

Staff Senate Minutes
January 19, 2006
1810 Litton Reaves

The meeting was called to order, November Minutes approved, and agenda was approved.

Present: Judy Alford, Susan Archer, Lee Bishop, Sheila Blankenship, Jean Brickey, Catherine Caldwell, Sam Camden, Melissa Coleman, Reba Crawford, Carolyn Dudding, Jessie Eaves, Walter Hartman, C. Denise Jones, Joyce Landreth, Lori Lee, Tracy McCoy, Suzanne Piovano, Christy Porterfield, Linda Price, Tal Roberts, Lynn Robinson, Becky Saylor, Bradley Scott, Louellen Sharp, Lori Anne Sheppard, Chris Thomas, Hubert Walker, Ken Wieringo,

Excused: Sue Ellen Crocker, Velva Groover, Cindy Koziol, Robyn Roddy, Tess Sentelle, Melissa Simpkins

Guest: Debbi Morgan, Kevin McDonald, Maggie Sloan

Joyce Landreth will be the new representative taking Widget Shannon's place.

Keep May 4, 2006 open for the McComas Leadership Seminar. All three Information Technology divisions are now represented.

Debbi Morgan from Human Resources (previously called Personnel Services) handed out a packet that contained Campus Violence Prevention Information and Resources sheet and a draft proposal for the Campus & Workplace Violence Prevention and Crisis Management Resource Manual. She can send a packet to individuals who didn't get a copy if they will notify her at dmorgan@vt.edu. Training will be given on the new program to departments wanting it. Let Debbi know if your department is interested in the training program. Another program that will be coming out is Responsible to Disruptive Students. More information will be coming out later on about this program. Linda Woodard, Jean Brickey, and others are working on establishing an Association in Human Resources. The University of Virginia, William and Mary, and Virginia Tech are the three colleges in the highest tier that will be writing all of their own policies except for Retirement and Health Care benefits for the new Restructuring Plan. Staff will be asked for their opinions establishing these new these new policies.

Kevin McDonald, Director of Equal Opportunity Office, spoke concerning the activities of his office. He is willing to listen to staff inputs and welcomes anyone that has a concern to come to his office. Maggie Sloan has just been hired as the Associate Director of that office. Kevin indicated that people are alike in a lot of ways but are also very different. Some individuals prefer to handle differences by ignoring them but if those differences are seen and recognized, people would feel better. His office will be trying to develop a H.S. Leadership Program that will provide leadership skills and VT scholarships to high school students. This office hopes to hold Conflict Resolution Program training this summer. He opened the floor up to questions and answers. After talking with a few Senators, he was made aware that there is a problem here on campus concerning position status. It was suggested that the Equal Opportunity Office speak to the campus about the status differences here at the University. A suggestion was also made to include information on appreciation of socio-economic class differences and role/job/career choices in trainings, publications, and talks on diversity. This is a form of discrimination along with race, color, etc. As Jesse Jackson said in his speech on campus on January 16, 2006, "You can not do anything about where you were born, what your culture is or what color you are, but you can do something about your character."

Speakers for the next Staff Senate meetings are President Steger or Kurt Krause if the President is in Richmond, February; Zenobia Hikes, March; Doug Martin, April; and Kurt Krause or if he speaks in February, President Steger, May. Nominations for elections will be coming up in March.

Commission and Committee reports were given.

McComas Leadership – May 4, 2006 – 8:30 – 1:00 – place to be determined

Communications – Lori Anne Sheppard will phone Mortgage and Finance Companies who have been leaving phone mail on this line and inform those individuals that this line is a University phone.

University Council – passed Resolution to add new programs to the Graduate School. Proposing thermostats on campus be set at certain temperature to save energy. Proposing new automatic faucets be installed on campus to conserve water.

CCSA – Linda Woodard updated on the Restructuring process. An employee hired after 1 July 2006 will be a University employee. The proposed date for current employees to have an option to change to a University employee is July 2007. To look at questions and answers concerning the Restructuring process, visit the web site http://www.vt.edu/restructuring/FAQ_employees.html#employees_q1. Debbie Morgan talked on the new Campus and Workplace Violence Prevention program. Judy Alford will meet with President Steger on Feb 9, 2006. Staff Employee of the Week is now listed on the Human Resources Home Page.

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity – Martin Luther King Week was celebrated with Jesse Jackson speaking on campus, community service projects, and a Diversity Summit being held. Principles of Community should be displayed around campus. All Deans should have them in their offices.

Faculty Affairs – Dealing with family-friendly activities like time off, day care, adult care, transportation, and single-life issues. Hope to make VT a personable environment. Small word changes were made in the Faculty Handbook.

Administrative and Professional Faculty – Members discussed the campus climate, professional development and mileage reimbursement.

Human Resources would like to do another Quality of Work/Life Survey. Last one done was in 1997. Check out the new study room on the 4th Floor of the Library. Suggestion was made to have someone talk about the ten-year plan of VT – roads, building infrastructure, parking, etc. A comment was made that nine-month and wage positions shouldn't have to pay for full year parking.

NEXT MEETING – FEBRUARY 16, 2006
Either President Steger or Kurt Krause

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyne S. Dudding