

COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY SYSTEM STAFF

December 18, 2001

Revised Minutes

Members Present:

Roy Ross, Chair
Fran Younger, UMCES
Kay Martel, UB
Joe Hill, UMBC
Vera Maher, USMO
Patrick McLane, FSU
Beverly Morris, UMUC
Andrianna Stuart, UMCP
Jeanette Cartron, UMCP
Susann Shoop, TU
Donna Test, SU
Sally Hearn, UMBC
Brenda Warwick, UMES
Gwen Scott, UMES
Carol Prier, UMCP
Venus Windmiller, UMBI
Judy Lowe, SU
Jessica Bird, UMB
Judy Young-Espeut, USMO
Shelia Richburg, UMBI

Alternates:

Stephen Agnes, UMB
Hermetta Hudson, UMES
Karen Stukes, UMBI
Art Hanlin, FSU
Starrla Levine, UB

Liaisons:

Rosario I. Van Daalen, USM Office

Guests:

Mr. John Martin
Vice Chancellor for Advancement
and President, USM Foundation

Sandy Ratke, UMCP

The meeting was called to order at 10 am. Vera Maher, USM Office representative, introduced John Martin, Vice Chancellor for Advancement and President, USM Foundation. Mr. Martin welcomed the group and addressed the challenges facing the USM institutions. Enrollment is at an all-time high, particularly out-of-state enrollments. USM is busy with the recruitment of a new Chancellor because he will depart on April 30th and several institutional presidents. He thanked the Council for its long-term efforts on behalf of staff.

Guests and new council members were introduced.

The minutes from the November meeting were reviewed and accepted with revisions.

Human Resources Report

1. The USM Policy on Call-up to Active Military Duty During a National or International Crisis or Conflict for USM Exempt and Nonexempt Staff Employees on Regular Status was approved in concept by the Board of Regents (BOR) on October 5th, 2001. At this time there is no State policy on this subject. State memorandums addressing Military Leave issues were incorporated into a policy. Proposed by State and offered initially by the USM, but not incorporated into the policy, because proposal was rejected by the Governor – USM offered an additional 15 days of military leave, if necessary. This will apply only until December 31st, 2001. Next year it will revert to only 15 days military leave.

2. The stated policy is as follows:

Tuition remission policy will still be in effect for military personnel even if they take Leave without Pay.

If called up by President of the USA, employees use accrued leave and once they go on leave without pay, USM will pay both state and employee benefit premiums. If called up by Governor, employee maintains all pay and benefits—Leave with Pay

3. Currently, many employees do not know about the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). It either does not exist at many institutions or employees who need assistance do not know where to go for help. Rosario has done a formal inquiry and found the following practices:

- The two best programs in USM are at College Park and UMB. These programs were comprehensive, a funnel for additional resources and information, and referred employees to outside organizations
- Towson University uses the TU Counseling Center which assists employees with problems such as financial, personal, eldercare, abuse, trauma, etc. The new President has given money toward a new position.
- The USM Office, UMCES and UMUC may send employees to College Park
- Salisbury University's new HR director is major supporter of the program with a concerted effort towards a **new** effective program to be funded by SU.
- FSU and other institutions use state resources and are very unhappy with results.

Questions asked: Were there any alternatives for the institutions with no resources?

Perhaps the newly elected Unions could provide some assistance? Could UMB's School of Social Work expand its services to other institutions, particularly those in the Baltimore region? The Council asked the Benefits Committee to investigate.

4. The State Higher Education Labor Relations Board (SHELRB) will hold its next meeting on December 20th at 5:30 pm at the Lowe House, Rowe Blvd., Annapolis.

The election results at the following institutions were announced:

- CSC, Police & Nonexempt—AFSCME; Exempt pending appeal
- FSU, Nonexempt—AFSCME; Police - Pending
- SU, Nonexempt, election run-off between AFSCME and MCEA, TBA
- UB, Nonexempt, election challenged; Police MCEA
- UMCP, Nonexempt—AFSCME
- UMUC, Nonexempt—AFSCME; Exempt petition withdrawn
- UMCES, Nonexempt—MCEA

The election results for BSU were not known. UMES will hold elections for Nonexempt employees on January 23rd. UMBC elections will be in February. The message from the CUSS Chair explaining the election process to USM employees, was challenged and not allowed to be sent forward at that time. The issue was given to John Anderson, Attorney General's office to make a determination of acceptability. The AG's office and Jamin Raskin, Chair of the SHELRB determined it was not biased.

Rosario distributed the proposed Regulations on CB from the SHELRB. These have been published in the MD Register and the deadline for the period of comment is

January 14, 2002. The SHELRB will also entertain verbal comments at its January 31st meeting.

5. Tuition Remission Policy, recently expanded to include MSU and St. Mary's College, has been sent to the AG's office for clarification on whether or not it includes BCCC. If approved by the BOR, BCCC spouses and dependents must attend BCCC for first two years (60 credit hours) before transferring to USM institution. Beginning in Spring 2002 it will be offered on a trial basis.
6. Rosario was asked what effect the Governor's hiring freeze (November 12, 2001) will have on Contingent II conversions to authorized lines. She explained that many of the conversions for this year had already taken place before November 12. FSU had agreed to convert some Contingent II positions in December 01. Since that commitment was made before Nov. 12, those conversions were honored.
7. The COLA is still expected to go into effect on January 1, 2002.
8. Legislation on the Optional Retirement Plan, health benefits amendment, became effective on October 1, 2001. This includes health coverage at full cost, group rate, for spouses and dependents but designations are critical. Spouse and dependents must be named beneficiaries.

Chair's Council

Roy Ross informed Chancellor, Board of Regents (BOR), and Presidents of **SHELRB** criticism of his letter clarifying Collective Bargaining election choices. His letter was not communicated at certain institutions because of challenge from Executive Director of SHELRB. Then it was dispersed too late due to election dates. Roy had an opportunity to speak with each institutional president on confusion and discrepancies issues. Presidents and Regents were quite upset the message from Roy Ross, CUSS Chair, pertaining to election information, was not allowed to be sent out in time for the earliest elections.

CUSS Working Committees Reports:

Benefits/Compensation will be working on the following issues (in order of priority):

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Merit pay standardized at 2 1/2% for Exempt staff who "meet expectations"
- Evaluation and follow-up on Nonexempt Merit Pay Task Force
- Lobbying for Building Excellence through Staff Training (BEST) program
- System Policy on sick leave donations as it applies to retirement

Communications

- Report to BOR on three institutional models for Best Shared Governance practices (UMCES, UMBC, UMB)
- Cover letter for BOR report-January meeting
- Executive summary of Report

Community Development

- Link to Staff Awards on website
- Information sent to institutions on Staff Awards in mid-December
- Staff Picnic-tentative date in July 22; will have one-hour meeting at beginning of picnic. The following locations were suggested: Donaldson Brown, Podickory Pt. (near Sandy Pt), Quiet Waters (Annapolis), Swallow Falls (Deep Creek), Hershey Park, Patapsco Pk., Horn Pt. or Solomons, Cambridge, and Ocean Pines

Legislative Affairs

- Waiting to hear budget report; economists from UMCP predict an economic turnaround by December 2002.
- Representatives must familiarize themselves with delegates; call them when necessary

Old Business

The **CUSS** membership list on the website was updated

Council agreed to award Chancellor with special plaque from CUSS

Executive Committee will decide on wording; Kay Martel will send out for comments

New Business

Address correction made to CUSS letterhead.

Domestic Partner issue will be important during the legislative session.

Motion to adjourn at 2:25pm. Seconded and accepted.

The next meeting will be 10 a.m., January 22, 2002, at the University of Baltimore