

**Council of University System Staff
November 19, 2002
Bowie State University**

Members Present

Joe Hill – UMBC
Sally Hearn - UMBC
Nicole Bush-Buffington – UMES
Brenda Warwick – UMES
Dale O’Neal – BSU
Marie Meehan – BSU
Ray Frederick – UB
Patrick McLane – FSU
Judy Lowe – SU
Susann Shoop – TU
Colette Becker – UM,B
Andrianna Stuart – UMCP
Carol Prier – UMCP
LuAnn Marshall – UMB
Colette Becker – UMB
Roy A. Ross – UMB
Bruce Abbott – UMCES
Linda Grant Morin - UMCES

Alternates

Arthur Hanlin _FSU
Jeanette Schadler, SU
Mary Edwards, TU
Mary Reed, USM
Brenda Warwick, UMES
Dorothy Holland - BSU
Bill Crockett - UMB
Fran Younger - UMCES
Lynn Crabb - UMBC

Chancellor’s Liaison-USM Office

Rosario I. van Daalen

Guests

Dr. Calvin Lowe, President, BSU
Dr. George Miller, Provost, BSU
Vera Chesley, Chair BSU Staff
Council

Call to Order

Chair Joe Hill called the November 2002 CUSS meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. at Bowie State University.

Greetings from BSU President, Dr. Calvin Lowe

Dale O’Neal introduced Dr. Calvin Lowe, President of BSU, and Dr. George Miller, Provost, to CUSS Forum. Dr. Lowe welcomed CUSS to the expanding BSU Campus. The New Science Building opened Fall of 2002 and a new 500-bed resident hall is being planned for 2003. Dale also introduced Vera Chesley, Chair of BSU Staff Council who welcomed all the CUSS members to BSU. A new Nonexempt alternate, Jeanette Schadler, from Salisbury University was introduced.

Approval of Minutes

The September minutes are still not available. The October minutes were reviewed. A motion was made and seconded to accept the October minutes as amended.

Report of the Chancellor’s Liaison - USM Office

Rosario stated she invited Dr. Kirwan to attend this meeting and speak to this group particularly regarding CUSS’ role in shared governance and the issue of how the membership of CUSS will be determined, but he was unavailable. There is presently a conflict with the current environment of shared governance and collective bargaining. A decision on this issue will be made soon and CUSS would like to have input into this decision. Joe Hill will try to set up a meeting with Dr. Kirwan with the complete CUSS membership, first, or secondly, the CUSS Executive Board will meet with Dr. Kirwan to advise him of the Council’s feeling on shared governance.

The rumor in the air that the Governor will be giving 12/24/02 as a special State Holiday. It is just that - a rumor and will not happen.

Currently information for the CUSS Web Page will have a new person handling this function, the name to be announced in the near future.

A policy change is being proposed for those employees called to active military service after 9/11/01 to enable them to use the Leave Reserve Fund (Policy VII-7.11). The proposal is being presented to the Finance-BOR on November 21 and to the full BOR on December 6, 2002. The proposed provision allows such employees to use the leave reserve fund up to 12/31/2002 to be applied retroactively, if appropriate. Full pay to continue until return to employment, and will also receive military pay. Out of seventeen people called to action in the USM so far, just a few may need to use this Policy. Job to be kept available. Changes to this policy may be considered after 12/31/2002 by BOR. Benefits to continue while on military leave.

Amendments to the Grievance Policy VII 8.0 and to the Employee and Applicant Disclosure Policy VII-2.30, are being presented to the AdminVPs meeting today. The State of MD General Assembly passed this law last spring. The policies allow an employee to file a grievance either through the USM or through the State Department of Budget & Management (DBM) Process, not both.

The members of CUSS concurred that shared governance and collective bargaining can work hand-in-hand and they want to share this view with the Chancellor directly. Based on the discussions taking place at the meeting Rosario recommended we have a meeting with the entire CUSS and the Chancellor to voice our concerns and views regarding CUSS.

Rosario stated that a policy proposal to continue the tuition remission reciprocity through Spring 2003 at Morgan, BCC and St. Mary's is being presented to the Finance-BOR committee on November 21 and then to the full BOR on December 6..

The Biennial Nonexempt Market Salary Survey will be conducted to keep the salary range competitive with the market, using the Baltimore market as a comparable. In a research of job classifications, USM Staff employees earn more than State employees.

Chair's Report

There was no BOR Finance Committee meeting in October.

The Chancellor's Council met on November 4th to discuss maintaining the budget. Issues discussed were how to address the shortfall. Options mentioned were limiting new building construction, furloughs, and layoffs. CUSS feels furloughs affect all employees whereas layoffs affect a select few. The furloughs are a more fair and equitable solution for all State employees. This would only affect State-funded positions, not Federally-funded grant positions. A one-percent cut in pay was not brought up at this meeting.

The Presidents are the CEOs of their respective institutions and they are asking to be allowed to determine from what fund the money will be cut and how it can be done. The Governor will be announcing soon further budget cuts.

The State Higher Education Labor Relation Board (SHERLB) has a new web address, www.mhec.state.md.us/shelrb

UMB held their election for Nonexempt Staff employees and AFSCME is their bargaining agent. TU and UMBI have not been petitioned to have elections.

Committee Workgroups

All new members and alternates at this meeting should sign-up for one of the CUSS committees. The Legislative Affairs Committee and Communications Committee were joined; however they are now two separate committees. At this point, the group broke up into their committees, followed by lunch.

Lunch

Committee Reports

Community Development Committee was first to report. The BOR Staff Award letter will be sent out to all USM Presidents next week. Each University should develop an awards selection committee to select the Staff representatives to be submitted to CUSS. This committee should consist of a wide-range of Staff employees from various departments within the respective institutions. The CUSS members are to follow-up with the President to facilitate distribution of this information to all Staff. The deadline for submission of the Staff nominees must be forwarded to CUSS on or before March 1, 2003.

Communications Committee has the website responsibility. Please check the Web Page for accuracy and forward any changes to merced@usmd.edu. The CUSS Newsletter has been completed and will be forwarded to the printer.

Benefits/Compensation Committee discussed the tuition remission policy that would allow eight credit hours for employees per semester. Currently it stipulates two courses up to eight credit hours, but should be changed and not be limited to two courses, but be allowed to take a total of eight credit hours which may be more than two courses.

The Leave Reserve Bank was discussed. The Leave Reserve consists of all unused personal leave. There is no pay back or cost to anyone for this leave. It is not recommended employees donate leave to other employees. An employee may request leave from the Leave Reserve Bank after using all available leave and then file a Request for Leave Reserve. This Policy does not need to be changed.

Legislative Committee suggested that CUSS members introduce themselves to their local legislators, both new and continuing. The key issues in this session will be the Budget FY03 and FY04. The budget must be balanced by 12/15/02 before Gov. Glendening leaves office and the following cuts may be proposed: 1% pay cut, furloughs, 1000 layoffs, early retirement packages. A letter should be drafted to representatives and delegates to voice our concerns regarding Higher Education Issues. The 1.25% one-time bonus merit increase final decision has not been addressed by the State. The Chair will ask the Chancellor if this raise will be implemented.

The CUSS Newsletter should be taken to the legislature and a letter from Chair Joe Hill to the Chancellor and the BOR with CUSS's recommendation that furloughs rather than layoffs are more equitable across the board to all employees, all share in the burden.

Old Business

December meeting will be on 12/17/02 at the University System of Maryland Office, Adelphi, MD. We will continue the tradition of bringing a dessert to the December meeting. Please call USM CUSS Representatives to let them know what you will be bringing. Rosario will not be able to attend this meeting.

Name tents and badges are in the process of being made.

New Business

If membership to CUSS is restricted, it will eliminate many members. A motion was moved and second that CUSS have unrestricted membership, to remain status quo. Discussion: It is believed by some that we cannot continue as we are. Issues to be discussed for excluded employees will become a problem for employees represented by a union. We would not be able to operate freely with collective bargaining. Some members cannot see it co-existing with shared governance.

The Council's stand presently is that there is no MOU, we are not in conflict. We must continue advocating the way we are. One issue raised was that the Union is not listening and adhering to the employees concerns that shared governance and collective bargaining can co-exist and that it be made a part of the MOU.

Another issue of concern is, what is the opinion of the Universities Presidents regarding CUSS?. We want to continue status quo. CUSS has accomplished a lot in an unadversarial way in the past decade. It has earned a lot of respect from the Chancellor, Board of Regents, the Presidents and the Legislature. We need to go to the Legislature with Senate Bill 528, Codification of CUSS, to help straighten out how CUSS can continue to exist with Collective Bargaining.

Issues raised: What will CUSS be allowed to do? How will CUSS membership be elected?

Intent of motion previously made is that CUSS remain Status Quo and advocate to a return to present membership representatives from all campuses. Ten in favor, two opposed.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 2:45 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting is December 17, 2002 at the University System of Maryland Office.