UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 9, 2021 – 1–3 p.m. – Virtual via Zoom

Members Present: Mitch Alters, Michele Bedsaul, Ashelle Brown, Kourtney Ennis, Priscilla Greene, Fred Hagemeister, Allison Johnson, Frank McMurrough, Taylor McNeilly, Jennifer O‘Donnell (Secretary/Treasurer), Katy Olney, Paul Sandman, Beth Simms, Jeff Smith, Susan Sokolsky, Mark Stanton (Chair), Kaylin Tingle, and Jessica Washington (Vice Chair)

Non-Voting Attendees: Carl Sorensen (ex-officio), Melody Wilson (ex-officio)

Members Absent: Craig Buchbinder, Josh Jeffreys, Joe Minick, Richard Thomas

Non-Voting Absent:

Mark Stanton, chair, called the Council meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. and welcomed council members and guests.

Mark Stanton opened the meeting by thanking the essential workers who worked to keep our campus open and safe during the recent winter weather events.

Mark reviewed the 2020-2021 USAC goals

1. Strengthen communications and outreach efforts to maximize the visibility and accessibility of USAC to all staff members

2. Continue to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive intellectual community in which staff are recognized for their contributions

3. Provide council members with professional and personal development opportunities to improve their leadership and advocacy skills

Updates from Around the Room

HERI Survey: The campus climate survey is now live! The survey was announced to the campus community via an email from President Crutcher on February 1. Those who complete the survey by March 15 will be in the running to win one of ten $100 gift cards.

Free Expression Statement: President Crutcher communicated via email that the university’s finalized statement of free expression has been approved by the Board of Trustees, and can be found here: https://president.richmond.edu/initiatives/free-expression/index.html

Staff Open Forum with University Leaders: next Wednesday, February 17 at 11:00, via Zoom. Check SpiderBytes for the Zoom link. For those who cannot attend, the forum will be recorded and posted to the USAC and HR websites.
USAC Elections: Mitch Alters, chair of the USAC Elections committee, shared that the executive council elections are underway. Additionally, the university wide USAC elections will take place in March. Nominations for council positions will open March 1st. Election details will be shared to the community via email over the coming weeks.

Guest Speakers

Elizabeth Buchholz (UR B.A. ’06, M.S. ’19), Organizational Learning Manager at UMFS, A Layperson’s Guide to the Brain: Using Neuroscience to Help Others

Committees and Liaisons Updates

Communications committee: Michele Bedsaul (committee chair), Kaylin Tingle, Kourtney Ennis, Paul Sandman, Susan Sokolsky, Taylor McNeilly, Ashelle Brown, and Mark Stanton

The USAC communications committee is discussing plans for virtual events for staff to stay connected with each other during these times of working remotely.

The communications committee is working with the UR Communications office to see if we can help to publicize a project they are working on with members of the university’s senior leadership team. University leaders will record messages of support for our campus community, and USAC can help to share the messages on our website and social media.

The USAC website redesign project is still underway, more news to come!

A HERI Campus Climate Survey reminder was posted on the USAC social media accounts, in an effort to help publicize the survey and remind our colleagues to contribute to the important data that will be collected.

Elections committee: Mitch Alters (committee chair and Parlimentarian), Josh Jeffreys, Joe Minick, Beth Simms, Jeff Smith, Fred Hagemeister, Jessica Washington

The USAC Elections Committee is still accepting nominations for the role of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer. Nominations close on March 4, 2021. Candidates will give brief statements during the USAC meeting on March, 9, 2021. Elections will take place after the meeting, via an electronic voting mechanism.

There are 11 council members completing their 2-year term, so USAC will conduct springtime elections to fill those slots. Those nominations will open in March, and elections will take place in April.

The Elections Committee will soon be collecting nominations for a university staff member to serve on the University’s Planning and Priority Committee. More information to follow.

Engagement committee: Priscilla Greene (committee chair), Craig Buchbinder, Frank McMurrough, Katy Olney, Allison Johnson, Rich Thomas, Jennifer O’Donnell

The Engagement Committee has reached out to offer assistance with computer accessibility for staff colleagues who need computer access to complete the HERI survey.
Faculty Senate Liaison to USAC: Mary Tate and Allison Johnson

No updates

Plant Involvement Team: Paul Sandman and Frank McMurrough

No updates

Foodservice Involvement Group: Richard Thomas and Jeff Smith

No updates

Budget Review, Jennifer O’Donnell

Initial Budget: $5,875
Expenditures YTD: $84.00
Balance: $5,791

Expected expenses:
- Name tags for new council members: $75.00
- Bulletin board materials: $9.00
- Voting mechanism (will be needed for upcoming election)
- Professional development: ~$650

Gallery Comments
There were no gallery comments.

Closed Session
The Council entered closed session at 2:11 p.m.

Web Submissions, Jessica Washington

February web submissions were reviewed and discussed. Web submissions and full answers are posted as a separate document online at usac.richmond.edu.

Mark Stanton adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Paul Sandman moved to adjourn, Jessica Washington seconded.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 from 1-3 p.m., virtual via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted, Jennifer O’Donnell, Secretary/Treasurer