

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY  
STAFF SENATE

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1992  
ROOM 102 - PHASE IV - VETERINARY MEDICINE

SENATORS PRESENT: Bill Aliff, Carolyn Alls, Pat Ballard, Freda Blecher, Janet Bryant, Clara Cox, Marge Dellers, Kathy Eschenmann, Spencer Foster, Betty Greene, Linda Haney, Diane Kaufman, Eileen Keeney, Larry Lawrence, Margie Lawrence, Don Massie, Sherilyn McConnell, Diane Patty, Rocky Price, Peggy Rasnick, Kathy Reynolds, Widget Shannon, Buddy Shaver, Sonja Stone, Charlie Stott, Sherri Turner, Pat Worrell

ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE: Jean Baker, Nancy Looney, Valerie Myers, Wyatt Sasser

GUESTS: Richard Lovegrove, SPECTRUM; Richard Alvarez, Public Safety, Health, and Transportation; Deborah Young, Environmental Health/Safety Services; Roy Jones, Faculty Senate

CALL TO ORDER

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President McConnell announced that Senator Worrell has been appointed to the Intellectual Property Committee and that Senator Phillips has been appointed to the President's Award for Excellence Selection Committee.

GUEST SPEAKER

President McConnell introduced Richard Alvarez, Director of Public Safety, Health, and Transportation.

Mr. Alvarez explained that he is involved in daily operations and policy making in the areas of compliance and transportation. In the area of compliance, he oversees the Police Department and Environmental Health and Safety. In the area of transportation, he oversees the Airport, Motor Pool, and Parking Services. He also oversees the Laundry and Tailor Shop.

Mr. Alvarez took over Environmental Health/Safety Services in October 1989, prior to budget cuts in December 1989. He stated that Health/Safety took tough budget cuts and lost positions, precluding implementation of several planned projects. He has now recovered some of the positions, and Health/Safety has been reorganized and restructured into Fire Safety/University Fire Marshall.

Mr. Alvarez said Deborah Young heads Laboratory Safety, and she has identified about 1,500 labs. She is involved primarily with chemical and air quality problems and has made great strides to comply with federal laws re-

garding research labs. Zachary Adams heads Environmental Health and is involved in the ongoing process of identifying areas with asbestos. Mr. Adams deals with building/indoor air quality problems. Mr. Alvarez stated that Environmental Safety has successfully taken care of all Area I priorities in the asbestos cleanup.

He reported that Keith Furr's office spent about \$400,000 on hazardous waste clean up last year and only \$200,000 was budgeted. He said it is very expensive to test unknown chemicals in order to identify them so they can be disposed of. The expense is covered by departments or the university contingency fund depending on the size and severity of the waste problem.

In the area of transportation, Mr. Alvarez said Mike Jones heads the Police Department, which is undergoing national accreditation at Mr. Jones's initiation. The department has only 31 sworn officers. Mr. Alvarez said that the Police Department initiated the dorm security program and that emergency phones soon will be installed throughout the campus whereby a caller can pick up the receiver and have instant access to the Police Department.

In response to questions from senators, Mr. Alvarez stated that if traffic flow problems are spotted they should be reported to J.B. Sutphin in Facilities Planning/Construction. Skateboards and bicycles are a big problem on campus. There is a problem with storing them on walks and in buildings and locking them to sign posts. Mr. Alvarez said several bike racks will be built to help alleviate the problem. He reported that the recently-initiated bike registration procedure has worked well even though it was approved later than he had expected.

In closing, he urged senators to forward questions to him in writing, and he will forward them to the appropriate office.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October 15, 1992, Staff Senate meeting were approved with three corrections: Jane Harrison was present. Page 5 should be corrected to read, "Senator Rasnick noted that an announcement was made to the Commission on Research . . . ." On page 2 under the Commission on Staff Affairs report, it was noted that the sentence should read, "Short-term concerns are leave without pay, parental leave . . . ."

#### SENATE COMMITTEE REPORTS

\*COMMUNICATIONS--Senator Cox, chair, reported that the committee has not had much success in identifying "unofficial" mailing lists. She reported that Senator Foster is working on a telephone helpline, which should be available in January. Included on the helpline will be information to assist employees who may have difficulty reading or writing. She reported that SPECTRUM Editor John Ashby is currently planning a series of articles that will highlight the contributions of staff. The series is tentatively planned to run in the spring.

Senator Cox said the committee discussed the need for a policy of openness at the university and made a motion on behalf of the committee that Senate ask the Commission on Classified Staff Affairs to consider developing a

policy of openness regarding university reports and proposals. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. President McConnell asked Senator Cox to draft a letter on the request to the commission.

\*ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS--Senator Patty reported that a mailing to association chairs had recently gone out. The mailing included a brief description of each of the university councils, commissions, and committees and identified staff representation on each. The purpose of the mailing was to get names of staff willing to be nominated for council, commission, and committee vacancies that may arise during the year. Senator Patty thanked Senator Murray for help in providing information on the councils, commissions, and committees. After local associations return the nomination forms by the November 30 deadline, names will be entered into an automated database. Senator Phillips and Senator Patty will ask non-senators serving on university councils, commissions, and committees to report issues of concern to classified staff to Senate Secretary Hise-Shelor.

\*LONG RANGE BUDGET AND PLANNING--Senator Ballard reported that George Crofts from the College of Arts and Sciences was the guest speaker at the committee's November 10 meeting. He discussed the budget process in the College of Arts and Sciences. Assistant Provost Pat Hyer will be the guest speaker at the December meeting.

\*POLICIES AND ISSUES--President McConnell reported that the Council of Presidents Subcommittee had held the first meeting of the Council of Presidents and that there was enthusiastic support for forming the council. The council discussed staff participation in local associations across campus, why some associations are more successful, and how the council members can share ideas about getting classified staff involved in the governance system.

#### UNIVERSITY COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEE REPORTS

\*UNIVERSITY COUNCIL--President McConnell reported that a correction had been made to the minutes of the Commission on Research regarding a statement that only faculty may serve as chairs of commissions.

\*STRATEGIC BUDGETING AND PLANNING--President McConnell reported that committee members are "in training" regarding capital projects, enrollment plan, and the budgeting process timetable.

\*COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS--Vice President Stott reported that the commission will look at staff representation on councils, commissions, and committees to make sure classified staff are represented. He said the commission discussed ways to recognize classified staff in addition to the President's Award for Excellence. The commission also heard reports of classified staff being given lower performance ratings because of their participation in the governance system. A policy statement may be needed to recognize staff participation in the governance system as service to the university and hence an appropriate contribution within one's job performance. The commission also discussed the idea of writing participation in the governance system into position descriptions.

\*COMMISSION ON GRADUATE STUDIES AND POLICIES--Senator Haney reported that graduate student parking is an ongoing issue.

\*COMMISSION ON RESEARCH--Senator Rasnick reported that no topics affecting classified staff were discussed.

\*COMMISSION ON STUDENT AFFAIRS--Senator Blecher reported that graduate student parking in faculty/staff lots continues to be a topic of discussion.

After discussion in Senate about the graduate parking issue, Senator Cox made a motion that Senate send a letter to the Parking/Transportation Committee asking the committee to establish a moratorium on issuing hangtags for faculty/staff lots to any additional groups until construction/renovation on existing lots is completed. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. President McConnell asked Senator Cox to draft the letter.

\*COMMISSION ON UNIVERSITY SUPPORT--Senator Sasser said that the following committees will report to the Commission on University Support: Building (Facilities), Communication Resources, Computer, and Parking and that the committees will submit their charge and membership to the commission by the end of December.

\*EO/AA COMMITTEE--Senator Greene reported that the committee has not met.

\*PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE-- Senator Shannon reported that the policy on off-campus parking is that off-campus employees are treated as visitors and are required to purchase a \$1/day hangtag or a visitor pass when parking short-term on campus. She reported that parking near the College of Veterinary Medicine is a problem on Saturdays when there are home football games. The college is open seven days a week, and employees and clients needing access to the veterinary hospital have difficulty getting through the traffic. The matter is being investigated. Senator Shannon also reported that a top parking priority is construction of a parking garage at the CEC, but that storm drainage problems must be corrected before construction can begin.

\*SCHEDULING AND REGISTRATION COMMITTEE--Senator Shannon reported that the committee has proposed a 1994-95 calendar and will distribute it to faculty and staff for input.

FACULTY SENATE--Senator Myers attended for Senator Rasnick. Faculty Senate discussed tuition relief for faculty dependents. It was suggested that Staff Senate President McConnell write Faculty Senate President Geyer offering Staff Senate assistance on any proposal for tuition assistance for faculty/staff dependents.

Faculty Senate discussed whether mail marked confidential is treated as such and if campus mail is handled differently than U.S. mail if it is marked confidential. A clarification was made that once mail (first class, printed matter, etc.) reaches the University Post Office, it becomes the property of the university. This issue will be addressed at a future meeting.

Staff Senators Aliff and Shannon volunteered to check on handling of confidential mail on campus and will discuss the issue with University Legal Counsel.

OLD BUSINESS

Vice President Stott reported that the Joint Health Care Task Force is still monitoring changes in the health care program and is putting together a report of concerns. It is looking into the annual OB/GYN visits, mental health aspects (United Behavioral Services), and managed care systems.

#### NEW BUSINESS

\*MEETINGS--President McConnell reported on two recent meetings: (1) Staff Senate/Faculty Senate/Parking and Transportation meeting, and (2) University administrative staff/Staff Senate President/Staff Senate Vice President/Dr. McComas meeting.

Staff Senate and Faculty Senate representatives met with Richard Alvarez, Carl Polan, and Curtis Lynch to discuss parking issues. Mr. Alvarez informed the group that there are approximately 6,429 faculty/staff vehicle registrations and 3,472 available spaces. There are 2,855 graduate student registrations, 13,000 commuter student registrations, and 4,164 available commuter spaces. Other topics discussed were the problems with roller blades, skateboards, and bicycles and with bus parking at football games. Mr. Alvarez reported that communications are under way with bus companies to develop alternate plans for parking at games. The problem of night parking by employees in areas near the Newman Library and other areas was discussed.

President McConnell and Vice President Stott met with President McComas and other university administrators to discuss staff issues such as pay benefits, lobbying, annual evaluations, communications, and staff participation in the governance system. Dr. McComas expressed interest that the group meet on a regular basis to exchange ideas and reiterated his enthusiasm for staff participation in university governance.

\*PRESENTATION SEMINAR--President McConnell reported that Senate Executive Committee has been discussing the idea of a seminar on how to organize and make public presentations. The seminar would be open to senators; non-senators who serve on university councils, commissions, and committees; and local association chairs. President McConnell asked for a show of hands from senators interested in such a seminar and received enthusiastic response. Plans for the seminar will be discussed at a later time.

\*SERVICE PROJECT FOR CHRISTMAS--Senator Greene said that some local associations had adopted a Christmas project. She reminded senators that in 1991 Senate donated money and helped a local family at Christmas.

A motion was made that Senate support a Christmas project. The motion passed unanimously. Senators may send contributions to President McConnell by December 15. Senator Greene volunteered to talk with the Montgomery County Welfare Department to identify a family that needs help at Christmas.

\*AY CLASSIFIED POSITIONS--Senator Stott stated there are numerous concerns with the proposal for academic year appointments for classified staff. Virginia Tech and Old Dominion University are working on a proposal to institute a two-year pilot program to test the idea. The main concern is that the proposal now calls for the appointments to be mandatory rather than voluntary. He stressed that the decision to make a position a nine-

month appointment should be a cooperative decision between management and the employee. He said there is concern regarding who would decide which position would be converted to nine-month positions. There is also concern about benefits earned by nine-month employees. He stated that Ann Spencer will be meeting with ODU and Virginia Department of Personnel and Training representatives to discuss various concerns with the draft statement. Senator Stott urged classified staff to forward comments about the draft proposal to him.

Senator Cox made a motion to adjourn into executive session. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Guests were asked to leave.

Staff Senate meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. to go into executive session.

Diane Patty  
Acting Secretary