

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
STAFF SENATE

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 16, 1992
ROOM 102 - PHASE IV - VETERINARY MEDICINE

SENATORS PRESENT: Pat Ballard, Lisa Barroso, Larry Blankenship, Clara Cox, Marge Dellers, Kathy Eschenmann, Charlie Gills, Betty Greene, Linda Haney, Barbara Hise, Diane Kaufman, Eileen Keeney, Don Massie, Sheri McConnell, Margie Murray, Charles Paige, Fred Phillips, Carlile Price, Rocky Price, Peggy Rasnick, Widget Shannon, Sonja Stone, Charlie Stott, Sarah Wheeler, Pat Worrell

ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE: Karen Board for Spencer Foster, Wyatt Sasser for Pat Donohoe, Janet Bryant, Bruce Harper, Lola Yelverton, Valerie Myers, Joyce Smith

GUESTS: Charles Hall - Division of Student Affairs, Dave Carper and Michael Mills - Airport, Ron Marlowe - Computing Center, Pam Orcutt Veterinary Medicine

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by President McConnell, who welcomed guests, liaisons, senators, and alternates to the first official Staff Senate meeting. There were 25 senators and 2 acting alternates in attendance, which constituted a quorum.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President McConnell introduced the Staff Senate officers and committee chairs for the 1992-93 term: Senator Stott, vice president; Senator Hise, secretary-treasurer; Senator Greene, parliamentarian; Senator Murray, Policies and Issues Committee chair; Senator Cox, Communications Committee chair; Senator Ballard, Long Range Budget and Planning chair; and Senator Phillips, Elections and Nominations Committee chair. A joint staff/faculty task force has been established to monitor questions and concerns about the Key Advantage health care program. Senator Stott will co-chair the task force, with Senators Eschenmann and Rasnick also serving as Staff Senate representatives. Staff Senate has an operating budget for this term; space is currently being sought for an office. All Senators will be asked to serve on committees within the Senate. President McConnell has been asked by President McComas to serve a third term on the President's Budget and Planning Council. Congratulations were extended to Senator Shaver, whose son-in-law was called up from the minors to pitch for the Philadelphia Phillies. President McConnell said to see Senator Shaver for free tickets!

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the June 18, 1992, Staff Senate meeting were approved with two corrections. The amendment from the June meeting that changed

Senator Cox's original statement was removed. Senator Cox said that minutes should record what was actually said. Senator Murray corrected the spelling of Ralph Byers' name on page 3. Minutes are considered in draft form prior to approval at a meeting. Two draft copies of the June minutes were distributed. The correct copy was the second draft, which gave Senator Pyle credit for reporting to the Senate on the May 20 study briefing to the University Facilities Review and Advisory Committee of the Cooper's & Lybrand review of facilities.

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORTS

- POLICIES AND ISSUES--Senator Murray, chair, deferred to Senator Stott, previous chair, who reported that the committee had met June 25, 1992, and had tried to identify the most important issues for the 1992-93 committee to pursue. The committee will have some continuity with seasoned Senators. In order of importance, the issues identified as priorities are managerial training, wage benefits, parking and transportation, and health and safety issues.
- COMMUNICATIONS--Senator Cox, chair, reported the committee had met on July 1, 1992, and the minutes were available at the front of the room. Most of the meeting rehashed previous issues, including discussion of new topics for the SPECTRUM column. The letter to new employees was completed with a list of current Senators on the back along with their respective staff associations, PROFS IDs, and telephone numbers. Staff Senate Executive Committee did not like the abbreviations used for the staff associations, and they will be spelled out. Senator Cox asked Senators to notify her if any information is incorrect. Senator Hise asked that all Senators who receive their minutes electronically and have full print capabilities let her know so that a minimal amount of paper would be wasted.
- LONG RANGE BUDGET AND PLANNING--Senator Ballard, chair, reported the committee had not met.
- ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS--Senator Phillips, chair, reported the committee had met July 8, 1992, and is trying to establish a database of potential nominees to serve on councils, commissions, and committees. Committee members are working on an information packet to send to staff associations that will include descriptions and details of the governance bodies along with a request for the names of employees interested in serving on them. Senators Rasnick and Patty are developing a format. The committee compared the list of Senators' terms to the election results for university councils, commissions, and committees and found only three potential conflicts, which will be directed to the appropriate staff associations for resolution.

OLD BUSINESS

Senator Stott gave a Key Advantage update. A list of participating physicians still is not available but is expected by August 1, 1992. DPT states the deadline for implementing the plan is October 1; however, Virginia Tech has set a deadline of August 30 to allow time for processing. Employees still have a lot of resentment about the plan.

There are numerous questions concerning mental health coverage. Employees recently received Dorthula Powell-Woodson's memo, which provided more direct information. The joint task force will track changes and problems. The sourcebook manual is not complete, and a new one should be coming out. Annual ob/gyn check-ups are now covered. Senator Eschenmann had heard a rumor on campus that Montgomery Regional Hospital was non-participating; she investigated and found the rumor to be false. Senator Barroso asked where concerns should be directed. Senator Stott said the joint task force and the Governor's Advisory Council would be appropriate avenues. Legislators are meeting every other week.

Senator Cox brought to the floor a previously tabled issue concerning whether or not senators want to be added to the official mailing list of deans, directors, and department heads. Two reasons Senators have not been added are cost and the number of mailings that are not relevant to staff. Senator Cox posed three questions to the senate: 1. Do Senators want to be added to the 3D's mailing list? 2. Would they pass information from the mailings to their constituents? 3. Would they serve as "gatekeepers," deciding which information should be distributed to staff? Discussion followed. Senator Phillips stated he found the material beneficial and passed it immediately to his co-workers. Senator Sasser said he felt comfortable deciding which material to pass to staff. Alternate Senator Smith stated the administrative mailing list is out of date. Senator Cox said Executive Committee is currently receiving the mailings. Senator Barroso asked if it were an all or none deal, suggesting the Executive Committee could screen and distribute. Senator Eschenmann feels the Executive Committee has too many duties. Certain information might be important to one area and not another. Senator Cox said since the Executive Committee only meets once a month, timeliness could become a factor. Senator Murray spoke to Senator Foster today, who told her the issue is that Personnel Services cannot be the "gatekeeper" and that all issues in the mailings should not go to classified staff. The possibility of the Executive Committee being the "gatekeeper" was discussed between them. Senators who have received the mailings do not consider most of the information to be that sensitive in nature. Senator Ballard suggested the Communications Committee be responsible. Senator Phillips said timeliness is a problem if information does not go to all Senators. Senator Sasser relayed that CSAC members had received the mailings so there should not be a problem for Staff Senators to have the same privilege. Senator Aliff moved to have Staff Senators added to the deans, directors and department heads mailing list. The motion was seconded. Senator Sasser said the purpose of Staff Senate is to open the avenue of communication. The motion passed with two opposed.

NEW BUSINESS

Senator Murray discussed the concept of a council for staff association presidents meeting bi-monthly or quarterly to share ideas. Senator Eschenmann felt it was an excellent idea. Her association is strong and has many ideas to share. Senator Cox said she is a member of one active association and one that is not very active, and she is taking ideas from the active group to strengthen the other group. She believes sharing information would be beneficial. Senator Haney suggested the council limit its meetings since some of the same people serve on so many

committees. President McConnell suggested that Senator Murray approach the presidents of the staff associations with the idea for a council. She said the decision to form it would be up to them.

Senator Stott brought up the bond referendum for higher education. This referendum will be on the ballot on November 3. Ralph Byers has information as it pertains to Virginia Tech. See Senators Stott or Murray for a copy. The referendum includes \$46,000,000 in projects for Virginia Tech. All Senators were encouraged to take this information back to their staff associations so all staff employees can learn the importance of the bond referendum to the university. Voter registration will be held in Squires for students, but staff may register there also.

President McConnell brought up an issue that had been before CSAC two years ago: whether or not the university should be open the Saturday and Sunday prior to fall semester for registration drop/add. Some academic areas feel they cannot waste two days for drop/add. Assistant and associate undergraduate deans will meet on July 27 to decide on the weekend registration. President McConnell solicited six comments from the floor as to what the senate wants done. Senator Shannon asked if undergraduates only would be allowed this luxury. President McConnell was unsure but noted there are no graduate people on the committee. She also stated wage terminal operators are not willing to work on the weekend. Senator Sasser asked if staff would be compensated. President McConnell said paid overtime would be allowed. Senator Dellers asked what kind of advice would students be able to get without the faculty present. Senator Stott asked if deans had discussed the weekend work with staff. Several people would be opposed to working on weekends for religious reasons. President McConnell shared concerns about no daycare, car-pooling problems, and the additional stress coming over a weekend immediately following the busiest time for the university: the week before fall semester begins. Faculty would not be available, and they need to make decisions regarding drop/add policy. Senator Sasser said having the university open requires work from many different departments, such as housekeeping, and suggested spreading the work out over the summer with mailings? Senator Shannon said that course requests are not run until August 10. Senator Eschenmann made the motion that Executive Committee send a letter to the assistant and associate undergraduate deans that the staff does not support the weekend drop/add. The motion was seconded. Senator Stott made a motion to amend the first motion by adding all appropriate university administrators to the distribution for the letter. The motion was seconded. The motion as amended passed with no opposition.

Ron Marlowe, guest, asked about the status of the Virginia Tech Employees Fund. President McConnell responded that the fund is still in existence but has been modified to help university employees who suffer financial hardships due to catastrophic events.

President McConnell recognized Pam Orcutt for giving the Staff Senate its first official gavel. Ms. Orcutt has been involved in staff participation in the governance structure since the original Ad Hoc Committee was formed. She served as Vice-Chair of CSAC and Vice-President of Staff Senate. This year, she will serve on the Commission on

Classified Staff Affairs. President McConnell said Ms. Orcutt's efforts will long be remembered as instrumental in founding of the Staff Senate. The Senate applauded Ms. Orcutt for her contributions.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Barbara Hise
Secretary