

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
STAFF SENATE
1870 Litton Reaves
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 1998

Senators Present: Reba Crawford, Janet Francis, Cindy Harrison, Delbert Jones, Terry Lawrence, Bruce Lytton, Mary Pennington, Nancy Phillips, Ben Poe, Peggy Rasnick, Tina Shanklin, Joy Thorn, Janet Town, Virginia Viers, Debbie Wilson, Jon Wooge, Kathryn Young.

Alternates: Rebecca Barlow voting for Jack Davis, Jessie Eaves, Mary Whitlock.

Excused: Jack Davis, Judy Fielder

Visitors: Marge Dellers, Linda Woodard, Jeannie Baker

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM

Minutes of the October 15, 1998 meeting were approved.

Announcements:

Ben talked about the Spectrum article on the importance of shared governance.

Joy Thorn gave up an update on the Staff Senate December 3rd event. It will take the place of the normal monthly meeting.

Linda Woodard has tapes of the Governor's Town Hall Meetings. She is having them duplicated. All of those interested in viewing these tapes can use work hours to view them. Anyone interested can contact the Personnel Office.

Marge Dellers of Information Systems states the University is in good shape for Y2K compliance.

Staff Senate Standing Committee Reports –

Elections and Nominations Committee – Chairman Jon Wooge submitted a written report. The committee met on 11/5/98. The topic of discussion was the fall mailing of the "Nominations for Elections to the Councils, Commissions and Committees". A discussion was held on the best way to distribute this information so that all classified staff would have a chance to receive it.

University Council/Committee/Commission Reports –

University Council – Cindy Harrison submitted a written report. Submitted to Staff Senate on 11/19/98.

The University Council minutes of 10/19/98 were approved.

A resolution regarding an offering of a combined Master of Science in Life Sciences had been deferred on 10/19/98. An amended resolution was resubmitted, and it was approved. The resolution went before the Board of Visitors on 11/09/98. The BOV approved the resolution. An announcement will be made to the university community.

The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies responded to a protest that dependents of employees must pay \$15 to use the gym and pool. It was explained that dependents over age 16 must have a Hokie Passport for identification, and the normal cost of that card is \$15. No further action was taken.

Dr. Ron Daniel presented an update on the requirement that students have computers. On his committee were Earv Blythe, Wayne Donald, Dianna Benton, John Husser and Susan Bright. It was reported that students living in dorms this year may be off campus next year. Problems facing the university are: How do we connect off-campus student computers to the university next year? What will it take? How do we do it? It was noted that two apartment complexes in Blacksburg have "some" ethernet now, but not the entire complex. Anyone with suggestions or requesting more information may contact Dr. Daniel.

The University Council meeting scheduled for November 16 was cancelled. The next meeting will be December 7, which will be the last meeting of the year.

Commission on Classified Staff Affairs – Cindy Harrison submitted a written report on the Commission on Classified Staff Affairs. The monthly meeting was held November 11, 1998. The guest speakers were Nevin Kessler and Judy Graham of the University Development Office.

Nevin Kessler gave a quick overview of university development. He explained the university receives contributions from alumni, parents, faculty, staff, friends, corporations and foundations. Most money donated to the university is designated for specific purpose; only 2 percent of the total money received is unrestricted.

Judy Graham reviewed the annual giving program. This is an organized effort to provide annual operating support to Va. Tech. The Development Office conducts a series of campaigns for different constituencies with personalized messages. The topic of discussion was the potential of having an account for private money to fund a tuition waiver program for faculty/staff spouses and dependents. She reviewed the steps necessary to fund a tuition waiver program for faculty/staff spouses and dependents. CCSA has appointed an ad hoc committee to establish an account for the 1999 campaign.

Tom McAvoy reported that several universities have tuition fee waiver programs for employee dependents ranging from 30 percent to 100 percent. They are Maine, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Maryland, Pittsburgh, Southern California, Tennessee and Old Dominion University.

Mary Whitlock submitted a written report to CCSA for the EOAA Committee. She reported that the EOAA Office is paying particular attention to compliance cases, ADA efforts, and the faculty search process. She noted that the majority of exemptions from full searches are for temporary or restricted positions lasting less than one year.

Spencer Allen reported to CCSA for the Benefits Committee. He encouraged members to urge their employees to attend one of Doug Martin's informational meetings concerning the new sick leave and disability program to make decisions at the first of the year.

Dennis Eavey reported to CCSA for Personnel Services. He reported the implementation of the new electronic leave reporting system has been delayed for one month due to technical problems. No word at this time on forthcoming holiday closing. The last date to use 1998 leave balances will be January 9, 1999.

Commission on Research - Delbert Jones reported that Va. Tech is ranked #13 in Research and was able to rank that high without a medical college. Va. Tech's goal is to rank in the top 10.

Guest Speaker – Mr. Minnis Ridenour – Sr. Vice-President – He has been at Virginia Tech since 1974. He presented a very informative slide presentation of the University Financial Structure that is also used to brief the Board of Visitors. He explained the different funding sources and who manages each.

He believes in developing staff through the Leadership Development program, therefore encouraging staff participation in this program.

He was asked about the Switzerland property owned by Va. Tech. He explained that for 25 years the College of Architecture has had students studying in Switzerland. The property was purchased in the beginning for these students to have a permanent home. This property is now used by all of the University community.

Mr. Ridenour was asked how he works with Dr Torgersen and Dr. Meszaros. He stated they work very hard together as a "team".

Old Business/New Business – Note: Due to time constraints no business was conducted.

Respectfully submitted by:

Joy Thorn, Secretary

12/3/98 Reunion Report by Ben Poe, Staff Senate President

I was very pleased with everyone who helped with last night's function. The feedback I received from many administrators and alumni was great. Dr. Larry Moore, Dr. Wayne Worner and Carole Nickerson all gave great supporting remarks for staff participation in governance. Dr. Moore emphasized how far the University has come in just ten years ... from a time when only one staff person represented the whole University staff and there was no staff entity. Carole echoed President Torgersen's memo encouraging staff participation.

Dr. Worner had a message that I felt was directed to me. He has analyzed the comments and feedback from the last McComas Seminar and provided the following suggestions:

Priorities of Time:

10% On developing external networks ... communications with other State Universities. To provide a joint response or focus on State decision making issues.

30% On University level activities - building within our existing activities - better communications between the two Senates.

60% Developing Support at the College or Department level, i.e. strengthening (or rebuilding) of the Staff Associations.

General Suggestions:

1. Capitalize on the good work already there. Make sure the information is there. Do not do too much re-inventing (duplication of efforts)

2. Create Staff support teams. Brainstorm - work with Department Heads.

3. Are we meeting needs? Ask staff ... not just the choir, but every staff member ... see if they have issues we have not focused on.

4. Don't be discouraged!!! If we get only one Staff Association moved from inactive to active status ... celebrate!

I found these items touching me in a number of soft spots. My priority from the beginning of the year was for us to get staff associations revived ... and I have felt such a time constraint from my "regular" work that I'm looking at half the academic year almost over!!! We don't need to worry about Staff Senate numbers if we have strong associations. "If you build them (staff associations), they will come (staff senate)"

Delbert Jones also encouraged me to delegate. He suggested we form teams to focus on particular areas where the staff associations are weak. I hope that we can do this after the holiday break.

For those of you who couldn't make last night's function, I hope this brief note helps to give you the gist of it. Please think of staff contacts you have in some of the "weak" association areas. I will be working on the College of Engineering personally to see what I can do to get another senator or two from here. Thanks to all of you for your support.

Respectfully submitted:

Ben Poe, President
Joy Thorn, Secretary