

Staff Senate Minutes
April 20, 2006
1810 Litton Reaves

The meeting was called to order. Welcome was given. Agenda was approved.

Present: Judy Alford, Kevin Ayoub, Susan Archer, Robin Atkins, Jean Brickey, Catherine Caldwell, Lisa Cotting, Carolyne Dudding, Trudy Epperly, Carolyn Furrow, Velva Groover, Susan Haymore, Jennifer Hundley, Trans Hundley, C. Denise Jones, Cindy Koziol, Lori Lee, Jimmy Martin, Tracy McCoy, Sharron McElroy, Deborah Morgan, David Pluska, Lynn Robinson, Wyatt Sasser, Becky Saylor, Bradley Scott, Tess Sentelle, Louellen Sharp, Lori Anne Sheppard, Melissa Simpkins, Jody Smiley, Joyce Smith, Chris Thomas, Ken Wieringo, Jon Wooge

Excused: Sue Ellen Crocker, Christy Porterfield, Vicki Walter

Guest: Doug Martin

McComas Seminar – May 4, 2006, 8:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. – Yellow Brick Road, Where We Are Now, Where We Are Going. Tables will be assigned. There are 108 registered to attend.

Travis Hundley from Sponsored Program was introduced. Two new Staff Associations are in the process of being established and should be on board by July 2006.

All Officers and Representatives have been elected for next year except for the Secretary position. One person has recently been nominated for Secretary. If there are any others interested in the position, contact Jon Wooge (jwooge@vt.edu).

Jean Brickey attended the Board of Visitors (BOV) Meeting in March. Before introducing Jean, President Steger told the BOV that without the Classified Staff, VT will collapse. Jean indicated that the employees were concerned with Restructuring because the BOV would be making the decisions about their salary.

Capital Campaign will be going public in December.

The Resolution to change the Staff Senate Bylaws Article II Section B to change the election of officers to be held by secret ballot by April 1 was approved after a discussion about not having to mention voting by secret ballots. Messages asking for nominations will be sent out in February.

Speakers for Staff Senate in May will be Kurt Krause; June – Betsy Flanagan; and July-Linda Woodard and Tony Gamble.

Doug Martin spoke on the changes in the Health Care program. Benefit programs are put in place to help both the employees' journeys and management needs. There is no state subsidiary to retiree benefits. The best change in the Health Care benefits starting July 1, 2006 is that we will only have one card that lists all benefits. This plan emphasizes the Wellness and Preventative Care programs. The High Deductible Plan has no premium cost but you will have an upfront \$1200 out-of-pocket cost. This plan is for the Healthy and Wealthy. You will pay all cost for medicines when you buy them up to your deductible cost. After meeting the deductible amount, then the charge to the person would be 80/20 – Anthem will pay 80% and you 20%.

Health Savings Accounts (medical) – an account set up at a bank or a Flexible Spending Account – account set up though VT can help with out-of-pocket medical expenses. A person can not have both accounts. Flexible Spending Account (FSA) is a use it or lose it account. You can not itemize a FSA on your taxes. For prescriptions, you must pay up front and then get reimbursed from your FSA. The State has rejected the idea of using a card to deduct from your account for the last two years. An employee can opt out of a company-provided health plan. If desire, you can remain in the health care plan for your life time. Even if a retiree has both A&B parts of Medicare, he/she can keep the prescription plan. There are a number of scheduled

meetings planned in surrounding areas and on campus to answer individualized questions. Premiums will be costing more. Out-of-Network means out of Anthem, not just out of area. There are a number of hospitals and providers that are affiliated with Anthem throughout the country. Over 80 percent of doctors and hospitals participate in Anthem. As Doug has said and continues to say, "Be Pleasantly Selfish to Yourself".

Ensure your beneficiaries are current – has there been any changes in your life (birth, divorce, death, etc.). Pay attention to details. If beneficiaries need to be changed, get a new form, have it notarized, and turn it in; check with Carolyn Pratt, Human Resources; or check with Minnesota Life directly.

If you leave the Virginia Retirement System, ensure you aren't coming back. If over 50 years employees can shelter up to \$30,000 this year. A ROTH account, you pay taxes on it now but it grows taxed free. A ROTH 457 is with the State. Doug told us to make sure we understand the terminology of our benefits, to check all figures on bills we receive and to not put our Virginia Retirement money in a Trust fund. He explained the different programs concerning the Cash Match program.

In 2-3 weeks, more information should be coming out concerning the Restructuring Plan. Nothing in the Benefit section of the Plan will be changing at this time. Doug said, "As Dr. Hyatt indicated, nobody will be pushed to become a University Employee, but may be pulled in that direction". Newly-hired employees as of July 1, 2006 will be University Employees.

Lori Anne Sheppard will serve on CAPFA until July 1, 2006. The results of the survey that was given to AP faculty will be shared with AP faculty and Administrators.

Staff Appreciation Day will be May 17, 2006.

NEXT MEETING: May 18, 2006 with Kurt Kraus as the speaker.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dudding