

# Staff Council Meeting Minutes

## February 5, 2009

### Attendance:

Present: Sara McGuire, Becca Washut, Trish Mailler, Kathryn Messier, Jan Cole, Scott Morin, Karin LaBarge, Abida Adnan, Rick Rubin, Sandy Bycenski, Karen LeHouiller, Chris Gentes, Jinny Mason, Kathleen Mosley, Barbara Pliska, Louise Rouleau, Art Usher, Sharon Fagan

Presidential Appointees (2:30, after President's meeting) Christian Lagier, Jenny Silver

Guests: Saari Koponen-Robotham

Absent: Alicia Guidotti, Barbara Garcia, John Zaikowski, Kathleen Yarnell, Pattie Lumbr, Peg Bielunis, Toby Davis

### Approval of January Minutes: motion passed with changes.

Becca will make changes.

### Treasurer's Report: Jan Cole

Activities Adjusted Budget: 11,628.00

Remaining: 5,602.00

Waiting on movie charges from January, Catering for ID retake break pub, NYC bus trip in April

How did we make money from the fall bus trip? Bus trip from fall had an income of \$700. The expectation was to break even. Activities will discuss budget at next meeting.

Staff Council Adjusted Budget: 6,732.00

Remaining: 212.01

Waiting on Staff Chronicle, Diversity Committee movies, crossover meeting expenses (drinks and dessert)

### Announcements:

*Retake Break* – Monday February 9. 2:00 – 5:00 PM.

Yes, the staff forum also starts at 2pm, and Larry Hunt will be announcing the retake break after the forum concludes.

*Retake Break Pub* – Monday, February 9. 4:00 – 6:00 PM. Join us for a lovely Mardi Gras themed event!

The *May Staff Council Meeting* will be scheduled outside of the Campus Center, and will be the crossover meeting for new members. *THIS WILL BE A BROWN BAG LUNCH MEETING*, and Staff Council will provide beverages and dessert!

All campus meeting on Monday: Questions/Comments/Concerns from Staff Council:

- Departments on campus are hearing different messages.
  - Some have already undergone budget cutting exercises and planned for reductions.
    - Some are expecting the consolidation of goods and services, potentially falling under a 5 college collaborative umbrella.
  - Some have been told that all cuts are not planned for July 1, but are spread over a three (3) year plan.
  - Some have been told that their budget cuts will include staffing cuts.
  - Some have heard nothing from their managers.
- Questions, comments and suggestions for forum:
  - Who is making the decisions?
  - If specific staff members/positions are being targeted for cuts, will those people in those positions be asked specifically if they have insight on reducing costs in their departments without having to lay them off?
  - If layoffs happen, with the shift of work responsibility onto others be compensated somehow?
  - If you cut positions, will there be a proactive move to update and upgrade other positions that have taken on additional work?

- Are you considering pay as you need benefit options; perhaps a sliding scale?
- Is there a cost savings associated with filling positions with temps?
- Is the use of outside consultants a wise investment? Do we need them and what are we gaining from that cost?
- If layoffs occur, will there be any type of seniority status used to shift positions? Will someone who has worked here for 20 years, have the option to fill another position within their department and layoff someone who has only been here for 5?
- What decisions have already been made? Anything permanent, even if the economy bounces back?
- What's in place for 5 college consolidation? Are any departments looking at this as an option?
  - At what point would a potential 5 college consolidation put too much work on one person?
- What will the staff morale look like in 2 years?

### Presidential Appointee Updates:

Jenny and Christian met with the president today at 2:00 pm. The president reports that

- She is happy with the activities that Staff Council provides, especially things that promote fun and morale such as Dog Days and the new water bottles.
- She is thankful for all of the input she has received through [planning@smith.edu](mailto:planning@smith.edu). All comments have been positive and seeking resolution. A common purpose is clear. She continues to invite all comments and suggestions from all departments.
- She does read that Staff Chronicle and thinks it is a very good vehicle for information sharing.
- She has received a very strong message to do what's possible to save jobs.
  - Some have an interest in reducing to a 4 day work week, others an interest in 9 month positions.
- She is very appreciative of the ideas shared by Staff Council

Jenny and Christian asked the president

- For an idea when we will have answers
- Should we assume if we haven't heard anything by July 1 that we will "be safe" for the upcoming academic year?
- For information to be shared consistently, and less sporadic as it has been thus far.
- If mid-level management could be involved in decision making

The president would like to come to a Staff Council meeting.

What could we put on that agenda?

She would like to come with an agenda or not.

### Spring Forum:

Rick met with the cross campus Safety Committee who asked to co-sponsor a spring forum. Without a confirmation, the safety committee booked the Carroll Room for March 31<sup>st</sup> from 11:30am-1:30pm. It is the general consensus of Staff Council that we are unable to take on the planning and execution of this event. Rick will inform the safety committee that we are not able to commit to this event.

Instead, some Staff Council members (Chris, Becca and Sara) will work on the next Staff Chronicle as a "Did you know" issue about the benefit of your Smith One Card and local discounts.

### PPC Meeting with Larry Hunt:

Concerns and Questions:

- People are being asked by supervisors NOT to be on Staff Council. Where is the support to keep this group alive if supervisors are not willing to support a few hours a month of leave time?
- Should Staff Council Nominations committee notify managers when their staff members have been nominated to serve on Staff Council?
  - Should we require a departmental support form that managers will sign to allow their employees to be on Staff Council?

Please send any questions or ideas to Rick to share with Larry at the meeting.

**Reminders:**

- Please look over the proposal from Sandy for the Staff Council Charter for the next meeting!
- Keep your ideas coming on productive ways to save money as a campus community!
- Always attend your Staff Council meetings! We are a united front working for the good of our community! Your voice and presence is needed!
- ***NEXT MEETING IS MARCH 5 IN CC ROOM 205!***