

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Staff Senate

Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
Thursday, February 16, 1995  
Room 102, Phase II, Vet Medicine

Senators present: Danny Belcher, Janet Bryant, Billie Cline, Joann Craven, Judy Davis, Marge Dellers, Patrick Donohoe, Leslie Graham, Wanda Grubb, Patty Hall, Mary Holliman, Brenda Husser, Julia King, Richard Lovegrove, Bhaba Misra, Eileen Moccia, Trevia Moses, Valerie Myers, Brenda Neidigh, Donna Norman, Mary Pennington, Peggy Rasnick, Vivian Rich, Widget Shannon, Chuck Shorter, Virginia Viers, Sarah Wheeler, Deb Williams

Alternates and guests present: Sherrie Settle for Delbert Jones, Wanda Garrison, Matt Martelli

Meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM

#### Announcements

There will be free clothing distribution to those in need by the Boy Scouts on Saturday, February 18, at the Blacksburg Middle School.

#### Guest Speaker

Peggy Meszaros, Senior Vice President and Provost addressed the senate as follows.

She has only been in office for 16 days, but she has been on Campus for 18 months. She stated that this is the best place she has ever been. She has seen the best of excellence in faculty, staff, and students and has seen high work ethics and support for one another. She attributes this to incredibly good hiring decisions.

If you ever hear that she has said or done something that you do not understand, call her and she will clarify it. She wants to help promote a working environment which is physically and mentally supportive of every faculty, staff and student and have physical and mental health. She feels that the Provost's Office should be an accessible and efficient service agency.

She then opened the floor for questions as follows.

- Q: We have heard a lot about computers and Project Enable for faculty development initiative; we were wondering if there are any plans for staff development on computers.
- A: She feels that if you are going to send faculty off to get trained, that you also have a compliment of staff who can help them when they get back. That should be proliferated around campus. You have to ensure that everyone has training in the technology.

Q: How is shared governance perceived in the University?

A: It seems to have a voice. It is a well devised system. We need to go back and renew interest as an avenue to be heard.

Q: How do you feel about supervisors who serve as roadblocks and knock staff down because of senate service?

A: It is unfortunate, she will make statements in favor of shared governance.

She stated that the issue is staff development and value and reward. Don't let it overcome you. If you can't change the system, then what can we do to make the work environment happy.

Q: What do you think of the bottom-up evaluation?

A: Human Resources worked with their staff associations to devise a process and a form that will now become a permanent part of the review of the Department Head, every two years and every five years. All staff that report to that Department Head have a chance for input. That came as a request from the staff. Evaluation is a growth process.

Senator Williams stated that she likes the internet effort that Provost Meszaros made and would like to see it continue. She is considering a once-a-month effort. She needs to know what the staff would like to see on the Provost's Page.

EOAA sexual harassment training session is scheduled for the first week of March for the Deans. It is scheduled to be a two-hour training session. The idea is that if the Deans will schedule those kinds of sessions in each of the Colleges, it will encourage participation.

#### Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the January 19 minutes were approved with no corrections.

#### Senate Committee Minutes

Communications - did not meet; however, Senator Lovegrove received a letter from Ann Spencer on the need for improved communications. They have formed an Employee Communications Committee headed by Spencer Foster. At the next committee meeting on March 1 they will discuss areas needing improvement. If you have input send an E-mail message to Senator Lovegrove at user ID Lovegrov. Senator Williams requested that we need a Senator to serve on that Committee.

Faculty Affairs - Senator Cline stated that the faculty accepted her very graciously. They discussed the Reduction In Force Policy, and are looking at taking out the five-year notice before faculty are removed. Full report available. Senator Neidigh - Administrative and Professional Faculty discussed the eligibility of administrative faculty to serve on committees.

Senator Williams - Public Service and Extension has met. There was at least one staff member nominated. There were very few nominations; only

two awards will be given out of four.

Senator Graham - EOAA Committee - new sexual harassment training manual is ready. Committee members were trained. The concern is that if staff are not educated about the new policy, then choices of options and rights to confidentiality could be compromised. When supervisors become aware of harassment, there are prescribed procedures which must be followed. There must be some intervention. Part of the investigation requires a visit to the harassment site. With the visit to the site, rights to confidentiality could be compromised. Most of the references were geared toward faculty and Deans. She requested that we get word out to associations to participate when the programs become available.

#### Old Business

President Sasser was to discuss amendment to Constitution and Bylaws to allow Nominations and Election Committee to submit names to Executive Committee to fill midterm vacancies. Since President Sasser was unable to attend a motion was made and passed to table the discussion until next meeting.

#### New Business

Senator Misra expressed concern that there is no Web Page for Staff Senate. A motion was made and passed that Misra investigate Web Page for Staff Senate. It was suggested that we have someone come and demonstrate the software.

Meeting adjourned at 6:38 PM.

Approved 3/16/95