

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

STAFF SENATE

1810 Litton Reaves

Minutes of the regular meeting

Thursday, October 16, 1997

Senators Present: Spencer Allen, Sherry Burlingame, Mary Conrad, Reba Crawford, Barbara Day, Judy Fielder, Janet Francis, Tom Hergert, Delbert Jones, Terry Lawrence, Joyce Longrie, Kathleen McNinney, Nancy Phillips, Ben Poe, Tina Shanklin, Joy Thorn, Virginia Viers.

Alternates: Rebecca Barlow, Catherine Bond, Billie Cline, Jack Davis, Jill Elswick, Charles Rose

Faculty Senate Representative: Kamel Rojiani

Visitors: Wyatt Sasser

Excused: Jody Bolen, Matt Gart, Cindy Harrison, Peggy Rasnick, Janet Town, John Wooge

Spencer Allen called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm .

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from September 17, 1997. Approved as submitted.

**Senate Standing Committees Reports**

Communications - An organizational meeting was held 10/15/97. Cindy Harrison was elected to chair. Milko Maykowskyj will be the Vice-Chair and Catherine Bond will be the Secretary. A written report on their 10/15/97 meeting was distributed. The projects for this year are to create a usable Staff Senate website, completion of a brochure on staff governance for distribution to all classified employees, revisit the need for a Staff Senate logo, maintain the Staff Senate memo on staff governance which currently is distributed to all new classified employees in their Personnel orientation packets and possible training activities for Staff Senate members in three 1-hour sessions at a future date.

Elections and Nominations - An organizational meeting was held 10/1/97. Virginia Viers was elected to chair. John Wooge will be the Vice-Chair and Barbara Day will be the Secretary. A calendar was drawn up as at what points of time the Elections & Nominations Committee needs to be contacting the classified staff and procedures to take.

McComas - An organizational meeting has not been held. Delbert Jones was asked to try to get a group together.

Policies and Issues - An organizational meeting was held 9/29/97. Joy Thorn was elected to chair. Next year's chair has not been chosen. The project for this year is to review and revise the Senate By-Laws. Input on proposed changes and upgrades in the By-Laws was requested. The committee meets the fourth Monday of each month at lunch time in Wallace Hall. All are welcome to join, more bodies are needed.

### **Council, Committee, Commission Reports**

Commission on Classified Staff Affairs - A report was given by Ben Poe. This group has several issues they are looking into. 1. Hokie Passport - a letter is being developed to send to the Hokie Passport Office to evaluate and reconsider the cost of replacement of an identification card. 2. Sponsored Program Compliance with OMBA-21 - it is a federal law that no administrative and clerical costs be charged to federally funded projects. The Controllers Office is working with the Office of Management and Budget to resolve ways to clarify the law. 3. Benefits for 1500 Hour Employees - Linda Woodard will provide data at the next meeting on the number of 1500 hour employees, unemployment cost of 1500 hour employees who have separated from Va.Tech, and how many vacant positions have been lost and equate those vacancies into FTE's. 4. Decentralization - what it means 5. Work Schedule Changes due to Fall "98" Timetable - the change in the class schedule to extend the time between classes for the upcoming academic year may affect the work schedule of some classified non-exempt employees placing them in overtime status. This commission will let University Council know of their concerns and make them aware the potential problem and address this before Fall 1998 semester. 6. Promote Staff Participation in Faculty Development Institute - Edward McPherson will address the November 12 meeting to discuss.

Commission on Undergraduate Studies - A report was given by Barbara Day and copies were distributed. The Commission approved new courses for the year. All faculty and staff will receive the "Academic Agenda" which is an update to the "University Plan".

Commission on Research - A report was given by Delbert Jones. The Commission discussed the possibility of the University staff losing their jobs that are being paid by federal grant funds. Staff positions are critical to the operation of the projects and an effort will be made to solve the problem.

Commission on Faculty Affairs - A report was given by Tom Hergert. The Commission discussed the "Severe Sanctions Policy". A system with several levels of punishment instead of the old system of either firing or doing nothing in cases of faculty misconduct.

Intellectual Properties - A report was given by Tom Hergert. The latest "Intellectual Property Policy" for the University states that classified staff cannot reap any financial benefit from an "assigned job". When faculty and staff work together on a project which is later patented, the 50% profit is split among the participating faculty member(s) and the staff member(s) get cut out. A change is trying to be made.

Commission on Student Affairs - A report was given by Judy Fielder. There were four guest speakers who talked about the student services database. There is a schedule being developed to cover now until the year 2000. There was a first reading of the Student Government Association resolutions. There will be a meetings at the Blacksburg Transit Office on Nov. 12 to discuss the proposed extension of the Two Town Trolley route to K-Mart and Wal-Mart. There will be a mock election of candidates on October 27-28 by E-mail. On October 21 at Cassell Coliseum, Mike Green will speak on alcoholism.

Faculty Senate Report -Professor Rojiani spoke about the October 2 Faculty Senate Forum of all Faculty Senate representatives in Virginia. Don Beyer attended but Jim Gilmore was invited and did not come. The biggest concerns right now are: 1. The benefits package which also affects the staff, and 2. The current University "climate". High alcohol consumption and student behavior in the classroom have resulted in serious problems. Professors are not sure how to handle disruptive or threatening behavior by students and guidelines for these types of problems are not clear.

Commission on University Support - A report was given by Mary Conrad. The attendance at this organizational meeting was proved to be positive, with 12 or 13 people attending. In previous years, this commission has met only once or twice a year. A monthly meeting schedule is in the works. Dean Swiger attended the meeting and made suggestions for the kind of issues which are appropriate for this commission. This includes the University Administration estimation of the cost of benefits for new positions, which apparently is not at all accurate and needs to be looked into. Further details are contained in the minutes. The next meeting has not yet been scheduled.

Employee Benefits Committee - Virginia Viers gave a report. A meeting was held on September 24. The minutes have not been approved yet. Issues discussed were the spouse/dependent tuition waivers and faculty long term disability care. Other issues are

health insurance, buyouts, and a benefits package for 1500 hr wage employees, etc. The next meeting will be October 29. Any concerns or opinions are welcome.

VGEA Report - The regional VGEA meeting was attended by Delbert Jones; Dick Cranwell who is on the budget committee was also there. Responses to submitted questions and comments on state employee issues were only given by Don Beyer. There was no response or communication from Jim Gilmore. Competitive salaries for state employees is still a big issue. Cindy Harrison has a tape of both candidates' responses, or lack thereof, to some of the questions. There is a rumor of an insurance increase of 16%

### **Old Business**

Sponsored Research Funding - In an earlier meeting Peggy Rasnick distributed a handout from Lenwood McCoy providing information on the changes concerning sponsored projects not funding classified staff positions. All were encouraged to read this handout, and if there were questions we would have had Sponsored Programs come to Staff Senate.

### **New Business**

Election for the Library Committee - Two nominees have come forward for the term ending June 1999. The two nominees were Jamie Wampler and Milko Mankowskyj, with Milko being nominated.

Staff Senate Budget - The Staff Senate Budget for the year was presented and discussed. The total budget is \$5,000. Discussion was held as to what the different line items were. It was explained that this was a proposed budget. It is a guideline to follow, but Staff Senate can make changes as needed. The proposed expenditures are for the most part higher than what has been spent in the past. The budget was passed by a unanimous vote.

Wyatt Sasser reminded Staff Senate that nominations for the Presidents Award of Excellence are due soon.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM

Respectfully submitted  
Joy Thorn, secretary  
Krissie Thrasher, recorder

