

Council of University System Staff (CUSS) Meeting - MINUTES  
 March 29, 2011  
 Coppin State University

In attendance:

**Members**

Marie Meehan	BSU
Chris Thomas	CSU
Absent	FSU
Absent	SU
Brenda Yarema	TU
Absent	UB
Colette Becker	UMB, CUSS Vice Chair
David DeLooze	UMB
Roy Ross	UMB
Lori Smith-Watson	UMBC
Joel DeWyer	UMBC
Gus Mercanti	UMCES
Absent	UMES
Sister Maureen Schrimpe	UMCP
Dolores Jackson	UMCP
Debby Mathis	UMUC
Melissa Stein	UMUC
Mary Reed	USMO

**Alternates/Guests**

Abby Byrnes	CSU
Karen Tyler	BSU
Gynene Sullivan	UMB
Chenita Reddick	UMES
Meredith Levesque	UMUC
Mike Paszkiewicz	UMCP

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

USMO

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- I. Welcome: Dr. Linda Nixon Hudson, Associate Provost & Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs
  - Working on new missions statement and student outcomes at Coppin
  - Value Staff/Faculty input in regards to shared governance
  
- II. Welcome and Introductions
  
- III. Approval of Minutes
  - approved as submitted
  
- IV. Chair's Report
  - Roy Ross started by talking about Annapolis Day

- Patricia Harrison, Visitors Program Coordinator for the Department of Legislative Services, greeted CUSS members at Senate House and brought us to the Senate Chamber
  - Sen. Rose Peck introduced CUSS members on the senate floor
  - Trisha gave members a tour of the Senate Chambers building shortly after the senate and house dismissed
  - After tour, CUSS members passed out letters to both delegates and senators throughout the afternoon.
- Brenda Yarema commented that she left the group shortly before CUSS went on the tour to listen to different levels of bills
  - Brenda had the opportunity to attend a luncheon at MD Inn where she heard that the state budget increased by ten million
  - Brenda mentioned that she questioned why the budget increased when state employees are feeling the impacts regarding retirement benefits
  - Brenda also pointed out that she wrote her state elected official and the President of Towson questioning where the additional money in the budget is going. Brenda did say that employees have the right to check their institutions budgets
- Mary Reed also mentioned in regards to Brenda's comments that she has written to her legislator recently in regards to retirement and the cuts state employees are facing
- Rosario and Colette stated that it costs more to train new employees than to keep people. Many assume that it is secure to be a state employee but don't realize what state employees are sacrificing
  - Colette also pointed out that the strategic plan is based on people staying and that we can't afford to hire trained professionals
- The question was passed back that what should CUSS members be doing at this point to educate Staff employees on these issues
  - Dave DeLooze mentioned that we should go back to our individual Institutions and send short letters informing them about the Staff employees retention issues and that they cannot afford to lose loyal trained professionals

#### V. Vice Chair's Report

- Colette presented two layouts for the CUSS website
- Everyone voted they liked the second layout with the yellow CUSS letters and was supported the design of the links on the side
- Gynene also asked everyone to update their contact information and send it to her before the end of the meeting
- Rosario suggested changing the tag line slightly to "Serving the employees..."

#### VI. Chancellor's Liaison Report: Rosario van Daalen

- Open enrollment for health insurance is scheduled from April 26<sup>th</sup> – May 26<sup>th</sup> with no correction period after the closing date.
  - Each Institution is holding a benefits fair
  - Will receive benefits booklet by mail
- A lot of changes are going to be taking place in retirement and health benefits
  - We will wait and see once the legislative session ends April 11th
  - concerned about changes in health benefits during open enrollment
- Second voluntary separation meeting was cancelled in March. Will keep us informed
- Biennial Nonexempt Market Salary Survey – salary structure. Report recommendation is under review and is waiting for the end of legislative session and budget approval before moving forward
- Mike Miller's merger proposal is under review and BOR will be charged with conducting a feasibility study on the merger of the two Institutions – UMB and UMCP
  - Looking at the best interest of the students
  - Two new presidents
- Mentioned employees may receive a \$750 bonus for FY2012; no COLA, no Merit; however, no furloughs.

#### VII. Old/New Business

- Nominations will be held in April and May for Executive committee positions
  - You can either self nominate or nominate someone
  - Elections will be held in June
- Chris mentioned the BOR Staff Awards review packets have been received and a final decision has been made
  - He will submit the packets to the Executive committee
  - Chris thanked everyone for their hard work and dedication
  - Brenda Yarema thanked Chris for his coordination with the BOR process
  - Debby Mathis mentioned she felt honored to review and select the candidate
  - Colette said she liked having the review guidelines because it made it easier when choosing a candidate

- Dave DeLooze shared Larry Lauer's commentary on the subject of merging UMCP and UMB stating that he is against the merger
- Larry stated that he worked with both Institutions and both are completely different, meaning their mission and organizational structure are not the same
  - Dave brought up the question of how is the council going to proceed and asked that we find out how Dr. Kirwan feels about the situation
  - Rosario asked that we pay attention to the report that will be released regarding the merger feasibility study and also what happens while the legislators are in session
  - Rosario suggested we recognize we are aware of it and will be available to add input at the correct time
- Lastly, it was mentioned that our 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the year, the final meeting for old members and the welcome meeting for new members, should be a cook-out, similar to what they've done previously
  - It helps build relationships with past/current members
  - A small committee was formed to coordinate the logistics of the meeting

NEXT MONTH'S MEETING: April. 26, 2011, Towson

*Respectfully submitted by Melissa Stein, CUSS Member at Large*