Meeting was called to order by Adrienne Piazza at 1:04 p.m.

Members present: Tracy Cassalia, Carrie Caumont, Bill Chappell, David Curtis, Molly Field, Andy Gurka, Denard Hall, Denise Johnston, Crista LaPrade, Lindsey Love, Keith Mitchell, LaQuashia Pegeas, Adrienne Piazza, Martha Pittaway, Cheryl Poston, Sadie Simmons, and Paul Witten

Members absent: John Butt, Andrew Morton, Jerry Robinson, Bryn Taylor, and Michael Torquato

Welcome and announcements

Adrienne welcomed Council and provided a brief overview of the agenda.

Web submission and hurricane review (Brittany Schaal, Director of Emergency Management)

Brittany Schaal attended Council to clarify the email that she sent out in advance of Hurricane Sandy. She apologized for leaving staff off of the initial mailing. Brittany apologized for the error and reiterated that she did not intend to leave staff off of the email distribution. Please see the web submission at the end of the minutes.

Constituent mood

The USAC table at the benefits fair had a good turnout. Many folks from facilities and the dining hall stopped by; there was considerable interest in the affinity groups.

Bylaws revision discussion and voting

Andy Gurka presented all of the proposed bylaw changes. The goal of cleaning up Article IV: Elections is to make the information general rather than specific in order to limit the number of bylaw changes from year to year. The Elections Committee would then be responsible for developing procedures that would be subject to change, as needed.

Article III: Definitions, Section 2 and Section 3 – Approved

Article IV: Membership, Section 8 – Tabled until December 11, 2012 meeting

Approved amendment:

c. The staff member responsible for staff appreciation and recognition events in the Office of Events, Conferences and Support Services

While the amendment was approved, Council voted to table the proposed bylaw change for Article IV, Section 8 until the December meeting. Two issues need to be resolved:

• What happens to the voting rights of this ex-officio member if they happen to be voted onto Council and,
• Council needs to confirm that participation of this role in USAC activities is approved by the supervisor of this role
• Council may choose to further define the role of the ex officio member
Article IV: Membership, Section 9 – Approved

Approved amendment:
   a. Nominations shall be solicited in March.

Article IV: Membership, Section 10 – Approved

Article V: Officers, Section 12 – Approved

Approved amendments:
   b. In the event the Vice-Chair or the Recording Secretary resigns or otherwise leaves their position at the University, a special election of USAC membership will be held to fill a vacancy.
   c. A special election of USAC membership, implemented by the Chair, shall be held within thirty (30) days of the vacancy.

Article VI: Meetings – Approved

Where are we now? Including committee & working group updates and constituent review

Copies of the USAC strategic plan where distributed while Council was asked to move around the room and write their thoughts on where we are now in our strategic plan. There are five main areas of focus: Human Resources & USAC, Communications, Affinity Groups, Rewards & Recognition, and Civic Engagement.

The exercise provided a snapshot of USAC’s progress in each of these areas. The general theme being that we have made great strides with Communications and Affinity Groups, but some additional work is needed in the other areas.

The shadowing and mentoring working group provided Council with an update. The group has narrowed their focus to mentoring opportunities. Currently they are working on the development of a pilot program for administrative support staff. The working group is in the process of researching how this has been done at several other universities.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 11 in Tyler Haynes Commons, Room 305

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Poston, Recording Secretary
Web Submissions

Submitted: November 2, 2012
“I am hopeful that USAC might be able to address the disparity between the value of faculty and staff that was displayed during the addressing of Hurricane Sandy. The statement: "Any faculty who is unable to get to campus safely on Monday, may cancel class, but should let all affected students know via email as soon as possible." indicates that faculty have far more ability to make decisions over their own safety without repercussion than those of us without PhDs.”

Action Taken:
November 2, 2012 – Web sub forwarded to Brittany Schaal, Director of Emergency Management
November 2, 2012 – reply from Brittany Schall:
The initial communication was an oversight on my part. In communications moving forward the goal was for faculty, students and staff to make a decision based on their comfort levels and individual impacts of the storm. I appreciate the candidness of staff members and am happy to attend the next USAC meeting to address any remaining concerns.
November 2, 2012 – reply back to Brittany Schaal from Andy Gurka:
The suggestion that we heard from multiple staff members that while faculty and staff are different, they should have each been addressed in the communication. For staff, a statement linking staff to and informing them about the Inclement Weather Policy (which is on the Human Resources website) would have filled that gap and staff would likely not felt left out.
November 13, 2012 – Brittany Schaal attended the November 13, 2012 USAC meeting to hear any remaining concerns regarding the error. Council had nothing further to add.

Submitted: October 14, 2012
“Several staff members at the University of Richmond have approached me and asked, “Why can’t we use our degree seeking tuition remission benefit outside the University?” The University of Richmond offers a limited number of degree programs. Many staff members may like to pursue a degree in an area of study not offered by the University. Also, some staff members already have undergraduate or graduate degrees and would like to pursue a higher degree in their chosen field, but the University of Richmond does not offer coursework these fields of study. Currently, the University allows use of our non-credit tuition remission benefit through approved external like CFP or Massage Therapy. In addition, the University allows dependents to use tuition remission and tuition exchange for degree program at other institutions. It's unclear why these tuition remission benefits can be used outside the University when faculty and staff are ineligible to apply tuition remission benefits to degree programs not covered by the University's offerings. While the University demonstrates its commitment to continuing education through its current policy, it would seem a logical extension of the policy to be expanded that enables full-time faculty and staff to use tuition remission benefits toward external degree programs in cases when the University's programs don't cover the desired course of study.

Action Taken:
October 14, 2012 – Web Submission forwarded to Carl Sorensen in Human Resources.
October 26, 2012 – Reply by Carl Sorensen:
I do realize that many people would find this to be a valuable addition to our benefit offerings but, there is not enough flexibility in the fringe budget for FY 14 to bring this forward as new program request during the budget cycle.