

Council of University System Staff (CUSS) Meeting - MINUTES

Nov. 17, 2009

Bowie State University

Bowie, MD

In attendance:

Members

Linda Parker-Ford	BSU
Dale O'Neal	BSU
Abby Byrnes	CSU
Absent	FSU
Jackie Eberts	SU
Carol Barr	SU
Gloria Gaguski	TU
Brenda Yarema	TU, Member at Large
Karyn Schulz	UB, CUSS Co-Secretary
Giordana Segneri	UB, CUSS Co-Secretary
Colette Becker	UMB, CUSS Vice Chair
Dave DeLooze	UMB
Deb Geare	UMBC
Lori Smith-Watson	UMBC, Member at Large
Mary Stapleton	UMBI
Gus Mercanti	UMCES
Willie Brown	UMCP, CUSS Chair
Sister Maureen Schrimpe	UMCP
Absent	UMES
Jessica McCarty	UMUC
Absent	USMO

Alternates/Guests

Cynthia Coleman	BSU
Marie Meehan	BSU
Shelia Murray	SU
Gynene Sullivan	UMB
Michael Hughes	UMUC
Kevin Pothier, chair of staff council	BSU

Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS: Rosario I. van Daalen	USMO

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Bowie State University President Dr. Mickey L. Burnim provided the welcome

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- October minutes approved as amended.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

- Chair Willie Brown proposed we send the Quarterly Report, to include the Frequently Asked Questions, regarding the FY 2010 budget cuts, furloughs and temporary salary reductions and examples of cost-saving actions taken by the Institutions
 - List of FAQs came from Assistant Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance Joann Goedert
 - Add bullet regarding what happens next: should it be included with a statement saying we don't know what happens next?

- Board of Public Works meets today
 - Sister Maureen Schrimpe: report, without bullet, is accurate for this quarter
 - Colette Becker: add language in introduction to say our efforts are ongoing
 - Clause will be added to first sentence of first paragraph: ACTION APPROVED
 - Jackie Eberts: Have there been any arrangements to discuss future budget cuts impact on employees prior to them happening (anticipated prior to winter break)?
 - Rosario van Daalen: For the last two furloughs, Associate Vice Chancellor Joe Vivona and the Chancellor made certain to communicate with CUSS, CUSF and Student Council
 - Gus Mercanti: Whether or not they know if the cut will happen, CUSS should be involved in planning for cuts with contingency plans for various percentages of budget cut: What will happen if another round comes?
 - Willie Brown's statement at the next Board of Regents meeting will reflect CUSS desire to be part of the decision-making process rather than recipients of news about the decision
 - Presidents should involve Shared Governance
 - USM won't tell the Institutions how to implement their cuts but will provide guidelines
 - Rosario van Daalen: There's an opportunity to work with the Presidents to improve the process
 - Each CUSS member can go to the Institution's President and get involved in decisions regarding spring and fall 2010
 - At Board of Regents meeting, Willie Brown will thank the administration for all they do but emphasize we want to be involved from the very beginning
 - Gus Mercanti: Has there been any consideration of consolidating academic programs?
 - Centralization helps cost cutting
 - Would be political hot button, given the lawsuit between Morgan State University and UMUC
- Board of Regents Awards Instruction Revision
 - Willie Brown commended Deb Geare and committee for work done to get information out on time and for clarifying issues related to who is eligible for nomination (Deb Geare sent clarification memo to Presidents)
 - Deb Geare: has revised instructions to use going forward to clarify what Exempt "C" is
 - Rosario van Daalen: In the Exempt Staff group, only subset "C" qualifies; subsets "A" and "B"—CEOs and officers—don't

- Willie Brown: If we're not asking people to edit a document, please send it out as a PDF
 - Please use layman's language when sending information to the general USM public
 - Michael Hughes: recommended some formatting changes and edits: definitions of classifications should stand alone
 - Group recommended reorganization of document for clarification; Deb Geare will revise and send it to the list for approval
 - Board of Regents Special Meeting and Chancellor's Council Meeting: USM pornography policy
 - Willie Brown's report to Chancellor's Council said we'll support whatever the Chancellor and the Board of Regents decide
 - Board of Regents decided that USM does not think it is in its best interest to pass the policy because of First Amendment issues and the difficult of enforcing the policy; this decision will be reported to the Legislature
 - Staff, Faculty, Student Meeting
 - Willie Brown sent two e-mails to Student and Faculty representatives of Student Council and CUSF about holding a joint meeting of the executive committees; all in agreement that it's a good idea and will be held the first or second week of December at USMO
 - About 20 people
 - Joint statement to Board of Regents and Chancellor: make us part of the decision-making process earlier, so we can be pre-emptive and not reactive; joint statement will carry more weight
 - Colette Becker: thanked Willie Brown for encouraging Presidents at the Board of Regents meeting not to raise parking fees; President at UMB held the line on increasing parking at his Institution
 - Willie Brown should attend the Board of Regents Finance Committee meetings if Staff or Human Resources issues will be presented; so far this year, only issues related to buildings and academic programs have been addressed
 - Once issues pass the Finance Committee, the Board of Regents almost always approves them
4. REPORT FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S LIAISON TO CUSS - Rosario van Daalen
- Revisions to Supplemental Retirement Plans: Under IRS rules, USM had to implement a document about 403 (b) plans (document in place as of Jan. 1, 2009)
 - Amended clause that had negative impact on employees wanting to take out loans from plan; after amendment, employees can take out more than one loan concurrently, as IRS requirements are restrictive enough
 - Document to be approved at the December Board of Regents meeting
 - Distributed Consumer's Report article about different medications and what's best to use for different ailments

- President Obama’s proposed Health Care plan: USM cannot do anything until the final document is signed in the federal government
- USM Human Resources Web page: list of Systemwide discounts prepared by CUSS has been posted there; can be linked to CUSS Web page
- Willie Brown: brought up to Chancellor issues regarding employees being able to take family/medical leave for their domestic partners; USM or State policies would need to be amended; Chancellor said he’d look into it
- Quarterly Report: Do we have a photo of entire CUSS membership with list of names for the front page of the fall 2009 report?
- Brenda Yarema: Is there a statewide policy about being made to work on furlough days?
 - Rosario van Daalen: Employees cannot be made to work on furlough days as stated on the Board of Regents document and it is against federal law; discuss with your Institution’s Office of Human Resources

5. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (Karyn Schulz)

- Is there a possibility of tagging on to the public transportation discount for Maryland State employees?
 - Dave DeLooze: UMB Staff Senate conducted a survey and worked with MTA to achieve a minimum number of riders to receive a pre-tax discount, coordinated with parking services
 - Can CUSS have input into statewide discount? Could be part of the Chancellor’s “green” legacy.
 - Discount was negotiated with State unions; Rosario van Daalen had looked into it several years ago and never got a response from the State. They were only considering a pilot program at that time.
 - USM and CUSS could negotiate discount on their own and not link it to the State benefit
 - Lori Smith-Watson: we can share information, gather contact information for who the interested parties are on each campus
 - Write to our General Assembly representatives
 - Who has the governor appointed to handle green initiatives?
 - Cost savings involved, because fewer garages will need to be built
 - Karyn Schulz will draft a letter, CUSS can provide feedback
 - Legislative Committee can determine who the letter should go to; copy Chancellor, Governor, Department of Transportation
 - Dale O’Neal, Bowie State University Primary Representative, introduced Kevin Pothier, chair of the Bowie Staff Council

6. AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORT

- Brenda Yarema: would like to brainstorm ideas to make CUSS more visible
- Quarterly Report should be made into PDF to send to staff lists and chairs of CUSF and Student Council
- If you have a restricted list, say “please spread this as far as you can.”
- Will also be posted on CUSS Web site, so a link will be made available.

- Lori Smith-Watson: Ad-hoc Committee has been tasked with making CUSS and benefits of work more visible
- Brainstorm: no limitations, high-level ideas
 - Give Quarterly Report to publications—Chronicle of Higher Education, campus newspapers—about concept of “shared governance”
 - Workshop to kick off Board of Regents Awards process
 - Dog and pony show at different campuses to explain what we do
 - Video or TV spot?
 - Letter from the Chancellor every semester that discusses CUSS and all Shared Governance (CUSF, Student Council)
 - New employee orientation
 - Once a year, bring Chancellor, Presidents, Board of Regents, CUSS together to increase comfort level
 - Partner more closely with CUSF, Student Council
 - T-shirts
 - Systemwide fundraiser
 - Get name, physically, on anything we push through: marketing toys
 - Group photo with T-shirts
 - Maryland Association of Counties conference booth
 - Women’s Forum
 - Participation in contest
 - Any more suggestions, send to group listserv

7. OLD BUSINESS

- Annapolis: all of CUSS meets Legislators, takes tour
 - Legislative Committee should organize for February
 - Logistics: name tags, communications
 - Start by e-mail, finalize at next meeting
 - Colette Becker will send e-mail out for everyone to respond to
- Carrying over 600 vs. 400 hours of annual leave: State benefit does not carry down to USM employees
 - Bring up through BOR to legislation, maybe discuss during trip to Annapolis

NEXT MONTH’S CUSS MEETING: Dec. 15, 2009, University System of Maryland Main Office

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