

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
STAFF SENATE
1810 Litton Reaves
Minutes of the regular meeting
Thursday, July 17, 1997

Senators Present: Spencer Allen, Sherry Burlingame, Mary Conrad, Barbara Day, Judy Fielder, Janet Francis, Cindy Harrison, Terry Lawrence, Kathleen McNinney, Rhonda Owen, Nancy Phillips, Ben Poe, Peggy Rasnick, Joy Thorn, Janet Town, Virginia Viers, John Wooge.

Alternates and Visitors: Sherri Settle, Jack Davis, Becky Barlow, Marge Dellers

Excused: Senators -Jody Bolen, Karen Frazier, Tom Hergert, Delbert Jones, Kathy Johnston, Joyce Longrie, Reba Rigney, Tina Shanklin. Alternates - Jeanie Baker, Dianne Ballard, Matt Gart

Spencer Allen called the meeting to order at 5:36PM

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from May 22, 1997, were approved without correction. The June meeting did not have a quorum.

Announcements: Cindy Harrison introduced Rhonda Owen. Her phone number and Email are; 231-6257 and OWENR@vt.edu.
Terry Lawrence resigned as Vice President due to personal reasons. He apologized for his resignation.

Special Election: For the office of Vice President.
Terry Lawrence nominated Ben Poe.
No other nominations were made. Ben Poe introduced himself.
Vote was taken by ballot.
Ben Poe was elected unanimously.

There was a discussion of the June minutes. Cindy Harrison asked the Senate for issues to be brought forward to VGEA. Her Email is CANOE@vt.edu. She will meet with Delbert Jones on July 23 , 1997 for a discussion of these issues.

Joy Thorn requested a verbal self introduction of Senators because of so many new faces.

There was some discussion about the overall number of Senators (27) and

alternates (17) being low. Spencer Allen reiterated the definition of an Alternate Senator which is that an Alternate may only vote in an election when representing an absent Senator. That is the only difference. There is no difference with respect to serving on committees and commissions. Alternates are still members of the Staff Senate, and are encouraged to attend meetings regularly. Spencer Allen mentioned that there is no limit on the number of Alternate Senators, and encouraged that there be at least one Alternate per Senator. There is a continual need for more participation on committees and having more alternates would certainly help.

Spencer Allen urged new Senators and Alternates to serve on committees and to please look over his handout which describes the various committees. There was also mention of a potentially new committee to interface with the state legislature which was brought up in the informal June meeting and is still in the planning stage.

Joy Thorn announced that she will not be handing out hard copies of the minutes and the agenda at the meetings. You should make your own copy from your Email to bring to the meeting.

Senate Standing Committee Reports: No reports.

The committees are in need of people to serve on them, especially the Communications Committee which has lost half of its members.

Old Business:

Logo Contest: Cindy Harrison announced the logo contest for a logo design to be used by the Staff Senate. The contest will continue until August 9. Please contact Tom Hergert "hergert@vt.edu" or Eileen Moccia "emoccia@vt.edu" with entries. Anyone employed by Tech can submit an entry. Please do not incorporate the acronym SS in the logo.

Lag Pay: No change will be discernible to current employees until their retirement. A question was asked if the Senate had written a thank you letter to Jim Schuler for his help with the lag pay issue? Not yet, but one will be.

Smoking Policy: The new policy which has now been implemented, was essentially the one the Senate had come up with years ago.

VGEA Legislation: Sherri Settle announced the results of the poll which asked employees to rank in order of importance the five proposals put forth by VGEA. The top three results were;

#1. Competitive compensation to replace the current system and performance based bonuses and competitive salaries.

#2. Leave Policies - provide an additional 3 days of annual leave after 15 years of service, with a maximum annual leave of 24 days per year after 20 years of service.

#3. Part time employment benefits - provide pro-rated VRS and health insurance benefits for part-time employees and allow current full-time employees with 20+ years of service to have any years of part-time service added to their work service for retirement purposes.

If there are questions about this please contact Delbert Jones.

Terry Lawrence said he would like to see area agencies meet once a year at Tech to discuss policies affecting state employees. There was discussion about the need for VGEA to be more active in our area. A proposal was made to arrange for VGEA members to speak at future Staff Senate meetings. It was also suggested that the Senate sponsor an open forum with VGEA for all Tech employees where important issues can be discussed.

New Business: The change in class schedule has now been passed by the University Council by a very close vote. The change will go into effect Fall of 98'. Concern was voiced about the effect this will have on staff schedules because some people will have to work past 5PM. Many members of the faculty have also voiced their opposition to the change. There was discussion about what, if anything, the Staff Senate should try to do about the new policy. Even though the new policy has passed the council, it will not take effect for another year so there is possibly still time to make changes. An alternative proposal which would shorten class periods to 45 minutes without changing the overall schedule was not feasible due to accreditation issues.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Thorn, Secretary
Krissie Thrasher, Recorder