

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Staff Senate

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 19, 1995
Room 102, Phase II, Vet Medicine

Senators present: Danny Belcher, Sheila Blankenship, Joyce Bohr, Janet Bryant, Billie Cline, Judy Davis, Betsy Davis-Jones, Marge Dellers, Patrick Donohoe, Les Fuller, Wanda Grubb, Patty Hall, Mary Holliman, Brenda Husser, Delbert Jones, Julia King, Joyce Longrie, Richard Lovegrove, Bhaba Misra, Brenda Neidigh, Donna Norman, Fred Phillips, Peggy Rasnick, Vivian Rich, Wyatt Sasser, Widget Shannon, Chuck Shorter, Virginia Viers, Deb Williams.

Alternates and Guests Present: Sherrie Settle

Call to order

President Sasser called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Due to illness, Secretary Myers was unable to attend the meeting and Senator Hall graciously agreed to take minutes.

Announcements

None

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the December 15, 1994, meeting were approved with no corrections.

Senate Committee Reports

Communications - no report

Elections and Nominations - written minutes available

Policies and Issues - written minutes available

Blue Ribbon Strike Force - Senator Williams reported that there was a universal leave document being passed around. This document IS NOT part of the Blue Ribbon Strike Force packet that was submitted to Governor Allen. She requested that senators inform association members that it is not part of the packet and was probably part of an early proposal, but is not being considered.

University Council, Commission, Committee Reports:

Commission on Public Service & Extension - Senator Williams reported that nominations are being accepted for the Public Service Excellence Award. She will send a copy of the nomination to Secretary Myers for

dissemination to senators and alternates. Nominations are due January 31. She is also serving on the selection committee.

Advisory Council for Strategic Budgeting and Planning - President Sasser reported that the topic of discussion was Governor Allen's budget proposal. It was reported that over \$14 million dollars are to be taken out of research and extension. It was pointed out that this is only a proposal and has to go through the legislature. Dr. Torgersen and Mr. Ridenour are in Richmond talking with legislators about the critical outcome of proposed budget cuts. Some discussion followed concerning letter campaigns and articles appearing in the local newspapers. Some classified staff associations and student organizations are organizing letter campaigns.

Commission on University Support - Senator Hall reported that they heard a report from University Architect Peter Karp on the new master plan, which is a general blueprint for the future of the campus. The commission also heard that 1,900 people took advantage of the payroll deduction option for parking permits. Paul Metz was elected vice chair.

Old Business

President Sasser said that a recent newspaper article reported that on the average, state employees use 13 days of sick leave a year. He pointed out that the Virginia Tech average is only seven days a year.

He requested that the membership act as taxpaying citizens and let the government know how we feel about the proposed changes. The Staff Senate is involved in Virginia Tech's politics, not the politics of the state. As a body, there is little that can be done; we cannot send letters to the legislature. The senate serves as an information disseminating organization. We can report back to our local associations and provide them with names and addresses of who individuals should write to. Politicians depend on their constituents to let them know how they feel on the issues.

Senator Dellers reported that on Friday, January 27 the task force for higher education will meet. This was the task force appointed by Delegate Shuler. Senator McConnell and Senator Dellers serve on this task force.

In the January 19 newspaper, there was an article that gave a number for individuals to contact their legislators. The number is 1-800-346-1234, extension 119. Another number is 1-800-889-0229 (7 a.m. - 7 p.m.). Senators and alternates were reminded not to use state telephones, stationery, etc. or state time to contact legislators. Also, when contacting your legislators, please make your comments short and to the point.

A question was raised concerning the layoff policy and bumping rights. Ann Spencer has not received any specifics at this time and is waiting for word from Richmond.

New Business

There was discussion concerning a proposed amendment change brought forward by the Senate Executive Committee. This amendment change would allow the Executive Committee to select a senate or alternate to serve on a Committee, Commission, or Council should a position become vacant during the year. The Executive Committee would select names from the database provided by the Elections and Nominations Committee. The senate membership would be polled for volunteers to build the database. The Executive Committee proposed this change because of the amount of vacancies that have occurred this year. There has been an election at almost every meeting.

Senator Williams stated that she opposed the proposed amendment. She feels it is the senate's duty to nominate and elect those individuals, and that the senate body is more informed than the executive committee.

Senator Phillips was in favor of the proposed amendment. He said that he believes the process has been disruptive to the senate and that the executive committee is as informed as the senate body. The amendment would help streamline the senate and make it more efficient.

Several other senators expressed agreement with Senator Phillips.

President Sasser said he is concerned with the lag time it took to get a representative into a vacant position. During that time, the senate did not have proper representation.

Senator Williams suggested using electronic elections, as has been done successfully in the past.

Senator Misra is concerned with electronic elections. He pointed out that if he was on vacation, etc., he would miss the vote.

Senator Holliman is also opposed to electronic elections. She feels that an alternate can not always monitor whether or not they should vote. She spoke in favor of the proposed amendment change.

The issue was tabled until further investigation could be obtained concerning this change. Senator Phillips will check with Dr. Larry Moore and get clarification on changes to the amendment. The Executive Committee will collect recommendations for senators and alternates and will look at options for changing the amendment.

Election of nominees for Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Committee

Election was held and Deborah Young's name will be forwarded to Dr. Torgersen to serve on the EO/AA Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 PM.