

Council of University System Staff (CUSS) Meeting - MINUTES

March 23, 2010

Coppin State University

Baltimore, MD

In attendance:

Members

Linda Parker-Ford	BSU
Chris Thomas	CSU
Absent	FSU
Carol Barr	SU
Jackie Eberts	SU
Brenda Yarema	TU
Giordana Segneri	UB, CUSS Co-Secretary
Colette Becker	UMB, CUSS Vice Chair
Lori Smith-Watson	UMBC, Member at Large
Absent	UMBI
Absent	UMCES
Willie Brown	UMCP, CUSS Chair
Sister Maureen Schrimpe	UMCP
Absent	UMES
Ayman Abdo	UMUC
Absent	USMO

Alternates/Guests

Abby Byrnes	CSU
Bernard Wynder	FSU
Shelia Murray	SU
Ron Kasl	UMB
Joel DeWyer	UMBC
Michael Hughes	UMUC
Karah Mercer	UMUC

Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS:	
Rosario I. van Daalen	USMO

Dr. Reginald Avery, President, CSU	

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Chris Thomas introduced Dr. Reginald Avery, President of Coppin State University

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Rosario van Daalen still needs to review the minutes
- Will conduct approval of minutes via e-mail after we include Rosario van Daalen's edits
- Anyone who needs tent cards should let Colette Becker know; she'll coordinate with the Communications Committee
- Brenda Yarema: Please send Gloria Gaguski an e-mail to say hello, since her medical condition prevents her from attending meetings

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

- Presentation by Census 2010 representatives and legislative session update at Chancellor's Council meeting
- Chancellor's Council meeting truncated because attendees were heading to Annapolis; no council reports were presented, just submitted written summaries

4. REPORT FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S LIAISON TO CUSS - Rosario van Daalen

- Open Enrollment
 - Systemwide Benefits Coordinators Open Enrollment training held by Department of Budget and Management-Employees Benefits Division (DBM-EBD) on March 5, 2010 at USMO, Adelphi, MD
 - Open enrollment information is available on the DBM Web site
 - Dates and new guide
 - No increase in premiums or co-pays; send a big thanks to your Legislators
 - Life insurance: MetLife has a funeral-planning guide
 - COBRA extended to March 31, 2010; back claim retroactively for involuntary termination
 - Retroactive adjustments: will use last four digits of Social Security number only
 - New Flexible Spending Account vendor: Connect Your Care, www.connectyourcare.com
 - Use of debit-type card that will deduct directly from your Flexible Spending account
- Re-implementing Board of Regents policy review
 - VIII-7.23 and 7.24: Removed abrogation language; provisions provided to military employees/family will remain in effect
 - VIII-7.50: FMLA
 - Federal Government added more provisions related to the military: for employees who are in the military or for employees who are family members of military (child, parent, spouse, designated next of kin), receive a total of 26 weeks (including 12-week FMLA); can also be used for military-related events (ceremonies, etc.)
 - Since 1993, USM has allowed employees to use accrued paid leave to cover 12-week FMLA period so health benefits are not at risk; now mandatory that employees use accrued leave during FMLA leave; if an employee runs out of accrued leave, s/he can take unpaid leave
- Legislation
 - SB 974: ORP (403b); will probably die
 - SB 317/HB 775 (heard March 9 and Feb. 23): retirement plan has COLA, adjust COLA for pension plan
 - SB 709 (heard March 10): disability retirement for surviving beneficiary of deceased member of State retirement system
 - HB 774/SB 498: expands exemption for earning for employment after retirement

5. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Jackie Eberts: CUSS had a great time in Annapolis, Thursday, March 11
 - Roy Ross, Jackie Eberts, Willie Brown and Carol Barr passed out 180 letter introducing CUSS
 - Special hearing had occurred the evening prior to the visit; Republican Caucus had proposed a 4.2 percent reduction of the general fund, including a reduction of 1,000 USM positions, 50 percent reduction in tuition remission benefit and resetting of budget to 2007 levels
 - According to Andy Clark, Legislators received 5,100 responses from USM advocates; Frostburg State University sent the most responses of all USM Institutions
 - Next year, CUSS should encourage everyone who can possibly attend to be in Annapolis
- Willie Brown: proposed regular meeting in Annapolis as February CUSS meeting: **ACTION APPROVED**
 - Meet at System Government Relations Office in Annapolis
 - If you drive a State vehicle, you can park in the Calvert Street Garage for free
 - Legislative Committee should begin coordination of Annapolis meeting in November **ACTION ITEM**
 - Brenda Yarema: If you let your Delegates know ahead of time that you'll be in Annapolis, they'll give you a tour and save seats in the gallery
 - Speaker of the House may also make a special proclamation of CUSS Day
 - Rosario van Daalen: Legislators need to know that there are other voices at USM that compose Shared Governance; not just the Union

6. OLD BUSINESS

- Ad Hoc Committee (Lori Smith-Watson)
 - Annapolis Day was one of the committee's goals and has now been achieved
 - CUSS coverage in the media
 - *Chronicle of Higher Education* publishes a survey on the best college campuses to work for and ranks the nation's top 50
 - Goal is increased recognition among external and internal constituents
 - Willie Brown: media for higher education is one thing, but outside publications (*Washington Post*, *The (Baltimore) Sun*) might misconstrue our intentions as being USM vs. Legislators
 - Article could focus on how Staff is doing more with less
 - Should we issue regular CUSS press releases?
 - Op/ed in major publication about Staff; needs news peg
 - Who's our audience? What's our message? When's the right time? What's our medium? Who's going to do this? What are we trying to accomplish?

- What's our message? Staff-student connection; people coming from out of state to work in USM; importance of Staff to keeping USM running; how responsible were we for Republican Caucus decision?; profile of Board of Regents Staff Awards winners; impact of tuition remission on Maryland economy (ROI); USM rank of most expensive state systems
- When? Sine Die, second Monday of April, Board of Regents Staff Awards (peg)
- Should be bottom-up, grassroots approach; do our own Institution constituents even know who we are?
- Let's start with our own newsletter: communicate monthly with brief paragraph of information about what we're doing (keep CUSS in people's minds more frequently); CUSS co-secretaries will write, Executive Committee will review **ACTION ITEM**
 - a. Use monthly press release to highlight CUSS representatives of Institution where we've had our meeting
 - b. Request feedback from constituents
 - i. Willie Brown will be responsible for creating a dedicated e-mail address for feedback and a Web feedback forum **ACTION ITEM**
 - ii. CUSS blog? Would need to be encouraged via Staff Councils to visit the blog
 - iii. Suggested wording: Are you having problems in your job? Do you have questions about USM policies? Do you have questions about USM benefits?
 - iv. Include "Did you know?" fact about CUSS
- Send CUSS minutes out to staff councils
- Colette Becker will review CUSS Web site with Communications Committee and report back **ACTION ITEM**
- Board of Regents Awards
 - Input due one week ago, but extended another week; now due no later than end of this week

7. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- Executive Committee
 - News release
 - Letters of introduction explained CUSS purpose, communicated concept of Shared Governance
 - CUSS represents 8,000 Staff
 - Republican Caucus information on USM Web site
 - Include CUSS Web site
 - Individualized for each campus with CUSS representatives' names and campus-specific information (upcoming elections, etc.)
- Board of Regents Staff Awards nominations

- Bland; some nominations in wrong category
- Help people focus
- Issue may be definition of criteria
- Where is the line between doing one's job and doing exceptional work?
- Standardize evaluation criteria
- Future agenda item: Review and revise Board of Regents Staff Awards criteria

ACTION ITEM

- Read Andy Clark's newsletter and call in to conference call; send newsletter out to your constituents
- Roy Ross: follow up on question about carryover of accrued leave; need to do more research on COMAR, should be agenda item for next month **ACTION ITEM**
- UMBI Staff: UMBC has hired two
 - Chancellor's Council meeting: Willie Brown will pass out UMBI recommendation letter encouraging presidents to keep UMBI Staff in mind

NEXT MONTH'S CUSS MEETING: April 27, 2010, Towson University

Respectfully submitted by Giordana Segneri, CUSS Co-Secretary