the next Staff Affairs meeting is on Monday, 26 January 2004.

B. Election, Membership, and Rules - Gary Newman

Gary Newman discussed the proposed amendment to the Bylaws under Section II, Article 4 (membership representation) related to meeting attendance. The Elections, Membership, and Rules committee report and election results were attached to the agenda.

Gabby Hazelton stated that bylaw changes must be read at one meeting and voted on it at the next. Gary Newman read the appropriate section of the Bylaw on membership representation to the Council.

Rory O'Neill stated that he would like to see adjustments to the wording, because not every representative is elected, so the word "elected" should be removed from the proposed change. He stated that from his perspective, an unexcused absence is if the voting seat allocated to your unit is not occupied by a human being at a Council meeting, then it is considered unexcused. He said that it is the responsibility of the representatives to arrange for alternates or just another person to be there to represent the constituents and to help achieve a quorum and conduct business for the meetings. He stated that one of the concerns from the Governance office is that we need to be sure that we have a mechanism in the bylaws to remove members. He stated that the bylaws should be structured, so that people understand what we are trying to achieve and what the consequences are.

Committee members asked about the rule for absences being applied to missed committee meetings as well.

Gary Newman stated that the unexcused absence issue is aimed at Council meetings because without a quorum present business cannot be actually processed. Rory O'Neill said that the Administrative committee and the membership should address the issue before the Council takes action. Gary Newman stated that the word elected would be deleted from the proposed amendment. He discussed the number of unexcused absences that Council members would be allowed.

Denise Ringhand asked about the role of the alternate.

Rory O'Neill stated that each unit has one vote per every fifty staff members in your unit. For example, if your unit has two votes allocated to it, and one of the two representatives is not present at the meeting, but you are present, you can share in the vote. If you arrive and the other two reps are there, there would only be two votes for your unit not three.

Barbara Oleson stated that she does not like the idea of committee work being considered as part of the membership in Staff Council, in relation to counting the number of absences from committee meetings. Angela Linn stated that as a representative you are required to sit on at least one committee and there are members who are not serving on a committee. Joan Fiorenzi stated that being away from the office is a sacrifice and that this is a volunteer organization, and that we are required as elected people to attend these meetings, but that it is not always possible due to work. She suggested that holding committee meetings at noon would be better.

C. Rural Affairs - Scott Culbertson

No report available.

D. UAF Advocacy - Angela Linn

Angela Linn updated the Council on the Legislative Communications training session held on December 3. She encouraged everyone to register to vote. She said that voter registration forms are on hand if needed and available on the web. She stated that the committee is planning the UAF Day at North Pole event.

D. Ad Hoc Committee on Work Place Ethics - Maya Salganek

Maya Salganek said that the committee is reviewing brochure that may replace the poster idea. She reported that the Community Conversations Forum was cancelled by the Dean of Student Services although the committee and organizers objected.

ACTION

7. Old Business

A. Academic Calendar Update - Rory O'Neill

Rory O'Neill reminded the Council members that the Academic Calendar/All Campus Day issue is still active.

B. Staff Council Raffle and Calendar - Rory O'Neill

Rory O'Neill said that he would soon contact Council members that previously volunteered for the Calendar committee to work on the Staff Council Raffle committee. He reminded the Council that the staff calendar will not be printed due to budget constraints. He plans to ask the volunteers from the calendar committee to volunteer for the raffle/picnic committee.

C. UAF Web Server Zorba

Rory O'Neill commented that the upcoming changes to the UAF web server Zorba and e-mail server (Aurora) were attached to the agenda for review.

D. Update on Staff Council Committees

Instructions for the UAF Staff Council Committees' Web Site

Jean Crews provided the Staff Council members with an instructional handout.

E. New Rep and Alt Orientation - Rory O'Neill

Rory O'Neill reminded Council members that the orientation will be held on Friday, 30 January in the Wood Center Memorial Conference Room from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

8. New Business

A. Volunteer Parking Permits - Angela Linn

Angela Linn informed the Council that a letter was sent to Bill Childress, Associate Director of Parking Services regarding volunteer parking permits.

The committee is waiting for his reply.

B. FY04 Governance Budget Report - Rory O'Neill

The FY04 Budget report was attached to the agenda for Council member's review.

Rory O'Neill stated that the budget supports both Staff Council and Faculty Senate needs.

Scott Culbertson asked about the budget for the Faculty Senate Newsletter.

Rory O'Neill commented that he would look in to that. Gary Newman asked about the microfiche budget. Lynette Washington replied that academic course paper work and agendas and minutes were microfilmed.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

A tape of this Staff Council meeting is available in the Governance Office if anyone wishes to listen to the complete tape. Submitted by Lynette Washington, Staff Council, Secretary.

*** For more information regarding UAF Governance, check out our
website at: <http://www.uaf.edu/uafgov/index.html> ***

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