

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Staff Senate

Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
Thursday, December 19, 1991  
1810 Litton-Reaves Hall

SENATORS PRESENT: Pat Ballard, Larry Blankenship, Clara Cox, Patrick Donohoe, Linda Haney, Doug Irvin, Eileen Keeney, Sherilyn McConnell, Anita Morris, Margie Murray, Pamela Orcutt, Charles Paige, Diane Patty, Rocky Price, Haywood Pyle, Carolyn Ramsey, Bill Ranck, Peggy Rasnick, Kathy Reynolds, John Rudd, Widget Shannon, Charlie Stott, Keith Tignor, Sarah Wheeler, Deb Williams, Pat Worrell

ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE: Bruce Harper for Spencer Foster, Richard Hayman for John Strauss, and Wyatt Sasser

FACULTY SENATE LIAISON: Marilyn Norstedt

GUEST: Velma Thompson with Senator Rasnick

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President McConnell, who welcomed guests, liaisons, senators, and alternates.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President McConnell announced the Management Systems Laboratories (MSL) Responsiveness Award and referred senators to the last issue of SPECTRUM for details. Selection for the award is made by MSL.

President McConnell said that the Senate Executive Committee had selected Senator Cox to serve as Senate representative on the selection committee for the President's Award for Excellence.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 21, 1991, Staff Senate meeting were approved. Minutes of the special Staff Senate meeting held on November 25, 1991, were approved.

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORTS

HUMAN RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL SERVICES COMMITTEE/ISSUES--Senator Stott, chair, reported that the committee had not formally met. He asked the committee members to meet for a few minutes following the Senate meeting.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL SERVICES COMMITTEE/STAFF ASSOCIATIONS--Senator Murray, chair, reported that one of the issues the committee will be monitoring and discussing is the length of terms of staff senators. Senator Murray said that the terms need to coincide with university

committee/commission appointments. She indicated that the Senate would need to give staff associations guidelines on elections of senators.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE--Senator Cox, chair, reported that the committee requested that its name be changed from the Publicity Committee to the Communications Committee to broaden its scope of responsibilities. The name change was proposed to and approved by the Staff Senate Executive Committee. Senator Cox said that the committee has volunteered to serve as liaison to CSAC until a formal appointment is made and that Senator Foster attended the December CSAC meeting in that capacity. She read the highlights of Senator Foster's report: CSAC is working on a final report that will include a history of staff involvement in university governance; a profile of the staff, including such material as training, education, and achievements; and a challenge to future leadership to continue and develop shared governance. CSAC discussed the problem of some positions requiring significant out-of-pocket expenses, such as safety shoes, for new hires and announced that a letter had been written to Ann Spencer expressing CSAC concerns and making several suggestions on ways to deal with the issue. CSAC discussed the guidelines for staff participation in university governance. CSAC heard a short presentation by Senator Foster on the Professional Office Support Staff Application, which is the university's "clerical pool." CSAC also discussed the memo on suggestions for budget reductions it sent to President McComas and the memo that Staff Senate sent him on the same topic.

COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS--Senator Patty for Senator Phillips, chair, reported that the committee had met and discussed ways to obtain minutes of various commissions and committees so it could monitor issues that impact classified staff. Senator Patty said the committee also discussed ways to determine the senators' preferences for and willingness to serve on committees so that a slate of nominees will be available when requested by the Senate President. She said the committee will make nominations for and oversee elections of officers.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS SUBCOMMITTEE--Senator Tignor, chair, and Senator Williams reported that the committee is working on the guidelines for Staff Senate terms and will present them to the Senate for review and amendments.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON LONG-RANGE REDUCTIONS--Senator Blankenship, chair, reported that a meeting has been scheduled January 7, 1992.

#### UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE REPORTS

PARKING/TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE--Senator Ballard reported that the issue of allowing graduate students to park in faculty/staff parking lots remains under consideration and discussion by the committee. Senator Ballard said that the Graduate Student Assembly has requested two alternate parking plans: (1) that graduate teaching assistants be allowed to purchase faculty/staff hang tags at the same fee as faculty and staff or (2) that a portion of a current student parking lot be designated a graduate student parking area. After much discussion by the Senate, President McConnell suggested that senators discuss the issue

with their respective staff associations and report constituencies' views at the next meeting so the Senate can make a statement to the Parking/Transportation Advisory Committee before the issue comes to a vote.

#### OLD BUSINESS

RELEASE TIME FOR STAFF--Senator Cox reported on the status of the revised guidelines for staff participation in university governance. Senator Cox has responded to a draft memo on the guidelines issued by Ann Spencer and said that the Staff Senate Executive Committee has also responded. Those responses requested (1) that a statement saying that staff associations "may" meet during work hours be changed to "should" meet during work hours and (2) that a statement saying that Staff Senate was established "to parallel Faculty Senate" be reinserted in the memo. Senator Cox said that comments on the draft, which was distributed to deans, vice presidents, the Personnel Advisory Committee, the CSAC chair, and Staff Senate President, were due to Ann Spencer on December 16 and that a final memo should be distributed sometime in January 1992.

GUIDELINES FOR PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE--President McConnell reported that Staff Senate Executive Committee had discussed the guidelines and was concerned about the distribution of the award packet, the short time-frame for nominations, and the four letters of recommendation. After considerable discussion, the Senate agreed on the need for clarification of the requirement for an "outside" letter of recommendation and noted concern that the required letters from an "immediate supervisor" and "department head" may, in some cases, be the same person. It was suggested that the Committee on Human Resources and Personnel Services Committee/Issues review the award procedure and make suggestions on improving the procedures. Since the nomination deadline is January 24, 1992, it was determined that the committee would not have adequate time to review the issue and make recommendations in time to improve the procedure for the current selection. However, the Senate committee was asked to draft a letter to the selection committee noting the concerns of the Senate and suggesting improvements for the 1992-93 selection procedure. The letter will be reviewed at the Senate's January 16, 1992, meeting.

#### NEW BUSINESS

EDUCATIONAL AID TASK FORCE--Senator Cox, who serves on the task force, reported that the group held its initial meeting on December 16 to begin discussion on the university's policy for tuition/fee waivers and educational leave for faculty/staff. Issues under consideration by the task force include separate policies for faculty and staff, educational aid for halftime salaried employees, whether people on educational leave with partial pay can work on wages for the university during that leave, whether people on educational leave with partial or no pay should also receive tuition/fee waivers, whether waivers should be limited to courses that are directly job-related or required for the degree a person is pursuing, and criteria for departments and Personnel Services to use in deciding which educational leave requests to approve.

OTHER

- There was considerable discussion of the Facilities/Physical Plant review by Coopers & Lybrand, an outside consulting firm. Senator Williams and Senator Pyle discussed their understanding of the purpose of the review, which they said is to develop a more formal structure and better communications between Physical Plant and recipients of their services. They also said that the review is not intended to delete positions.
- Senator Hayman reported that EO/AA will be presenting new hiring guidelines for faculty and separate guidelines for hiring staff. He said that the Senate may want to review the new guidelines. [The minutes were amended on January 16, 1992, to include the following information on this point from Linda Woodard in Personnel Services: In December, two separate documents were disseminated:
  - o (1) the faculty hiring guidelines developed by the Provost's Office and EO/AA Office and (
  - o 2) the AA strategies for faculty. The university's hiring procedures for classified staff have not changed and are still derived from state policies. The AA strategies for staff were developed with input from the EO/AA Office as a working document for supervisors and managers to assist them and the Personnel Services Department in the implementation of the university's Affirmative Action Plan. The AA strategies for staff are a part of the AAP and will probably be disseminated in February. There is also an AA strategies for students document.]
- President McConnell extended the Senate's appreciation to Senator Murray for printing the Senate Resolution that recognizes selected members of the faculty and administration (passed by Staff Senate on October 17, 1991). The resolution and letters will be mailed to those recognized as well as to the University Council president and secretary.
- President McConnell informed senators of two families in need of help during Christmas. She said she had secured assistance from the Virginia Tech Police Department for one family and some assistance from the National Honor Society at Christiansburg High School for the other family. She still needs assistance for the second family and will accept support from senators.
- Senator Shannon suggested that the minutes and other materials that are mailed to senators be printed on both sides of the paper when possible to lower copy expenses.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Diane Patty  
Acting Secretary