

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Staff Senate

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

Thursday, November 17, 1994

Room 102, Phase II, Vet Medicine

Senators Present: Joyce Bohr, Janet Bryant, Shannon Casey, Billie Cline, Joann Craven, Judy Davis, Marge Dellers, Patrick Donohoe, Leslie Graham, Patty Hall, Mark Kidd, Sherilyn McConnell, Valerie Myers, Brenda Neidigh, Donna Norman, Fred Phillips, Rocky Price, Peggy Rasnick, Vivian Rich, Wyatt Sasser, Widget Shannon, Chuck Shorter, Paula Van Curen, Sarah Wheeler

Alternates Present: Susan Edwards for Deb Williams, Netta Eisler for Richard Lovegrove, Denise Orden for Betsy Davis-Jones, Beverly Parkins for Mary Pennington

Call to Order

Vice President Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

Guest Speaker

Dr. Larry Moore addressed the senate on changes to Constitution and Bylaws for University Council and trying to streamline the government structure. In 1988, they went through a lot of growing pains to establish a Commission on Classified Staff Affairs.

Each university commission and committee generates minutes. Committee minutes go before commissions for approval, then they go to University Council. College commission/committee associations, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, Student Government Association, university standing committee, and member of University Council policy matters are approved through the submission of a resolution to University Council for its acceptance. Resolutions then go to the university president, then to the board of visitors.

Policy resolutions, once they are received from a commission, go to University Council for a first reading. They can be deferred by another commission or senate. If there is no problem, there is a second reading a month later, at which point it can still be deferred, amended, or tabled. Then there is a final reading for council action. Our constitution is based on shared governance.

Donohoe questioned about how often committees and commissions should meet. Dr. Moore responded that the commission chair is responsible for when the committees and commissions meet.

Announcements

We need to be a positive force and a watchdog for the staff. We also need to understand the minutes and the reports are very important to keep communications open.

## Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October 20, 1994, meeting were approved with the following changes: Widget Shannon and Sarah Wheeler should be added to Senators Present; page three, paragraph four, Lorrie Martins name should be corrected to Lorrie Martinson.

On page two, Commission on Public Service and Extension paragraph - Senator Williams requested that her report be clarified to read "Commission on Public Service and Extension - Discussion is being carried out to propose some additional uses of Extension offices as a "front door" to the community where John Q. Public can walk into any extension office in the state and get information and help about Virginia Tech services. For example, it could be a place where prospective students could go to pick up catalogues and applications. Please provide any input you might have to DEBW @ VTVM1."

## Senate Committee Reports

Policies and Issues - Senator Dellers thanked Cindy Harrison for taking notes of the meeting. Patrick Donohoe discussed repetitive motion injury and status of claims with Workmen's Compensation. There was an article in the Roanoke Times that stated that OSHA was studying repetitive injury and that the Labor Department hopes to complete regulations aimed at protecting workers from repetitive motion injuries by January, 1997. Robin Ball had been asked if repetitive motion injuries were covered during orientation and she stated that due to time constraints it was not covered. Communication will continue with CommonHealth to attempt a breakthrough in education to employees. Senator Craven reported on the External Performance Evaluation Management Study Committee, which looks at the processes of peer institutions and how we might adapt them to Virginia Tech. Dennis Eavey will also serve on the committee, and as the core committee is established, they will ask each staff association to send a representative. Harrison gave a very detailed report on the problems that have developed with the parking meters that have been placed at Southgate. She had talked with Lenwood McCoy about having drop boxes installed there also. Jim Shuler attended Physical Plant's semi-annual meeting. He reported that the final report of the Blue Ribbon Strike Force is in the Governor's hands. Shuler recommended that everyone study the report line-by-line and come up with solid, concise reflections and recommendations. He is available for information and input. It is recommended that individual letters be written, not form letters, and be sent to all known legislators, particularly those that have been in the General Assembly the longest. No university machines, letterhead, or equipment should be used to generate these letters.

Elections and Nominations - Senator Rasnick distributed ballots and brief biographies on the nominees to fill the vacancy on Commission on Faculty Affairs and two candidates for Transportation/Parking. During the committee's previous meeting, members discussed sending letters to candidates whose nominations were successful or unsuccessful. Senator Graham has agreed to be responsible for these letters.

Communications - Senator Myers reported that Ann Spencer expressed

concern to Senator Lovegrove about improving internal communications. The Communications Committee will write a letter to her informing her that this is one of the Senate's concerns also. We will also ask to be involved in any effort.

Ad Hoc Committee for Government Task Force Reform - Senator Shannon reported that one of their charges is to go through the lengthy document and try to get something back to the Staff Senate and eventually to the legislature or governor. The governor can place items in executive orders without going before the legislature unless an item changes the Code of Virginia. On December 19, VDOT has requested a meeting with as many legislators as possible concerning the document. Senator McConnell stated that you can request a copy of the Strike Force document by calling 1-804-786-3088, or it is also available through Gopher on the mainframe. Phillips stated that it would be a while before we know the full impact.

The Academic Support Committee met on November 16. They approved the second reading of a resolution concerning faculty having sensitivity to different religious holidays observed by students. Members also an overview of express check-in.

Old Business - None

New Business

Senator McConnell - The Virginia Tech Employees Fund was established in 1990 to assist laid-off staff members or those who suffered a significant pay cut, and to assist employees with catastrophic events. At that time, \$15,000 was raised in three weeks. The university has become aware of a classified staff employee, Karen Board, who is a single mother with a son in college in Mississippi and a daughter in college here at Virginia Tech. She pretty much has no other family. She has developed breast cancer and underwent a mastectomy two years ago. This past summer the cancer returned in the form of a lesion on her liver. The recommended treatment is a bone marrow transplant, complete stem cell replacement at Johns Hopkins. The estimate for her treatment is \$150,000 - \$250,000. Johns Hopkins requires a \$50,000 down payment before they can put her on the recipient list. State health insurance (Key Advantage) will not pay for a bone marrow transplant for breast cancer. The legislature has recently overturned this and effective after the first of the year they have mandated that state employees will be covered for the transplant. Unfortunately, this mandate is too late to help Karen.

A motion was made and carried to support the concept of declaring that the week of December 5th be Karen Board week. Some local civic groups and a student service organization have been contacted to help with fund raisers and wearing pink ribbons, which is the national sign for breast cancer.

Election ballots were distributed. Results will be sent electronically to senators.

The Senate executive committee has been invited to breakfast with the

vice president and provost candidates. These interviews will begin November 29.

President Sasser arrived at the meeting and addressed the typing test issue. If you are applying for a job that requires typing or data entry and are a state or wage employee working on campus, the typing test is good for three years. If you are not a state or campus wage employee, the typing test is only good for one year.

Due to a fire alarm and evacuation of the building, the meeting adjourned at 6: 54 PM.