

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY  
STAFF SENATE

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 1992  
ROOM 102 - PHASE IV - VETERINARY MEDICINE

SENATORS PRESENT: Carolyn Alls, Pat Ballard, Larry Blankenship, Patrick Donohoe, Spencer Foster, Linda Haney, Barbara Hise, Diane Kaufman, Eileen Keeney, Margie Murray, Valerie Myers, Pamela Orcutt, Diane Patty, Rocky Price, Haywood Pyle, Bill Ranck, Peggy Rasnick, Kathy Reynolds, Widget Shannon, Charlie Stott, Keith Tignor, Deb Williams, Pat Worrell

ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE: Mary Ann Johnson for Clara Cox, Kim O'Rourke for Buddy Shaver, Bruce Harper for Fred Phillips, Wyatt Sasser for Charles Paige

FACULTY SENATE LIAISON: Roy Jones

GUESTS: Marge Dellars - Health & Safety, Carlile Price - Forest Products

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Vice-President Orcutt, who welcomed guests, liaisons, senators, and alternates. There were 23 senators and 4 acting alternates in attendance, which constituted a quorum.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Orcutt announced that Senator Shannon and Steve Dehart had both been nominated and their names sent forward to President McComas to serve on the Parking/Transportation Advisory Committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 21, 1992, Staff Senate meeting were approved with two amendments. Senator Cox's statement under Educational Aid was changed to read "Employees should consider educational aid a discriminatory benefit since it is not available to everyone." The motion to amend was carried by a slim margin with 11 for, 9 opposed, and 7 abstentions. The second amendment recognized Wyatt Sasser as attending for Charles Paige.

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORTS

POLICIES AND ISSUES--Senator Stott, chair, reported that the committee had met May 27, 1992, and that the minutes of that meeting are included in the packet. He said the committee is awaiting a report from the Quality of Life Subcommittee.

POLICIES AND ISSUES/STAFF ASSOCIATIONS--Senator Murray, chair, reported the committee had compiled a list of twenty comments to forward to Greg

Ritter concerning the benefits of staff associations to administrators. She said she will continue to accept comments.

COMMUNICATIONS--Senator Foster for Senator Cox, chair, reported the committee had met on June 3, 1992. Senator Foster said that Ann Spencer met with the committee to discuss campus communications, including the possibility of adding Staff Senators to the mailing list of deans, directors, and department heads. He said the question had arisen about whether Senators would be willing to serve as "gatekeepers," deciding which information to pass on to staff and which to discard. Senator Foster asked if anyone knows about unofficial mailing lists that parallel the deans, directors, and department heads list. He requested that discussion of the mailing lists be tabled until more Senators are present. He also thanked everyone who provided input for the graduate assistant parking article that appeared in SPECTRUM today and stressed that both sides were clearly portrayed.

ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS--Senator Patty for Senator Phillips, chair, said the committee is waiting to hear from Larry Harris about whether appointments for university councils, commissions, and committees will be staggered. Senator Murray said she has heard they will be staggered. Senator Patty said the committee is working towards developing a database of staff volunteers willing to serve on committees, which will be an ongoing project. She said the committee could use a listing of different university governmental organizations as well as the number of times each will be meeting.

LONG RANGE PLANNING & BUDGET--Senator Ballard, chair, reported the committee met on June 16, 1992, and discussed the future direction of the committee. She said one issue is the dwindling number of members. She asked for new appointments to the committee when new Senators come onboard in July.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Senator Stott gave a Blue Cross/Blue Shield update. Problems still exist with the mental health aspect of the Key Advantage health care plan. Senator Stott said that legislators seem to believe that "sweetening the pot" for physicians has solved all the problems. The list of participating physicians is still unavailable. Doctors lack confidence that what BC/BS is offering them now will still apply later. Delegate Joan Munford has asked if employees would still like for DPT and BC/BS personnel to visit Virginia Tech. Senator Stott suggested using the 1-800-552-2682 number for questions about the health care plan. He reported that Minnis Ridenour stated issues of Virginia Tech employees before the Governor's Committee last Thursday. There are many confidentiality concerns as well as concerns about doctors having received the wrong information.

Senator Stott said he talked to Health Coalition representatives, who are asking legislators to delay implementation of the health care plan until March 1, 1993. Although the Coalition has backing, the state Democratic leadership feels the plan will be resolved in the next 90 days. A letter to the editor concerning coverage of an autistic child was used as an example of the plan's inherent problem of not covering pre-existing conditions. Doug Martin is working on a grandfather clause to cover these kinds of conditions. An article in SPECTRUM was not specific about

which pre-existing illnesses are covered. Senator Williams encouraged all senators to go back to their associations and plead for renewed efforts to convey concerns to appropriate officials.

Senator Donohoe asked if a current listing of doctors involved in the new health care plan could be published in the paper weekly so employees would have adequate time to make rational decisions.

Alternate Senator Johnson shared information from Senator Cox that Tom Goodale and Gary Hooper plan to take the graduate assistant parking issue back to the Parking/Transportation Advisory Committee with the possible recommendation that faculty/staff lots be available to those graduate students whose working responsibilities are significant. How "significant" will be defined is unclear. The parking committee functions in an advisory capacity. The ultimate decision will be made by university officials who have thus far followed the advice of the parking committee.

NEW BUSINESS--Vice-President Orcutt said Arthur Snoke is monitoring the disadvantages of Key Advantage. She said Senators should discuss this issue with their associations and continue to ask questions until answers are provided. She said President McConnell plans to ask the Faculty Senate how it feels on this issue.

Senator Kaufman asked if Senators would be involved in any way in promoting voting for the bond issue concerning higher education on November 3. Vice President Orcutt stated many students do not vote due to absentee ballots being difficult to obtain. President McComas has encouraged employees to spread the word to as many voters as possible on the importance of the bond to higher education. The Staff Senate may want to use SPECTRUM to encourage voting on the bond issue. Absentee applications must be received five days before the election or completed in the registrar's office at least three days prior to election. Voting registration will be held in Squires in September. Ralph Beyers is working with students. Staff Senate needs to develop a voter registration plan for staff as well as students.

Senator Williams updated Senate on the study of Physical Plant facilities by Coopers & Lybrand, and Senator Pyle reported on the study briefing to the May 20 meeting of the University Facilities Review and Advisory Committee. Report of the study generated much discussion in the Senate. Some Senators expressed concerns about the validity of the report. They said that the facilities area could use improvements and that some of the report's recommendations will be implemented. The Physical Plant itself has had a change of command in the last nine months, which is expected to result in positive changes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Barbara Hise  
Secretary