USAC Meeting Summary
August 14, 2012
1:00 – 3:00 PM

The meeting was called to order by Andy Gurka at 1:05 p.m.

Members present: John Butt, Tracy Cassalia, Carrie Caumont, David Curtis, Molly Field, Andy Gurka, Manny Haines, Denard Hall, Denise Johnston, Keith Mitchell, Lindsey Love, LaQuashia Pegeas, Martha Pittaway, Sadie Simmons, Bryn Taylor, and Paul Witten

Members absent: Bill Chappell, Crista LaPrade, Andrew Morton, Adrienne Piazza, Jerry Robinson, and Michael Torquato

1) Welcome and What’s the mood?

Andy Gurka announced that Adrienne was on vacation and he gave a brief overview of the days agenda.

Notecards and markers were made available for council members to jot down any thoughts they have regarding the current mood on campus. Andy will tally the results and share them at the next meeting.

2) Planning & Priorities Committee Voting

Parliamentarian & Elections Committee Chair, Lindsey Love, distributed ballots and led the election process for selecting the next Planning & Priorities staff member. Andy Gurka was the winner of that election.

3) Web Submissions (July 10 – August 7, 2012)

Web Sub: Workweek
Submitted: June 16, 2012
"I am a full time employee here at UR and I am wondering why we do not work 40 hours per week? Can this policy be explained and hopefully discussed for future change?"

Action taken:
July 16, 2012 – email to Human Resources for response
July 16, 2012 – checked Human Resources website for information – information about the work week is online at: http://hr.richmond.edu/compensation/week.html
July 17, 2012 – response from Carl Sorensen, Associate Vice-President for Human Resources:
"The normal work schedule for non-exempt clerical and office support staff is 38.75 hours per week. For non-exempt employees in the skilled trades and service maintenance jobs a 40 hour week is the normal work schedule. It is very common at colleges and universities to have different work schedules depending on the nature of the job. We have reviewed this in the past and found our current policy continues to be a good practice for UR as well."

---

August 14, 2012 - Council had nothing further to add

Web Sub: University houses
Submitted: June 16, 2012
"I have a concern about the houses that the University owns around campus. There used to be Spiderbytes when a University house became available. In the last month, I heard that one became available and has already been "sold" to a faculty member. There weren't any notices that the house was going to be
available. This doesn't seem to be a very transparent process, like it used to be. Has there been a change in who is eligible and how they advertise a house being available?"

**Action taken:**
July 16, 2012 – email to Louie Love for answer
July 18, 2012 – reply from Louie Love (with attached policy document):
“Attached is a new housing policy that has just been recently approved. The policy may be new but the operations for handling the University houses has remained consistent with the housing policy for the past forty years. Please read item 1 under ‘general guidelines’ in the policy.

A few of the houses have been purchased by the University from faculty and staff members over the past several years. Four of those houses have been used to house visiting faculty scholars on a temporary basis (a few weeks to an academic year) and to provide housing for students during the spring semester for students who have returned from studying abroad during the fall semester. Recently a house was purchased and is being used to better support student needs and the chaplaincy program by having the University Chaplain live on campus in the house.

Full time faculty and full time staff are eligible to purchase a house. A house for sale will continue to be advertised via SpiderBytes and perhaps additional media that serve faculty and staff.

I am responsible for real estate owned by the University and will be glad to meet with anyone who has any questions about the housing policy or University houses. My phone number is 804-289-8383, email address: llove@richmond.edu and office location is G-18A Maryland Hall.”

July 19, 2012 – Andy followed-up with Louie about plans to share this policy with staff. Louie's reply: “I do not have plans to share the policy; however, if someone wants a copy, he/she can send me an email requesting the housing policy and I will be glad to send them an electronic copy of the housing policy. My understanding is that the President’s Office has a project that currently is a work in process to create one central website that provides access to all University policies.”

August 14, 2012 – Council mentioned that houses for sale used to be in the staff newsletter. Council had nothing further to add.

**Web Sub: Affinity Group Meeting times**
Submitted: July 19, 2012
"I have previously inquired about varying the day and time of the elder care affinity group. Any progress towards alternating the schedule for those who cannot attend midday on Wednesdays? I was told video tapping or streaming or even posting guest speakers presentations! handouts was not going to happen as sometimes the session functions as "group therapy." As it sta−ds, there is no benefit to those who cannot ever attend at the current time. I was lead to believe there was ongoing discussion about this issue. Update please. Thanks."

**Action Taken:**
July 19, 2012 - email to Martha Pittaway, chair of the Staff Involvement subcommittee, for response
July 19, 2012 - response from Marthia:
• Martha discussed with all affinity groups mixing up meeting times so that more staff could attend; there is a challenge present that no one time will ever meet everyone's needs
• Videotaping the group meetings continues to not be an option because staff who attend the meetings agreed upon a "what is discussed in the group, stays in the group," policy
• Resources and handouts can be shared via the individual affinity group listserv or on the individual affinity group websites. Each affinity group will decide what they think is the best way to share this
information

• Specifically for the Elder Care group (to which this suggestion is written for), the group is looking at scheduling an additional discussion group session later in the afternoon if demand is there for it. Staff who are interested should join the Elder Care listserv at: http://iists.richmond.edu/mailman/iistinfo/usac-eldercare-list to be sure that they know about upcoming meetings, speakers and resources

--
August 14, 2012 - Alternate times for affinity group meeting timers are being developed now; staff should watch SpiderBytes for upcoming dates.

Web Sub: New Affinity Group Suggestion
Submitted: July 26, 2012
“My suggestion is for a new affinity group about retirement. Speakers could be found on subjects of Medicare, retirement funds, when to retire, setting up your retirement at UR, etc.”

Action Taken:
August 7, 2012 - suggestion sent to Martha Pittaway, chair of the Staff Involvement Committee
August 7, 2012 - Martha is willing to meet with any staff member interested in creating a new affinity group to assist them in getting started. Affinity groups are organized and led by staff with a vested interest or passion for their suggested topic. The Staff Involvement committee will be discussing in upcoming meetings plans for rolling out new affinity groups and getting feedback from staff on potential topics. They will also look into hosting a session on retirement planning for staff to gauge interest in the specific topic that was in the suggestion.

--
August 14, 2012 – Council had nothing further to add.

Web Sub: Lost vacation time
Submitted: August 1, 2012
"For employees who cannot take all their vacation due to the demands of their job, rather than losing that time they should be paid. The supervisor would have to approve this verifying that the employee was unable to take his/her vacation due to work demands."

Action Taken:
August 7, 2012 - suggestion sent to Laura Dietrick in Human Resources
August 9, 2012 – reply from Laura Dietrick

Vacation time is provided to employees to allow for time away from the job to rest and relax. The University feels it is important for employees to have a balanced work life. The intent is not to pay employees for not taking vacation time. It is important for managers to work with employees; especially those close to the maximum vacation accrual, to ensure employees take their vacation time throughout the year so they are not pressured to take the time in the weeks prior to their anniversary date. We communicate to those managers when we see employees getting ready to lose time.

If an employee feels that the culture in their office doesn’t allow for them to take vacation they should feel free to contact their HR Business Partner. Here is the link from the HR website which will help them determine who they should contact
http://hr.richmond.edu/contact/Department_chart_alpha_Rev_7_2012.pdf

This link might also be helpful for the employee to see the role of the Business Partner
http://hr.richmond.edu/contact/team.html

--
August 14, 2012 – Council had nothing further to add at this time.
4) Mapping our Constituents and Communication Strategies

Several charts around the room illustrated the results of the “mapping your constituents” exercise. Council circulated around the room and wrote their names next to areas/offices where they might be able to reach out to and/or share information with.

Several folks already have a means by which to communicate with a large number of people and they will use those means to communicate USAC information and initiatives.

At the September meeting this information will be useful during the advocacy training. The training will show Council how to reach out to those groups.

5) Share Back Strategic Draft Plan

Andy gave an overview of the goals of the strategic plan (referred to handout). He also reviewed several of the existing committees and the aims of each and how, as a whole, USAC can be effective in their mission.

Reporting qualitative data will be important going forward to show where the needs still are and what we’ve achieved.

Working groups differ from committee work, because they may be revamped as the needs change within USAC from year to year. Committee work is typically the same from year to year.

6) Human Resource Presentation

Associate Vice President of Human Resources, Carl Sorensen and Director of HRIS and Operations, Denise Jones were in attendance.

Carl provided an overview of the role of Human Resources at the University. It is important for human resources to advocate for employees and create an environment so employees can be productive and safe. Human resources often serves in an advisory role to the leadership of the University.

New changes in human resources

Human Resources has implemented an HR solution center. The primary goal of the solution center is to be responsive to the needs of the campus and handle daily inquiries in a timely matter. Denise Jones, who was a previous employee of the SPCS, heads up the solution center.

Denise shared some additional information about the solution center. Again, the goal of the solution center is to make everyone’s job easier and help staff do what they need to do. The solution center allows people to get help in a variety of ways: phone, email, the HR website, and the solution center drop box. Of course, this is a time of transition for HR, so they are trying to work out some kinks. In due time, the service will only get better. The HR solution center aims to respond to your request within one business day.

If anyone has comments or suggestions concerning the solution center, they are encouraged to contact Denise Jones. Denise also encouraged Council to pass along any changes that may be occurring in their
areas, particularly regarding reporting relationships (changes in supervision). Doing so insures that the online directory, Banner, and performance management systems are the most current and accurate.

There is a lot of focus on new software programs right now with the goal being to improve transactions. One new system, UR Talent Web, has potential to handle multiple areas such as training, job descriptions, performance management, and talent acquisition.

The human resource office has undergone some reorganization. Carl Sorensen, Pam Ash, and Kim Wilson serve as the HR Business Partners. A great deal of their focus is on job descriptions and employee relations.

Valerie Wallen is responsible for Talent Management and Organizational Effectiveness.

The Human Resource Solution Center may be reached by calling 289-URHR (8747), visiting the website, or via email at URHR@richmond.edu

Carl discussed his goals for 2012-13 goals for HR. The department will invest time and energy in communicating policies and procedures as well as roles and responsibilities of the HR team.

Carl praised Council for the hard work that went into the flexible workplace research and he believes the partnership between HR and USAC is a positive one.

7) Committee Sign Up and Time

Andy left it up to Council to sign up for committee assignments. Committee work time will be built into future meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 11, 2012 in Tyler Haynes Commons, Room 305

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Poston, Recording Secretary