

**STAFF SENATE Minutes**  
**Graduate Life Center Room B, Thursday, February 16, 2012**  
12:00 noon – 1:00 P.M.

**Attending:** Aaron Akers, Bonnie Alberts, Beth Alley, Susan Archer, Brent Bowden, Lori Greiner, Velve Groover, Jennifer Hanratty, Anna Hawthorne, Robena Hughes, Hal Irvin, Denise Jones, Maxine Lyons, Steve Myers, Karen Nicholson, Heather Baldwin Patel, Angie Robinson, Becky Saylor, Robert Sebek, Louellen Sharp, Judy Taylor, Sue Teel, Leslie Thornton-O'Brien, Ken Wieringo, Patricia Williams, and Jon Wooge.

**Excused:** Judy Alford, Shelly Key, Tracy McCoy, and Wyatt Sasser. **Guest:** Steve Tatum

**Opening:** President Maxine Lyons called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM. The agenda was adopted. Minutes of the January 19 meeting were approved as posted electronically.

**Announcements:** Communications Committee will soon launch the new Staff Senate web site. Robert Sebek requested pictures and more information about the James D. McComas Staff Leadership Seminar. Elections and Nominations Committee will soon be having a called meeting to finalize the ballot... Elections will again be conducted by Survey. Jon Wooge announced that the following positions still need a nomination or volunteer to serve next year: Representatives to the Commissions on Faculty Affairs, Administrative and Professional Faculty, and University Support, as well as Secretary of Staff Senate. Elections will be in March, and succession of the officers will take place July 1. McComas Staff Leadership Seminar Planning Committee is on task, on time, and on budget announced Leslie Thornton-O'Brien, chairperson of the May 3 event. Commission on Faculty Affairs met January 27, and heard an update by Dr. Sherwood Wilson on the Multi-Modal Transportation Facility, and the January 31 University Athletics Committee meeting included a fall academic update, and a discussion and tour of facility upgrades.

Steve Tatum, representative to the Intellectual Properties Committee, reported on two changes to Policy 13, 000: 1.) tightening the wording about Virginia Tech's ownership of inventions and software developed by employees, and 2.) lowering the amount of university resources needed to trigger university ownership of work by students and others who are not employed by Virginia Tech. Current language in the policy says "...the strong presumption of ownership is to the university..." Proposed draft says, "... as a condition of employment or other involvement in research and/or related activities using University Resources, the ownership is to the university..." Regarding the second change, Virginia Tech currently owns intellectual property if students and others use \$10,000 of university resources. The proposed amount would change to \$5,000.

**Old Business:** None. **New Business:** None.

**Program:** Cynthia Rutherford, Director, Employee Wellness, will not be here today. She injured her back this morning loading books she was bringing for her presentation.

President Lyons opened the floor to further information sharing and questions.

Hal Irvin gave an update and outline of the policy on conviction checks. They will be required on all new employees and promotions for staff and faculty. Presently only 2.0% of applicants are not hired/promoted on the basis of conviction check results. The policy will go into effect in July, once it is approved by the Board of Visitors,

Responding to a query about Stadium Woods, Maxine Lyons said that she is the representative of the Staff on the committee appointed to make recommendations as to how to go forward on this issue. This committee that includes town representatives and faculty that teach in Stadium Woods meets every two weeks. According to President Lyons, no Staff Senate resolution is needed to assure a thorough investigation of the costs and benefits. The committee has already hired a tree study.

Responding to a question about the recent announcements about legislative action on the employee contribution to the Virginia Retirement System, Hal Irvin replied that employees will not have to pay the proposed 1.0% into VSR. Still on the table are the issues of reducing the Cost of Living escalator from 5% to 3%, and changing the compensation base used in calculating an individual's benefit from the final three years of employment to the final five years.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be Thursday, March 15, in a location yet to be determined. The guest speaker will be announced at a later date.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan L. Archer  
Senate Secretary