

**Council of University System Staff
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science
Chesapeake Biological Lab–Solomons Island
July 25, 2006 Meeting**

Members Present	Alternate Members
Marie Meehan - BSU	
BSU	
UMBI	
Scott Wibbert-UMUC	
Jim Hartsock-UMUC	Jesse Ketterman-FSU
Chenita Kollock-UMES	SU
Bernedette Bell - CSU	Loretta Hollifield-TU
Mary Reed - USMO	*****
Joe Hill – UMBC - Chair	Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS:
John Barber - UMB	Rosario I. van Daalen, USMO
UMBC	*****
UMCP	Dr. Barbara Palmer, Director, Chesapeake
Larry Lauer – UMCP	Biological Laboratory
David DeLooze - UMB	
UMBI	
UMBC	
Bill Crockett - UMB	
Judy Sabalauskas-UB	
Gloria Gaguski-TU	
Joan Doremus - TU	
SU	
SU	

Call to Order

Joe Hill, Chair, called the July meeting to order at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory (CBL), Solomons, MD.

Dr. Barbara Palmer, Director of CBL, welcomed the council to its beautiful location on the Chesapeake Bay. CBL was founded in 1925 by Dr. Reginald Truitt, and the site is approximately 60 miles from Washington, DC. CBL has 22 buildings, 120 employees and 65 research students. They have a 65 foot, 38 year old research vessel which will soon be replaced.

Report from the Chancellor's Liaison:

- The USM is working on a proposal to increase the employer contribution to the ORP with a mandatory employee contribution, such as in the Employee Pension System. The council needs to ensure support for the proposed mandatory employee contribution to the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP). It will increase employees' retirement. Making it mandatory is beneficial to employees since it reduces their taxable income, and it does not affect the IRC maximum of the Supplemental Retirement Plans.

- Rosario encouraged everyone in the State Employees' Pension System to compare their account statement from this year against last year's, to view an increase to the retirement calculation based on the change made by the General Assembly, during this past legislative session. Statements are generally mailed to the employees in late summer.
- The proposed amendment to the definition of dependent child, under the Tuition Remission policy was tabled by the Finance Committee. The policy has always had language reference to the IRS definition of dependent, since the original policy was written in 1980. In 2005, the IRS changed its definition of dependent and the USM needs to clarify how it applies to Tuition Remission. The Attorney General's Office is working with the USM on the proposed language.
- Employees are being asked to sign a certification to assert that they can legally claim a child as a dependent on the tax form - in that case, tuition remission is a benefit, otherwise, it is considered taxable income. Bring examples to next meeting of different situations in regard to tuition remission so that they can be discussed.

Chair's Report

- There was no Finance Committee meeting nor Board of Regents' meeting or Chancellor's Council to report on.
- The BOR Staff Awards winners have been informed via letter and their names have been announced to the institutions presidents as well. The awards will be presented in September at the BOR meeting. Joe suggests that the BOR Staff Award timeline be reviewed again for potential changes.
- Joe distributed the 2005-06 CUSS certificates to CUSS members and alternates.
- Joe was given a beautiful rosewood plaque from the council for serving as chair for the CUSS 2005-2006 year. He expressed his appreciation and gratitude at the gift. He was given several additional – humorous – gifts and he took them good naturedly.

Benefits and Compensation

- They discussed what should be on this year's committee agenda.

Communications

- The newsletter will be ready for review by the end of the week. The Communications chair gave the incoming chair – orientation packages to be given to new members and alternates at the next meeting which will take place at Salisbury University on August 15, 2006 in the Commons Building.

Community Development

- No report.

Legislative

- No report.

New Business

- Larry Lauer, incoming chair, suggested that the monthly CUSS meeting agenda be emailed in draft form for suggestions, i.e., additional topics to be added for discussion at the monthly meeting.

- A “get well soon” card was signed by the committee to be sent to Roy Ross who is recovering from illness.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Eileen Reed
Secretary