Council of University System Staff (CUSS) Meeting - MINUTES

February 23, 2010

University of Maryland College Park
College Park, MD

In attendance:

Members		**Alternates/Guests**	
Absent	BSU	Marie Meehan	BSU
Absent	CSU	Richard Rathjens	TU
Jay Hegeman	FSU	Gynene Sullivan	UMB
Jesse Ketterman	FSU	Kathy Miller	UMBC
Carol Barr	SU	Joel DeWyer	UMBC
Jackie Eberts	SU	Chenita Reddick	UMES
Brenda Yarema	TU	Michael Hughes	UMUC
Karyn Schulz	UB, CUSS Co-Secretary	Karah Mercer	UMUC
Giordana Segneri	UB, CUSS Co-Secretary		
Dave DeLooze	UMB	**********	
Ron Kasl	UMB		
Roy Ross	UMB	Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS:	
Deborah Geare	UMBC	Rosario I. van Daalen	USMO
Lori Smith-Watson	UMBC, Member at Large		
Absent	UMBI		
Gus Mercanti	UMCES	**********	
Willie Brown	UMCP, CUSS Chair		
Sister Maureen Schrimpe	UMCP		
Larry Lauer	UMCP		
Absent	UMES		
Ayman Abdo	UMUC		
Mary Reed	USMO		

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
    - CUSS Chair Willie Brown introduced Dr. Linda Clement, vice president Student Affairs of the University of Maryland College Park
        - Thanked the good work of staff that supports the System
        - There are 7,600 staff at UMCP and 1,400 faculty
        - Dr. Clement shared the story of the Provost's decision to close or not to close the UMCP campus during the two 2010 blizzards
        - Dr. Clement invited CUSS members to explore the campus
        - She called UMCP a "city of 50,000 people," which makes it the fifth largest in Maryland
        - Dr. Clement gave a special thank you to Sister Maureen Schrimpe and her staff for making sure that UMCP students were well fed during the two blizzards

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
    - January minutes approved with no needed additions or changes.

3. Legislative Update: Andy Clark, Executive Director, USM Governmental Relations
    - Information pertaining to the CUSS Annapolis Day was discussed: when to visit, where to visit, etc.
    - New legislation happening in Annapolis
        - Towson v. Morgan
        - Football Act
    - Budget meeting occurring at 1 p.m. on Feb. 23
    - Mr. Clark distributed packets regarding legislative services and information
    - Mr. Clark said very few discussions in Annapolis occur that don't involved USM Staff employees, and their welfare is always considered in these discussions
    - USM has lost more than $200 million since 2007 and recommended three areas to focus during the CUSS visit to Annapolis:
        - Furloughs: how they have impacted morale, were they really necessary versus buying days back from institutions; Staff dedication continues despite hardship
        - Support the Governor's budget proposal for USM
            - Includes small increase in USM budget
        - Issues pertaining to the Teacher Retirement/Pension plan
            - HB 1379
            - HB 1113
            - SB 974
    - Mr. Clark indicated that while the Governor's State budget includes a possibility of up to 10 furlough days for other State agencies' employees, no USM decisions will be made until after the legislative session is complete, the USM budget is finalized, and the BOR provide their final resolution.
    - The Higher Education Investment Fund is being supported by Maryland business leaders
        - Intent is to supplement general funds for USM
        - Intent is to stabilize tuition and help cover part of any tuition increase
    - Mr. Clark suggested that although anytime the Legislature is in session is a good time to visit, it is recommended to visit at the end of February or during the first two weeks of March.
    - The UMB Audit may increase the focus on USM employees making higher salaries
        - Chancellor Kirwan will publicize the results when they are finished
4. CUSS Annapolis Visit
    - CUSS members can visit as representatives of CUSS and as private citizens, but be cautious about separating between the two roles
    - Willie will send out a doodle.com calendar survey to determine the best day for CUSS to visit as a group
5. CHAIR'S REPORT

- Chancellor's Council meeting
    - Willie shared his concern expressed that there is minimal language in the USM Strategic Plan about Staff employees, while there is much verbiage about Faculty employees and Students
    - There was a discussion about the Race to the Top initiative
        - Dr. Kirwan is on the committee to help school districts write grants to earn federal money
    - Maryland Bond rating is still excellent, which helps with funding for capital projects
        - USM: AA rating
        - Maryland: AAA rating
- UMBI restructuring moving forward with many Staff and Faculty employees being reassigned positions to the Institutions that inherited their programs but there is still concern for staff who may still be losing their jobs as of July 1 due to the restructure
    - Mainly administrative Exempt Staff employees
    - Suggest a letter be written to the Chancellor and USM Presidents to ask that they continue to keep these Staff employees in mind when potential hires are made throughout the USM. Human Resources directors will be copied in this letter.
        - Larry Lauer will supply the letter (from a previous letter) with some changes to focus on current issues
- Exempt Salary structure
    - Recognized as a concern by Regent Kendall, needs to be addressed as soon as budget will allow

6. REPORT FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S LIAISON TO CUSS - Rosario van Daalen
    - Open Enrollment will occur (tentatively) from April 14, 2010 through April 28, 2010
        - Open Enrollment will be closed from April 29, 2010 through May 11, 2010
        - There will be a correction period from May 12, 2010 through May 19, 2010
        - Enrollment period earlier to allow Faculty to participate before semester ends
        - No news yet on benefits changes for next Fiscal Year or new vendors
        - Benefits coordinators will have a training on March 5, 2010 at USM Office

7. STRATEGIC PLAN DISCUSSION
    - Anthony Foster, Associate Vice Chancellor for Accountability and Planning, met with CUSS to discuss the proposed Strategic Plan and listen to concerns from CUSS
        - According to SB 682: USM is required to create and update its Strategic Plan yearly, which helps with the oversight of the System
    - First plan was written in 1999, prior to Dr. Kirwan
        - Dr. Kirwan wanted to streamline and focus the plan based on:

        - Accountability
        - Vision statement
        - Four goals, five themes
- Current plan ends 2010
    - New plan will span the decade to 20202
        - Hope to have a draft spring 2010 or summer 2010
- AVC Foster reviewed a PowerPoint that was used during the budget retreat in October 2009
- AVC Foster then answered questions from CUSS members:
    - Maintenance of facilities: There is no wording in the Strategic Plan that addresses how older facilities will be maintained, even in the capital facilities section of the plan
    - How will the plan address the lower USM Staff-to-Faculty ratio as compared to its peers?
        - Board of Regents will need to explore this in order to support the Strategic Plan
    - Focus should be on graduation/retention rate (supporting currently enrolled students) rather than simply increasing enrollment
    - How to really address Staff employees' development; work/life balance
    - Current plan mentions Faculty employees recruitment and development, but there's no mention of these initiatives for Staff employees; cannot meet Governor's goal of 55 percent educational attainment for the State without the help of Staff employees
    - Succession planning (replacing retirees) needs to happen
    - It was suggested that the wording be strongly 'beefed' up in the Staff employees section and include new plans for:
        - Staff employees development
        - Staff employees recruitment
        - Staff employees retention
    - Willie suggested that when AVC Foster drafts a white paper, CUSS members can forward comments to Willie, so he can collect and forward them to AVC Foster

8. OLD BUSINESS
    - Ad Hoc Committee (Lori Smith-Watson)
        - Motion was made to put this item on March's agenda
    - Board of Regents Awards
        - Nominations in and packets were distributed to members of each subcommittee
        - Reviewers are expected to provide their input a week prior to the next CUSS meeting

NEXT MONTH'S CUSS MEETING: March 23, 2010, Coppin State University

Respectfully submitted by Karyn Schulz and Giordana Segneri, CUSS Co-Secretaries