



## **General Council Meeting Minutes**

**April 13, 2007**

**Toepfer Room**

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## **1 Call to Order**

The council meeting was called to order by Chair Kathryn Howard at 10:00a.m.

## **2 In Attendance**

Baechle , Dan  
Blazar , Kathleen  
Boesinger , Laila  
Cartier , Kevin  
Charvat , Jackie  
Cole , Richard  
Dowdell , Kathleen  
Embury, Paula  
Fuller Murray , Beth  
Hetzl , Robert  
Hill , Susan  
Hlavna , Janet  
Howard , Kathryn  
Knox , Charlie  
Masely , Rosanna  
McKinney , Janet  
Nathan , Tedda  
Sherman , Brian  
Solis , Carolyn  
Taylor , Crystal  
Terchek , Joshua  
Watts-Gup , Peggy  
Watson , Lorraine

## **3 Approval of Minutes for February Meeting and Budget Report**

The minutes from the February meeting were reviewed and approved.

## **4 Announcements**

1. Nomination for president's award is still open. Forward nominations to Patsy Harris or S. Alexander
2. Volunteers needed for commencement .. contact Laurie Detmer.

3. Call for nominations for SAC vice-chair. Nominations open until April 30th. Ask to speak at next SAC meeting. For term beginning in September 2007. Beth Fuller-Murray has agreed to run. No nominations from the floor. If only one nominee, then appointment by acclamation of council.
4. Per Peggy W.G. There will be party in the quad this year. Working with Staff Rec. Committee for theme.

## 5 New Business

1. University LGBT Committee Update (M. Gibbons):

Introducing Marty Gibbons: Executive dir. of the LGBT committee at Case. Thanks for opportunity to speak. Soliciting input & feedback from SAC. Lots of progress with students, but need outreach to faculty and staff .... Still experimenting with basic mission ... University to be more open and welcoming to LGBT community. Finding the constituents is sometimes a challenge (not everyone is “out”). Many LGBT still uncomfortable within working environment. CWRU links to LGBT web site. Can sign up via email, listserv, etc. Partner policy issues. Univ nondiscrimination policy change to include transgender persons. Also trying to make univ more prominent nationally with respect to LGBT issues. Magazine for LGBT recently selected CWRU as one of the best for promoting scholarship for research in LGBT area. Reach out to faculty? Please forward suggestions, comments, etc. to Marty Gibbons.

2. Staff Policy Resolution on Ombudsperson (R. Cole):

Thanks to SAC for help with the omb. issue. First draft of resolution was about one year ago. Potential benefits of the omb. office. Looking at peer institutions – what do they do, why, how well does it work? The fact that peer institutions use the omb. position should motivate CWRU to follow suite.

What does omb bring to campus that we don’t currently have? (1) confidentiality is paramount – office is totally separate from university (2) neutrality – not an advocate for either univ, or staff, or student. Independent (3) informal – not a place to file a grievance, but rather a place to express concerns before taking more formal steps (4) role as arbiter on campus. Q: Per D. Baechle: what does omb actually do? Not an advocate, but may act as a neutral 3rd party to protect individual’s rights. Helps level the playing field. Q: What kind of change can omb help to make? Omb is a “conduit” rather than advocate. Omb office acts as a channel, and a referee to ensure that the process is followed correctly. Since appointed by the president, then has authority/responsibility to report directly to president’s office. Possible to persuade change in policy, but does not have direct authority to effect policy change. Per PW Gupp: But many of the services of omb are already provided by HR – on a confidentiality basis. Each management center within the school has mediation centers. Because of open dialog in employee relations department, there are very few grievances filed. Labor relations issues per unions on campus. HR has appeal committee, mediation services, etc. HR offices and departments are outcome-oriented. Per KH: perception on campus that there is a need for omb on campus. There are issues that some staff have about going to Employee Relations with respect

to certain kinds of highly sensitive issues. Eg., post-docs and researchers on 12-month appointment letters. Post-doc affairs office could be enhanced at lower cost than that of creating new office. Per PW Gupp: There are persons in each management center who are supposed to be performing the role of policy referee. If not, then it should be fixed. Q: Omb office provides a single “clearing house” place to go when problems arise, rather than requiring determination of which office/department is appropriate. Per C. Knox: When issues cross divisions, communities w/in univ, then it’s useful to have a resource that is unaffected by those barriers.

Q: How much would the omb cost? A: Depends on how it’s implemented. Perhaps as much as \$500,000 per year for omb + staff.

3. Update on Staff Morale Survey Findings (T. Grigger, B. Fuller-Murray):

Ad hoc committee. Review: meetings to decide how best to approach the issue. Decided to update the survey from 2002. To gauge morale at univ. several notices sent to staff, via Case Daily, 470 respondents. Addressing 1st question: is morale high or low? 361 indicated that morale is low, 32 said high, 68 were indifferent. But survey not representative sample. Reasons, fear of additional layoffs, lack of confidence in leadership, concern with fiscal management. Because of negative response on Q1, the committee would like to continue to solicit ideas & suggestions for improving morale. Q: If majority of morale issues is related to no raises, then what can committee do? A: We have no control over salary, but would like to make recommendation on issues that are within our control. Per P.W.Gupp: HR is currently working on morale issues via steering committee. Per KH: Indications of changes in policy and work environment that are doable & addressable via SAC. More importantly, addresses almost total lack of communication from exec levels. Is SAC at fault? Can we do more? E.g., people in plant are overworked, but are nevertheless happy because they are self-directed. Solicit examples of where it’s going well. If you’re happy in your work, why is your work environment better?

Per KH: Who in attendance considers a good work environment? A: per T. Nathan: (Business School) self-direction, small group. New dean has been having regular meetings with staff. Tells us what’s going on within the school. Solicit suggestions from staff – and this helps with morale. Not a gripe session, but rather an information session. Communication is key. Also respect. We need a “culture of respect” across levels of management. Note, people who are happy in their work assume that rest of univ. is like that. The converse is true. Per R. Cole: dean knows people by first name, makes a point of thanking for work, etc. Any supervisor who acknowledges the employee who stays late, etc. Per P.W.Gupp: HR is significantly overworked, but leadership nevertheless inspires enthusiasm about the work. “Treating each other as customers”. Per K. Dowdell: Met dean only once. Should be more frequent. Meetings with dean cost nothing but the dean’s time. Good for morale. Per J. Terchek: What’s up with the SOM letter asking for money? Very insensitive with respect to zero raise policy. Per R. Hetzel: What about the cost of rebranding of Case back to CWRU? Another \$500,000? Where is accountability for poor decision regarding expenses at high level? Has CWRU gone from academic culture to business culture over the past 5 years? Why is SOM so top-heavy?

4. Per Peggy W.G. There will be party in the quad this year. Working with Staff Rec. Committee for theme.

## **6 Old Business**

1. Staff Educational Enhancement Fund (K. Dowdell, K. O'Linn):
2. Smoking Policy Update:

## **7 Discussion of Issues by the Representatives**

None

## **8 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30a.m.