



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE STAFF COUNCIL MEETING OF NOVEMBER 18, 2004

The third regular meeting of the Staff Council for the academic year 2004-2005 was held in the University Room (BB 2.06.04) at 8:30 a.m. with Venetta Williams presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance.

Members present: Lisa Blancas-Olivares, Kim Brandt, Antreshawn Buhl, Patricia Dunn, Maria Espericueta, Suzy Gray, Elnora Kennedy, Dottie Kyle, Carolyn Motley, Cindy Orth, Ann Roberts, Trish Roberts, Sonia Saenz, Anne Speights, Mary Lou Spillers, Velma Tristan, Steve Wagner, Venetta Williams.

Members absent: Rebecca Alvarez, Chris Chipps, Lachelle Dixon, Fred Hample, Minnie Martinez, Carmen Ortegon, Dee Russell-Terrell, Rosalinda Stead, Don Swinson, Roger Terry.

II. Minutes of the October 28, 2004, meeting were approved.

III. Guest Speakers:

A. Powell Trotti, Director of Business Operations Downtown, briefed the Council on the student and discounted bus passes available from VIA. There is no intent to offer a different discounted pass to faculty and staff other than VIA's Big Pass, which costs \$20 per month for unlimited use throughout the city. Mr. Trotti asked the council for assistance in determining the need and interest in the university selling the VIA Big Pass on campus as is done with the student semester pass. The Council discussed the possibility of greater promotion of VIA route and pass information. A suggestion was made to add a link to the Staff Council web page ("You asked") with a link to a survey or to the VIA information flyer.

B. Diana Pina, Diversity Trainer with the Office of Institutional Diversity, spoke to the Council about diversity training available. After an exercise depicting various incidents, Ms. Pina informed the Council that the important thing was to take some type of action when observing an incident. She also informed the Council that their office is putting together some focus groups that will meet at the end of January. She asked for a potential list of staff who might be able to participate in the focus groups.

IV. Report of the Executive Board Activities

Venetta Williams attended the Employee Advisory Council meeting in Austin. The EAC is composed of members from all components and meets quarterly at different campuses. Venetta was elected to the EAC Policy Committee. UTSA's Staff Council

is similar to other components' groups although others seem to have a higher activity level. Other information discussed at the Executive Board meeting will be discussed in New Business.

V. Committee Reports

- A. Communication Committee: Patti Dunn thanked Suzy Gray for taking care of all the web links. Changes to be made to the website should be sent to Patti.
- B. Employee Benefits/Compensation Committee: Trish Roberts reported the committee met and discussed the FMLA/disability issue. The committee would like to invite Angela Hardwick to speak to the Council at a future meeting. The committee also found out that there is no collective place on campus for information on discounts from area vendors. The Council proposed making a recommendation that there be a central depository place on campus to collect and disseminate vendor discount information. The committee also discussed ways to be proactive in getting information out about the Staff Council. Some ideas were to contact University Communications (publication in UTSA News/Today), enclose flyers with paychecks, prepare a roster/information sheet to hand out at new employee orientation, and possibly getting an article in the Paisano.
- C. Elections Committee: Lisa Blancas-Olivares asked for volunteers for this year's election process.

VI. Old Business – None.

VII. New Business

- A. The staff's morale needs a boost throughout the university. In general, the staff wants more money and recognition. The Staff Council needs to know what the staff wants the Council to do for them. One complaint is update of the older buildings is being overlooked while concentration is on new buildings. The university is in the process of updating directional signs on campus. The Council can submit a proposal that approved colors other than "UTSA white" be used to paint the inside of older buildings. Cindy Orth recommended that the Council draft a list of points of concern and/or issues at the December meeting. She asked the members to bring ideas back next month after researching what the Staff Council should propose. Cindy encouraged everyone to look at other component's websites, specifically looking at their purpose, mission, roles, etc.
- B. Suzy Gray has a camera and can take everyone's photo. Everyone will need to sign a consent form. Suzy stated that building a new website for the Staff Council would be labor-intensive and she would not be able to do this. She cannot develop a new website but can maintain what we already have. Cindy will talk to Craig Evans and Joe McBride and report back to the Council in December.

- C. Reviewing/Amending By-Laws to Replace Departing Members: We need to review the by-laws to decide how we want to deal with replacing members who resign or retire from the university. We lost one member last summer and are losing John McGee this month. Currently the Elections Committee keeps a list of the top four people who got the most votes to fill a position. We could go to the next person on the list to fill the remaining term. Lisa will check other components' by-laws and report next month.
 - D. The next meeting will include a potluck breakfast. Cindy Orth will coordinate this. A flyer will be sent by e-mail.
 - E. Dr. Bailey will be a guest speaker at the February meeting. The Council agreed to ask Angela Hardwick to give a presentation at the January meeting.
 - F. Several members volunteered to have their names submitted for the diversity focus groups. Venetta asked that any further recommendations be e-mailed to her; information should include name, department, title, location, phone number and a short professional bio.
 - G. Ann Roberts announced that beginning Spring 2005 Financial Aid will take over processing of employee benefits for staff members. Employees can still submit forms to Fiscal Services but they will only let you know how much is owed to the university. Financial Aid will disburse the employee assistance award as a financial aid award. This fall 95 employees are taking advantage of the program. Venetta handed out a package explaining the UT System Employee Education Program. Staff Council members were asked to explain the package to employees. A recommendation was made to put the package on the website with a link to the form.
- VIII. Next meeting: December 16, 2004, BB 2.06.04 (University Room), at 8:30 a.m.
- IX. Meeting adjourned.