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Staff Council Meeting, 1/19/2010

UNM Staff Council

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University of New Mexico
STAFF COUNCIL MEETING

Summary Minutes ~ View full meeting online at staff.unm.edu
January 19, 2010 ~

Members Present: Elisha Allen, Romeo Alonzo, Marsha Baumeister, Jennifer Bayley, Loyola Chastain, Bob Christner, Mary Clark, Maria Daw, Chris Elliott, Annabeth Fieck, Barbara Gabaldon, Nancy Huffstutler, Barbara Jackson, George Kelbley, Merle Kennedy, Juan Larrañaga, Janet Luarkie, Karen Mann, Christina Maris, Suzanne McConaghy, Linda McCormick, Shannon McCoy Hayes, Lisa McHale, Kathy McKinstry, Kathy Meadows, Hollie Medina, Cindy Abel Morris, Jon Price, Shelley Rael, Fred Rose, Eva Rouf, Inigio San Gil, Cody Saxton, Judy Willson and Roberta Zozaya.

Members Absent: Sandra Bauman, Lesley Davidson Boyd, Ron Compher, James Gale, Joyce Krantman, Etta Linton, Roberta Menicucci, Russell Morris, Barbara Shortman and Gary Stepic.

Members Excused: Mary Jacintha, Rhonda Miranda and B. Frances Rico.

Parliamentarian: Not present.

Guests: Sari Kosinsky, UCAM; Kim Halpern, Con't Ed; Ray Sykes, HR; M. Carr, IT; Beulah Woodfin, ERB; Vanessa Shields; Helen Gonzales, HR; Tracy Wenzl, A+S Dean's Office; Icel Kendrick, HSC Compliance and Kash Heitkamp, University Libraries.

1. Call to Order: Speaker Clark: quorum is established.

2. Approve Agenda: Speaker Clark: agenda is amended and adopted as amended.

3. Approve Minutes: Speaker Clark: minutes are adopted as submitted.

4. The Special Order of the Day: Speaker Clark: Recognizes Councilor Loyola Chastain and announces that she is retiring next month. The Council shows appreciation for Loyola's contributions to the university on behalf of staff and students with applause.

5. Constituent Comments: Speaker Clark: (2:40 a constituent wishes to make remarks)

Mike Carr, IT Security and Quality Assurance states that due to internal audits a few UNM IT policies need revising and they will come out for 30 days for comments...we will look at all IT policies en mass.

Please take a moment to review and be familiar with our drafts that will come out soon.

<http://cio.unm.edu/standards/>

6. Executive Committee Report: President elect Kennedy: On January 6 EXEC met and Elisha reported the university is not in favor of the proposed 2% staff compensation cuts. The committee also discussed our 20th Anniversary Celebration and we may need to revisit that resolution...please take a look at that and think about it.

We met again 1/13 and Marc Saavedra briefed us on upcoming legislative meetings and initiatives...from EXEC Mary, Elisha and I will be going up to for UNM Day as well as the weekly briefings...as the session goes forward, please give us your comments as well as those of your constituents.

One of the points Marc made to us was the importance of each of us contacting our own legislators in seeking support for UNM initiatives.

7. President's Report: Elisha Allen: The BOR approved preliminary materials for the new student housing on south campus-this project does ask for our students-on a 9 mos. School calendar-to sign a 12 mo lease...despite my personal concerns, it seems to have student support and will move forward. I attended a meeting with faculty and students and city officials and my goal in these meetings is that UNM can and should do a better job of working with the community and its constituencies and I am willing to help. The city is hoping to fund-\$100,000- legislation for a joint traffic study taking a broad look at regional problems...UNM, and hopefully CNM, will have a role in this study.

As Councilors and UNM staff-of more immediate concerns to us are our wallets and checkbooks...and that impact on our salaries and services we provide. I have been advocating that while we understand that we are going to have to cut, we need to do this in a strategic way-we need to hold low and middle income staff harmless, reinvest in programs and services that are part of our core mission even as we have to cut others feels like the best way to weather this.

We are coordinating our efforts with Marc Saavedra's office and along with our Governmental Relations Committee will be going to Santa Fe for UNM Day and distributing copies of our UNM Today Article-I know many of you are concerned about the proposed 2% cuts to compensation but we have heard this is dead in the water since it is an election year-it seems difficult for them to pass given the inherent opposition from groups larger than us, but you should contact your legislator.

UNM administration and CUP have proposed an across the board 3% budget cut that would allow higher ed institutions to determine where to cut-this is better for UNM and will allow us more control over our budget.

This morning Sterling and I met with Helen Gonzales and she is optimistic that insurance rates can stay flat, but this will depend on more data/cost projections that will soon be forthcoming. The 403B Plans are now back online and you can now take out loans on these plans. We have followed up on our continued interest in an Ombudsperson and learned that DR and Faculty DR were tasked to get a report to the Provost on making recommendations on "overlapping" services and the report has been turned in and the Provost will make the final decision. Respectful Workplace issue is in the Faculty Senate Policy Committee and they are working on it. HR asks that if you are considering retirement it is best to contact HR early due to their staffing issues.

8. Speaker's Report: Mary Clark: The current issue of UNM Today has our column on the front page and inside there is a photograph of our PAWS Pet Charity Drive crew-great exposure for the Council. Upon hearing and reading of the proposed 2% compensation cuts coming from the legislature I jumped into action enlisting my constituents to contact their legislators and to express opposition to this effort. On The League of Woman's website you can learn how to contact your legislator.

<http://www.lwv.org//AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home>

9. Committee Reports:

a. Communications: Annabeth Fieck: At our recent meeting we have been focusing on the website-there will be a new content manager coming online in April and we decided to wait until that is implemented. In the meantime, we can collect new content and delete the old and archive other info. We have many suggestions for the site-especially around minutes...a first step towards this was to standardize the file names for committee minutes and Hollie, our chair, will let us know how to go about implementation of this new format.

We also discussed responsibility for who maintains the website-it was mentioned that maybe EXEC should-we ask them this...who has the power to add things to the site? Our newest member Judy Willson offered up great thoughts. The web survey asked the question if staff wanted to be contacted about the

Council and we are in the process of contacting them now. eNEWS is believed by the committee to be too general a name for this listserv and we moved to change the name to Staff Council News.

b. IT Cabinet: Bob Christner: This group met on December 12 and one issue discussed is the web content manager-a content manager for websites-the new system will be deployed soon to academic departments first. This is important to us as we are looking at making changes to our site but we have no real priority to get into the queue anytime soon. Our new contact with Dell has changed purchasing process somewhat for work stations-staff can also buy from the bookstore and we receive the same price the university does.

There is a new initiative for a new email/calendaring/messaging system in place. There are over 200 emails servers on campus and this is a strong initiative to have a common system for all of us. Banner 8 will be updated over Spring Break for 7 total day mission critical update.

c. Faculty Staff Benefits: Christina Maris: At our recent meeting we did an overview of previous committee work/accomplishments: CAT leave form revisions; maternity/paternity leave for faculty to include adoption of children. If you have benefits issues, please direct them to me...I hope to get data from HR on CAT leave-hours and funding donated, etc. Our meetings are open to all-2nd Wednesday at 3:30, Latin Reading Room in Zimmerman-and the faculty co-chair is very receptive to staff and our issues.

d. Rules and Elections: Marsha Baumeister: We have met according to the Council's approved election code and have begun to look at Precincts in preparation for our upcoming spring elections. Hollie is our chair-per the code we are working on developing the breakdown of staff data as required by code to be determined by January 25-we then will bring numbers to you to vote on in February. We are hoping not to adjust the Precincts and therefore the listserves by much to save IT from having to make big changes for us.

e. Legislative Finance Committee update: Elisha Allen:

<http://www.unm.edu/news/2010/january/newsreleases/TCPresentation.pdf>

This info was presented to the regents at their meeting on January 12 by Tom Clifford, Chief Economist for the state in an effort to answer questions about state revenues and our economic status as a state..a bit of a doom and gloom report. Overview of chosen slides from that presentation were presented for viewing.

10. Guest Speakers:

2:00 Dr. Beulah Woodfin: ERB Updates: Dr. Woodfin introduces her self and states she is the higher ed representative to ERB, having been elected by AAUP. My principal message for you today is that the ERB fund is sound-up approx 29% since last year-1/09- but since last year's losses were nearly 30% we need growth this year to get back where we started. There are approximately 64,000 active members in ERB-members still at work. There are approximately 32,000 retirees in the ERB...about a 2-1 active employee for each retiree. This fund is known as a mature pension fund-every month it pays out to retirees/beneficiaries more than it collects. Last FY that amount was about 110 million for the year-so the fund needs to make that kind of money in the investment market as well as increase its holdings to pay for future benefits and the operation of the fund.

The NM Pension Funds are defined benefit plans and this means it is established by law and that provision is formula based-does not allow you to invest your own funds....called a defined contribution plan...if you make poor decisions about your investments you will be out of luck...it requires knowledge and time to invest wisely.

There are very few defined benefits plan because it puts the liability on the employer. The operating budget of the ERB is 40 million dollars and as of Dec 31 the fund was up to 8.3 billion-less than ½ % of the total corpus of the fund going to operating expenses. With public funds the legislative bodies have to

consider the consequences of poor retirement decisions possibly leading to public welfare for survival- this is a reason to be somewhat paternalistic and make decisions for employees. Let's do some questions.

Q: Jennifer Bayley, G13: The additional 1.5% increase to the ERB this year we did not really feel the hit due to the federal 2% incentive we all received-do you know when the 2% tax rebate ends?

A: Dr. Woodfin: The stimulus money needs to be replaced from somewhere and I think it expires at the end of this FY and so it is my understanding you will have to absorb the 1.5% and I am hearing you are going to get a pay cut as well.

Helen Gonzales states that HB 854 was to intended mirror the stimulus recovery act so expires in 2 years, for staff making under a certain amount of salary it was neutral.

Q: Jennifer: a big fear is that the laws enacting our defined benefit would be changed-is that a possibility?

A: Dr. Woodfin: You probably know the law was changed last session so that new employees starting on or after July will have changes to their eligibility. NM is different from other states in that the benefit is recognized as a "property right" and I have spent a few days last week at committee hearings and they are very much aware of this and they are concerned about changes as they would be very expensive because the viability of the fund is predicated on continued employee contributions through the years-if they switch to a defined contribution plan, they would still have to put money in the current fund in order to remain viable for the current retirees who are recipients of pensions from the fund... I don't think it could be done legally and if it were done it would require a tremendous up front contribution of the employer to fund that. Some states have gone to a "hybrid" fund-part defined contribution, part self investment. I would say you must stay on top of suggested legislative changes-this year with a 30 day session nothing will happen with this, but that has been under discussion.

Q: Karin Retskin: Please talk a bit about the state not making its special payment into the ERB this year, what that might mean and what it would do to the plan as well as future ramifications.

A: Dr. Woodfin: In 2005 the legislature recognized the historic underfunding of the ERB/fund and they proposed over the next several years they would make additional contributions to the fund over and above the employer/employee contributions...the governor proposed, during the special session last fall, that the state's additional contributions to ERB for 2010 not be paid-it is my understanding this was deferred to the current session. When you look at a 8 billion dollar fund 18 million dollars is not very much-however we on the ERB/board are very much against this as we feel it would establish a dangerous precedent so we have been opposing this every chance we get-for as long as the fund has been in existence the appropriate payments have been made to the fund and we feel it should be maintained-it is a contract with the retirees. There is no substitute for political activity on issues like these.

2:30: HED Advisory Board Report: Vanessa Shields:

<http://www.hed.state.nm.us/content.asp?CustComKey=193240&CategoryKey=304784&pn=Page&DomName=hed.state.nm.us>

<http://hed.state.nm.us/cms/kunde/rts/hedstatenmus/docs/659391705-08-21-2006-09-06-24.htm>

I am the current statewide staff rep to this board-I started in 2007..we recently met after being dormant for a while...we are seen as "critical friends"-offer advice, ask questions on certain issues. We went over a few issues-the Santa Fe Community College wants to build an education center where different higher educations institutions in the state could offer degree programs to the residents of the Santa Fe area. The advisory board does support this idea, funding to be generated with a bond issue in 2010-there was some concern with overlap and my concern was staffing...advisors etc...so, the idea is a go, but details remain to be worked out.

We discussed the strategic goals and sub goals and priorities of the department of higher ed-these are online if you'd like more details.

Please contact me – it is up in the air if I stay as the rep and they are looking into that-if you have questions and issues for me to take to the meetings.

11. Councilor Comments:

Suzanne McConaghy: asks for a draft-from EXEC or from our Governmental Relations Committee- that she might send out to her constituents to explain these legislative issues and get the word out to our constituents.

Speaker Clark offers to put wording together for everyone.

Romeo Alonzo: The Employee Rights committee offers our help to the EXEC during this legislative session and we will have a meeting soon.

Elisha Allen: Could we have an open discussion on the 20th Anniversary Celebration?

Speaker Clark states that previously we had approved a month of celebration but due to all sorts of constraints this is unlikely...this is not to be confused with Staff Appreciation Week/Month events.

Communications Committee did discuss this, but there was not much interest in following through.

Speaker Clark suggests we let staff know more of what we do..but does staff know about our different committees and what they do? Communications Committee thought that we might have each committee highlighted each month in UNM Today.

Perhaps an open house where we ask staff to come and meet us...but there is no ad-hoc committee so nothing is getting done.

A motion is made that at the time of the March Staff Council meeting we have an event inviting staff to join us in some way; the motion is seconded. The body is reminded that our March meeting is the week of Spring Break...it is suggested we meet in the atrium with committees tabling. The vote is called and the motion fails. The topic will be discussed in February.

12. Motion to adjourn : 2:45 called and seconded; the motion passes and is adopted.