

**Council of University System Staff
Bowie State University
November 15, 2005**

| Members Present | Alternate Members |
|---------------------------|--|
| Marie Meehan - BSU | |
| Dale O'Neal - BSU | |
| Sam Sibanda - UMBI | |
| Jim Hartsock-UMUC | Jesse Ketterman |
| Chenita Kollock-UMES | Janine Vienna - SU |
| Bernedette Bell - CSU | |
| Mary Reed - USMO | ***** |
| Joe Hill – UMBC - Chair | Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS |
| John Barber - UMB | Rosario I. van Daalen, USMO |
| Christine Routzahn - UMBC | ***** |
| Thomas Noyes - UMCP | GUESTS: Dr. Calvin W. Lowe, President |
| Larry Lauer – UMCP | Bowie State University |
| David DeLooze - UMB | Ms. Cynthia Coleman, Chair |
| Donna Taylor - UMBI | BSU's Staff Council |
| Lidia Schechter - UMBC | |
| Roy Ross - UMB | |
| Cindy Schuster-UB | |

Call to Order

Joe Hill, Chair, called the November meeting to order at Bowie State University (BSU) at 10:00 a.m.

Dale O'Neal welcomed CUSS members and alternates to Bowie State University, and then introduced BSU's president, Calvin W. Lowe. In his brief remarks, Dr. Lowe mentioned the new Center for Business and Graduate Studies which is currently being built on campus. The center will be completed in about 18 months. The official groundbreaking ceremony took place in September. Dr. Lowe was asked about BSU's current enrollment, and he replied that total enrollment is about 5,300 with approximately 4,000 undergraduate students and 1,300 graduate students. Dr. Lowe also mentioned that he will be resigning as BSU's president at the end of the Spring 2006 semester.

Cynthia Coleman, chairperson of BSU's staff council, was invited to the meeting and spoke about the search for a new president. She has had the opportunity to meet with Chancellor Kirwan and she believes that he listens to staff concerns with an open mind which encourages a sense of community.

Report from the Chancellor's Liaison:

- The Fidelity 403(b) Supplemental Retirement Annuity (SRA) plan has been implemented. In electing to utilize the supplemental annuity plan(s), an employee reaps the benefit of a reduction in taxable income. The plan is available to all employees except for Contingent I's.
- UNUM – The special enrollment period has not ended yet – a spouse's coverage can now be equal to that of the employee's coverage. The minimum amount of coverage needed in order to enroll has been reduced to \$10,000. There is a 5% reduction in premium costs effective February 1, 2006.
- Joint Pension Committee has held 4 hearings in Annapolis so far this fall. Rosario, Joe Hill and Roy Ross have been very visible at, and very interested in, the meetings. The State is conducting a complete review of its Retirement/Pension Plans. There is another hearing tentatively scheduled for December. Senator Kasemeyer and Delegate James are co-chairing the committee and have shown a great interest in the employees' concerns.
- Rosario was emphatic in stating that "employees, ultimately, should only rely on the State Retirement Agency to confirm their individual information regarding their own retirement financial data, dates, and laws that apply to their own case."
- In regard to a question about how health insurance companies are chosen – Rosario responded that there is a bidding process that takes place each contract period.

Report from the Chair:

- Board of Regents Finance Committee meets this Thursday.
- In a recent meeting, several institutions' presidents expressed concern about prescription costs as well as the current pension system.
- Joe distributed a CUSS report at Board of Regents' meeting on October 21, 2005 indicating that CUSS had delivered a letter of "introduction" to State legislators on September 26, 2005. On October 20, 2005, a second letter was given to legislators – a letter of "concern" about "affordable health care and prescription coverage."
- Prescription drug cost letter on CUSS website is a "living document."
- The next letter to be delivered to State legislators will be in regard to USM's retirement package.
- Joe indicated that there is a good possibility that CUSS can work with the Council of University System Faculty (CUSF) in regard to our shared concerns – affordable health care and retirement package.
- Joe mentioned Holiday Open House at Chancellor Kirwan's home – Hidden Waters. He hopes that everyone will make an effort to go to the reception.

Benefits and Compensation Committee

- Prepare an agenda before each monthly meeting so that this committee can use its time more effectively.
- Discussed how to have Contingent II's recognized for their efforts on behalf of the institutions.
- Contact Andrew Rein, former chair of the Benefits and Compensation Committee, for any material that he might have related to this committee that would be of "benefit" to us.

Communications

- The committee is endeavoring to have the CUSS members/alternates' information – listed uniformly on the CUSS web page. It takes due diligence to keep up with changes that need to be made on a continual basis.
- Marie read the names aloud of staff serving on the standing committees to ensure that they were correct.

Community Development

- Spoke about staff awards' timeline. All institution representatives encouraged to participate in preliminary evaluation process.
- Cindy will be bringing copies of the nominations to the December meeting to be distributed for review by the different committees. Decisions on nominations to be made in January.
- Even though the Board of Regents' Staff Awards are not presented at the same time as the faculty awards – CUSS has made considerable progress in obtaining a more favorable month for staff to be honored by the Board of Regents.

Legislative

- Larry interacted with the Council of University System Faculty (CUSF). They are as concerned about the issues of prescription cost increases as CUSS.
- There was a discussion as to when Dr. Gira's plaque should be presented to her. It would be very appropriate to present it to her at Frostburg's commencement. If they can, CUSS members/alternates are encouraged to be on hand for the ceremony.
- It might be a good idea to present yearly plaques or certificates of appreciation to presidents who support CUSS.

The next meeting will be at University System of Maryland Office in Adelphi on Tuesday, December 13, 2005.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary E. Reed, Secretary