

COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY SYSTEM STAFF
October 23, 2001
Revised Minutes

Members Present:

Roy Ross, Chair
Fran Younger, UMCES
Kay Martel, UB
Joe Hill, UMBC
Patrick McLane, FSU
Bruce Abbott, UMCES
Andrianna Stuart, UMCP
Jeanette Cartron, UMCP
Dottie Holland, BSU
Donna Test, SU
Judy Lowe, SU
Brenda Warwick, UMES
Gwen Scott, UMES
Carol Prier, UMCP
Venus Windmiller, UMBI
LuAnn Marshall, UMB

Jessica Bird, UMB
Willie Fields, CSC
Vera Maher, USMO

Alternates:

Dale O'Neal, BSU
Hermetta Hudson, UMES
Ead Foote, UMUC

Liaison:

Rosario I. van Daalen, USM Office

Guest:

Spencer Deakin, FSU

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. Patrick McLane, FSU representative, introduced Spencer Deakin. Mr. Deakin welcomed the group and reinforced the importance of CUSS in Shared Governance at FSU.

Brenda Warwick of UMES introduced Hermetta Hudson, UMES Nonexempt Alternate.

The minutes from the September meeting were reviewed, accepted with revisions.

Human Resources Report

- 1) Open Enrollment ends the end of October. Any changes to coverage and benefits for 2002 must be made by November 1st. Members were encouraged to make changes as soon as possible to avoid last minute rush. The U.S. Savings Bond Campaign and the Maryland Charities Campaign are underway during the same time period.
- 2) Zurich Insurance Company will no longer offer insurance coverage through USM. Farmer's Insurance Company recently merged with Zurich and decided not to offer coverage to large groups. Employees have until the end of the coverage period to find an alternate company.
- 3) A list of institutions for which unions have filed election petitions was circulated.

The first election will take place at FSU on November 14, 2001 for Nonexempt staff and Security Police Officers. Once the petitions are filed, elections must be held within ninety days. December 31st is the last available election day for those petitions filed on October 1st. Each institution will have an opportunity to sit with the State Higher Education Relations Board to decide how to hold a vote (mail-in vs on-site). FSU will have an on-campus election from 6am to 4pm to include all shifts. Employees must be present to vote. Police and Nonexempt staff will each have their own election voting booth. Privacy will be given during *voting*. Certain restrictions will be in effect:

- No campaigning for specific number of hours before election begins
- One hundred foot ring around election place- no buttons, posters, flyers allowed within that area
- The process for “Confidential,” “Supervisory,” and “Management” is in order at FSU but probably not on other institutions yet. Employees will be notified by letter whether they are eligible to vote or excluded from Collective Bargaining.

The constitutionality of restricting campaign buttons within the 100 foot ring was challenged by some CUSS representatives as a violation of Civil Rights because it is something worn on your person.

The next SHELRB meeting will be October 25th in Silver Spring. Meetings will be regularly scheduled for 4th Thursday of month except for Thanksgiving and Easter. SI-IELRB trying to get organized. Board just moved into office space and received office equipment. Hope for timely agenda for future meetings. Rules and Regulations for SHELRB will be decided upon at October meeting.

Chairs Report

The Board of Regents (BOR) met on October 5th at the University of Baltimore. The BOR Staff Awards were presented at the meeting. Because of the lack of publicity, very few staff members attended the presentation. Many staff were unaware that the awards would be given at this time and expressed concern that Staff Awards did not receive the important recognition that Faculty Awards have in the past. Several recommendations were made with the goal of improving Regent awareness of staff awards:

- Moving Council reports earlier in the BOR meeting agenda
- Announcement of Awards and Award winners made at BOR meeting
- Actual Awards given at the Chancellor’s reception each fall

The BOR Staff Award agenda was discussed. LuAnn Marshall reiterated the aesthetic presentation of nominees’ package is not important. Nominees are judged on service accomplishments, not marketing as a package. Committee is concerned that institutions do not take deadline seriously. Several institutions submitted nominee packets after the deadline last year and were rejected. This year a serious focus will be toward making sure all institutions nominate and recognize outstanding employees.

- The Shared Governance Report from USM institutions will be sent to the BOR Education Committee for review in November. The next BOR meeting is in December.

Chancellor's Report

- The BOR Staff Awards were announced and the Shared Governance report discussed. Shared Governance report will be presented to BOR Education Committee for November meeting with plans to submit at BOR December meeting.

The Governor recently signed an Executive Order placing a freeze on all hiring for the State. As of today, it doesn't extend to the USM. The BOR will meet to decide if the Executive Order will be extended to the USM. The freeze also extends to all Capital Planning Projects. This includes plans for USM construction on Coppin's campus. Rosario van Daalen was asked to address the rumor that state employees will not receive the 4% COLA scheduled for January 2002. She said the money has already been budgeted and is expected to proceed. However, State Budget decisions will be made by December 15th and a firmer answer on COLA is expected at that time.

The Communications Committee is gathering institutional Shared Governance organization charts. Each institution is asked to gather information reflecting number of different councils and employees in each group. It will put together a summary on Best Practices in the System and present to the BOR and Presidents. Several institutions such as UMCES and UMBI have very unique situations because research centers are scattered across the state.

Several pieces of legislation will be of importance to Staff in the upcoming Legislative Assembly. Among them are the Whistle-Blower Act which includes Equal Opportunity guidelines and locations for filing employee grievances. Frank Komenda will be asked to attend the November meeting to explain the legislative process and specific information on the 2002 session. Frank will retire as of December 31st. Maitland Dade will be on loan from BSU to fill in during the 2202 session.

The following are goals set by CUSS Working Committees for 2001/2002:

Community Development

Staff Picnic
Staff Awards

Compensation

Staff Ratio/representation
BEST practices
System Policy on sick leave regulations and buy back at retirement
Merit pay standardized at 2 1/2% for Exempt staff who "meet expectations"
Updating USM Employee Handbook
Improvement of Performance Evaluation Process

Communications

Organization Charts

Benefits

Employee Assistance Policy

Sick Leave Donations
Sick Leave Retirement Issues

Legislative Affairs

2002 Legislation

Rosario will clarify the System process for employees at top of range and ineligible for base increase for "Above Standards" or "Outstanding" ratings. Recommendation is bonuses be given in those exceptions.

Council members discussed institutional inconsistencies on merit raises. Some institutions give percent. some divide pool of dollars and spread evenly among recipients and some give bonuses. Reps from UMCES reported that supervisors told to never give outstanding rating. IJMES received \$250 bonus, not tied to base salary. One notable problem is terminology in Chancellor's guidelines: "up to 2 1/2%" or \$ value. Does not limit number of "Outstanding" ratings as reported by some institutions' management.

The official ballot for Collective Bargaining Vote has raised concerns. The third choice on ballot is. "No representation." There is serious concern that employees will interpret that to mean they will not be protected if they don't vote for a union. CUSS will ask that that line be changed to "No Union Representation." Roy will address the issue at the next SHELRB meeting. If not well received, he will send email to all system employees

with explanations. Supervisors and CUSS reps will be asked to post information. The first institutional vote will be FSU on November 14th.

Brenda Warwick asked for advice concerning UMES employees request for 4 day/12 hour work week in the summer with the hope of increasing morale. Rosaric thought it would be a problem for essential personnel and small departments. She suggested they could rotate off days to make sure all positions are covered. The change in policy decision will have to be addressed at UMES because it is an institutional decision.

A request was made that a certificate of recognition be sent by CUSS to Staff Award winners and a letter of recognition sent for all nominees. Venus Windmiller will follow use same certificate as last year.

Other committees were deferred until November meeting.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 27th at UMCP.