

## UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

*June 13, 2017, Carole Weinstein International Center Commons*

**Members Present:** Matt Barany (Vice Chair), Shannon Best, Amy Gallagher, Slade Gormus, Beth Ann Howard, John Hurst, Jackson Knox, Ingrid Lasrado, Paul Lozo, Kirsten McKinney (Chair), Barb Michaelson, Julie Neville, Heather Sadowski, Brittany Schaal, Cindy Sharp, Kate Sirc (Secretary), Cindy Stearns, Tara Stewart, Cassandra Taylor-Anderson, Harold Wainwright, Joseph Woodford

**Nonvoting Members Present:** Paul Brockwell, Lynn Robertson, Carl Sorensen

**Members Absent:** Ingrid Lasrado

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Kirsten McKinney called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. and welcomed/recognized our newly elected council members, returning council members, and council members completing their terms of service. Minutes were approved electronically via the listserv and posted online.

### **Discussion and Vote: Proposal for Support of Staff Groups – Heather Sadowski**

Heather gave quick summary of a new proposal to support established staff groups. USAC would maintain a list of groups and contacts on the website, promote group events and programs open to all staff, and provide a small amount of funding through an application/reimbursement process. Next steps would be to eliminate the position of Affinity Groups chair, set an application review process, and earmark an amount in the budget for this initiative.

A vote was taken and the majority decided to continue discussion next month with the new 2017-2018 USAC.

### **Discussion and Vote: Proposal for Staff Benevolence Fund – Jackson Knox**

Jackson submitted a proposal to establish a staff benevolence fund to fund professional development opportunities and help employees experiencing an undue hardship. The goal of this proposal would be to assist our colleagues, invest in our own staff, and help create a culture of goodwill to further establish UR as an employer of choice. Staff members would complete a thorough and detailed application and submit for review. USAC, as a whole, would vote to approve or deny each request based on a set of established guidelines and criteria. The maximum funding would be \$300 per person, and initially the program would be funded through staff donations. The proposal was modeled after a program at the University of Denver.

A question was asked as to how impactful this could be with a limited amount of funding to work with. Jackson responded that even helping one person is better than zero, and it will set the foundation for future years. He further explained that the Workplace Environment Committee would be charged with managing the applications and funds. Kirsten reminded the group that an Employee Assistance Loan program does already exist within HR.

Beth Ann Howard made a motion to indefinitely table this discussion for the next Council to consider. Cindy Stearns seconded the motion. The majority voted in favor to table, 4 against, and 1 abstained.

### **The Future of Web Subs – Matt Barany**

Over the past year, the Workplace Environment Committee and the Executive Committee has evaluated the current web submission process and today Matt presented their recommendation on how to move forward. He began by reviewing the current website, form instructions, and email the Chair and Vice Chair receive after submission. There is a concern people use the form as a platform to complain and criticize anonymously, which is not the intent of the program. Matt outlined three new channels by which staff can communicate – a compliment form, a suggestion form, and a question form. A new landing page would include clear instructions for each and direct the person to the most appropriate form.

**Compliments** would simply allow someone to submit praise about another staff member or department. **Suggestions** would give someone the opportunity to share an idea, along with a well-thought out rationale, to a specific department on campus. Lastly, someone could submit a **question**, directed to a specific department, and can submit anonymously if they choose.

By offering three options, Matt hopes people will treat this process differently and submissions will be more thoughtful, researched, and respectful. It will also help the Vice Chair direct communications to the right people.

Brittany Schaal made a motion to move forward on this with the new Council, Cindy Stearns seconded, and it passed unanimously.

### **Committee Updates**

- Executive – Kirsten will prepare an annual report and publish online by June 30.
- Communications – Amy Gallagher is also working on year-end report outlining committee efforts.
- Affinity Group – No update at this time.
- Volunteer – Brittany will also prepare a year-end summary.

### **Elections – Beth Ann Howard**

The 2017 USAC Election concluded May 31, 2017. Results:

#### *Seat-Specific Elections:*

School Staffs (All)	Shannon Best
Dining and Retail	Lisa Bayard
Facilities	Austin Leach

#### *General Elections:*

Academic Affairs	Dustin Engels
Advancement/Communications	Pam Lee
Athletics	Mika Elovaara and Stephanie Bernthal
Business Affairs	Wendy Burchard and Rick Richardson
Enrollment Management	Emily Martin
Information Services	Jason Cope
Student Development/Chaplaincy	Meg Pervarski

The Committee met several challenges this year including not increasing turnout in Facilities, sign-on issues with our Simply Voting platform, and the addition of electors mid-cycle (part-time employees). Next year, the Committee recommends beginning elections while students are still on campus in order to reach the most dining and facilities staff before they go on summer schedules. This would include amending the by-laws which dictate elections must close May 31. Lastly, they recommend including a representative from Facilities and Dining on the Elections Committee.

Beth Ann, Paul, and Kirsten will be meeting to develop a comprehensive, step-by-step guide to managing elections.

### **PIT (Plant Involvement Team) – Paul Lozo**

There were three main issues discussed at this month's PIT meeting:

- The University of Richmond sign at Three Chopt Road entrance is no longer visible due to overgrown shrubs. Landscape will work to rectify this.

- There is a concern about drivers passing carts/bikers/etc. on the blind hill by the Physical Plant. Extra signage and lines will be considered but it's doubtful this may have any impact
- "Do Not Enter" sign by the Business School parking lot went missing but has been replaced.

### **Year in Review – Kirsten McKinney**

To celebrate the efforts of this year's Council, Kirsten reviewed our accomplishments:

- Co-hosted two open forums – one on sexual misconduct and one on the strategic plan (partnered on both with the President's Office)
- Hosted two successful Gelato Days, engaging 192 people in July of 2016 and 146 in May of 2017
- Improved USAC's presentation and marketing materials
- Participated in University Communications focus groups regarding staff communication initiatives
- Researched and answered 78 web submissions
- Made two updates to the bylaws regarding USAC positions (codified the Secretary/Treasurer role and established the Volunteer and Engagement Coordinator position)
- Updated the New Parent card in cooperation with HR
- Submitted nominations for the Provost Search Committee, QEP, Chaplain Search Committee, and Benefits Committee
- Participated in the Dean's 360 formulation with the Faculty Senate
- Researched and recommended a new approach for supporting staff groups (formally Affinity Groups)
- Researched and recommended a new approach for web submissions
- Hosted 20 guests at USAC meetings
- Initiated a welcome process for new staff
- Volunteered at the Benefits and Wellness Fairs
- Assisted CCE with toiletry collections for area high schools during the holidays
- Had more of a presence at this year's Spiders In The Know
- Welcomes two new itty bitsy Spiders
- One Conference Championship winning coach

### **Recognition of Representatives**

Continuing our year-end celebration, Kirsten recognized each USAC member concluding their term of service and gifted each person a framed certificate signed by Dr. Crutcher. She also recognized and thanked committee chairs, our immediate Past-Chair Paul Brockwell, Secretary/Treasurer Kate Sirc, and Vice Chair Matt Barany. Matt returned the favor and recognized the hard work of this year's Chair, Kirsten McKinney.

### **Transition to New Executive Committee – Kirsten McKinney, Matt Barany, Kate Sirc**

The outgoing Executive Committee formally transitioned their duties to the 2017-2018 Executive Committee: Brittany Schaal (Chair), Paul Lozo (Vice Chair), and Amy Gallagher (Secretary/Treasurer).

### **Announcements**

Paul Brockwell shared a reminder about the Fishing Tournament on Saturday, June 17. Registration is closed at this time.

### **Closed Session**

The Council entered into closed session at 2:35 p.m. No actions or votes were taken.

The Council adjourned by 2:45 p.m.

Submitted by

Kate Sirc

Recording Secretary and Treasurer