

# MINUTES

Council of University System Staff (CUSS) Meeting  
**May 17, 2011**  
**University of Maryland, Baltimore County**  
 Baltimore, MD

In attendance:

**Members**

Marie Meehan	BSU
Chris Thomas	CSU
Jay Hegeman	FSU
Absent	SU
Kay Kazinski	TU
Brenda Yarema	TU
Karyn Schulz	UB, CUSS Co-Secretary
Giordana Segneri	UB, CUSS Co-Secretary
David DeLooze	UMB
Lori Smith-Watson	UMBC
Gus Mercanti	UMCES
Renà Finney	UMES
Willie Brown	UMCP, CUSS Chair
Sister Maureen Schrimpe	UMCP
Melissa Stein	UMUC
Absent	USMO
Joel DeWyer	UMBC

**Alternates/Guests**

Tim Sporklin	UMBC
Stanyell Bruce	UMBC
Beth Wells	UMBC
Steve Bowers	UMBC
Terry Aylsworth	UMBC
Kathy Miller	UMBC
Nancy L. Miller	UMBC
Brian Souders	UMBC
Chenita Reddick	UMES
Mike Paszkiewicz	UMCP
Meredith Levesque	UMUC
*****	
Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS:	
Rosario I. van Daalen	USMO
*****	

- I. Welcome and Introductions
  - Greg Simmons, Vice President of Institutional Advancement
    - Former member of Staff Council
    - Leads entirely Staff-powered unit
    - \$175 million fine arts building is entering phase two
    - 13,000 students; \$100 million in research
    - a rising tide lifts all ships: successes and accomplishments across the USM improve situations for all Institutions
- II. Andy Clark, special guest
  - Appreciates working with CUSS on advocacy end of higher education
  - Hopes he's representing our interest to highest degree and best capabilities
  - Thanks CUSS on behalf of P.J. Hogan as well
  - Overview of legislative session
    - Revised report passed out
    - How do you best describe this legislative session? This session, more than any other, was one of the toughest policy and political sessions we've been through in a long time, based solely on strain on State's budget.

- Overall, we took a \$4 million cut to USM; when you look at what's happened to competitor institutions in competitor states, we didn't dodge a bullet, but it wasn't as bad as it could've been.
- Governor has recommended 3 percent tuition increase, but Board of Regents hasn't voted on it yet.
- In span of five years, we've gone from sixth highest tuition in nation to 25th
- Inclusion in budget of merit increases for operationally critical Staff is an acknowledgment among Legislature that you have to look out for your best and brightest Staff, not just in USM but throughout the State; these designations will be watched critically, so we have to use the designation in a judicious, reasonable, modest way.
- 1,400 messages went to Legislators in the span of four days on pension and retirement system; they got the message that this issue is vitally important to USM employees
- Andy Clark and P.J. Hogan are looking for feedback on legislative advocacy strategy
- Thanks CUSS for assisting on retirement/pension issue
- Highlights of legislative session
  - In 2011, Maryland maintains its AAA bond rating; only one of eight states to do so
  - \$1.48 billion USM budget
  - inclusion of merit raises for operationally critical Staff in budget bill
  - for first time in four years, FY 12 budget does not include furloughs for State employees
  - everything asked for in capital construction budget was approved; gave about \$1 million back that we didn't need for some projects
- Issues to watch
  - Merger taskforce for UMCP and UMB; asked for by Senate President Mike Miller; we need to be careful about how principal investigators and other faculty who are bringing research dollars to campuses would feel about the merger; take conversation very seriously; pros and cons are to be investigated; \$1 million withheld from budget until results of study are submitted
  - Dream Act: bill to provide undocumented aliens tuition remission (not a USM bill, but USM supports); if you're a high school student in Maryland, and you can show you've gone to high school in Maryland for three consecutive years and you've gone on to community college to earn 60 credits or an associate degree, and you or your parents have filed Maryland income tax for three consecutive years, then you are eligible for in-state tuition at a USM Institution; in other states, community college piece is not included in dream acts; probably going to referendum
  - Special session in October, primarily for redistricting and discussion of gas tax (revenue raisers)
  - For the first time in a long time, there's regulation of for-profit Institutions in Maryland; have to check in with MHEC (related to student debt and grade fixing to maintain Pell Grant payment); has to do with consumer protection

- CUSS thanks Andy Clark and P.J. Hogan for their help, support and constant reach-out and inclusion of council
- III. Chancellor's Liaison Report
- Chancellor's letter for newsletter should be ready before the end of the month
  - Voluntary Separation Program: second meeting May 9
    - Not much hope for implementation; doesn't see a lot of progress, and implementation would have to occur before June 30 for cost savings for FY 11
    - Couldn't afford to refill the positions vacated, and we can't afford to lose employees
    - Administrative Vice Presidents are meeting today and the VSP will be discussed
  - VPs are also discussing the Chancellor's Salary Directives; very late this year because we needed final directions/permission on distribution of \$750 bonus
    - Bonus is approved for all employees in Regular positions, regardless of funding; State provided the funding
      - State was pushing for distribution over 26 pay periods, or about \$29 per pay period; by the time you take taxes out, it would be about \$15/paycheck
      - Board of Trustees Institutions would have had to do payroll manually for 26 pay periods
      - Approval from Annapolis that we can distribute the bonus as a one-time distribution (Note after the meeting: will be distributed on the second pay period of FY'12).
      - \$750 will be taxed in full at time of payment as required for bonuses; payment will be included in paycheck
      - up to Institution to decide if bonus will be extended to Contingent employees since funds will not come from the State;
      - usually prorate based on FTE, but we don't know yet if the bonus will be prorated (Note after the meeting: the bonus will be prorated based on FTE)
    - directives will include very specific guidelines/criteria for "Retention of Operationally Critical Staff; we fought hard for it and we can't abuse it
    - no change to Nonexempt Salary Structure; stays as is for the next two years
  - pension/retirement legislation
    - Impact on ORP members still unclear; will communicate as soon as we receive information
    - compared to the rest of the country, changes to current active employees are minimal; thanks Andy Clark and P.J. Hogan for their hard work
  - tuition remission policy for dependents: nothing is being taken away, but we're trying to create an easy definition of dependent child (child, adopted child, step-child, etc. up to age 26 on registration date of semester you're applying for tuition remission); tax liability applies to employees who don't claim dependent in taxes (form will be revised to reflect this language); goes to Chancellor's Council on June 6 and then to BOR at end of June
  - as part of the Effectiveness and Efficiency report, reviewing and updating policies; if policies are not in the USM Board of Regents manual, you have to

refer back to the red classified employees manual of University of Maryland Institutions (these policies are still in effect if we don't have them in the USM BOR manual); there are the blue Associate Staff employees of University of Maryland and the Unclassified employees manual from the former BOT, and some policies from all are in still in effect; one of requirements of Effectiveness and Efficiency report is to update policies and review best practices (make technical changes to reflect appropriate language and current practices)

- The CUSS- created list of discounts for USM employees is posted on the web; is the information related to your Institution still accurate and complete? Recommendation is that the original committee that worked on it take it on again and review it (Benefits and Compensation Committee)

IV. Approval of Minutes

- Minutes approved as submitted

V. Chair's Report

- Nominations
  - Joel DeWyer withdraws acceptance of nomination as secretary because he will be a CUSS alternate
  - Brian Souders, UMBC, accepts nomination as secretary
  - Is there another nomination for a co-secretary?
  - Nominations are open for another month; elections will be at next month's meeting; send any nominations to Colette
- Volunteer Separation Program (VSP) will be discussed later when Joe Vivona and JoAnn Goedert attend the meeting
- Bylaw review; CUSF and USMSC announce their Executive Committee for the following year earlier in the spring; they accept nominations one month and vote the following month; is there a practical reason, other than that it's in the bylaws, that we take three months to elect our executive board?
  - Rosario: Historically, various Institutions have had their staff council elections later in the year (April, May, June); is this still true?
  - UMB and UB have staff elections in June and CUSS elections in July; UMUC has staff elections in October
  - Suggest creation of ad hoc committee to review bylaws and get back with recommended changes in a couple of months: Ad hoc committee of Willie Brown, Karyn Schulz, Giordana Segneri, Gus Mercanti
  - Bylaws last updated in April 2000, perhaps?
  - Check with Larry Lauer or Joe Hill for electronic copy of bylaws
  - We can use Wiggio for collaboration on a single-source document
- Joint meeting with CUSF scheduling
  - We'd like to do it again at UMCP, Tuesday, Nov. 15
  - Spend the next month thinking about agenda items for the joint meeting
  - Let's invite Andy Clark, P.J. Hogan, Joe Vivona, Irv Goldstein and the Chancellor as early as possible to get it on their calendars
  - Let's also invite the Governor; send a letter to invite him, shows solidarity within the USM
- Standard Operating Procedures—Calendar of events
  - Deferred till next meeting
- Letters of appreciation to Andy Clark, P.J. Hogan, Chancellor

- Willie Brown will distribute letter to the council when he's back in the office for review and feedback
- BOR Staff Award Addition (Joel DeWyer)
  - Distributed outline of suggested criteria for proposed award
  - Is it outside of the scope of the responsibilities of one's role? The key words are "exceptional contribution"
  - May not have to be awarded every year
  - Enforcement of term limits at various Institutions? Is this a concern, if longevity is a factor in considering nominees?
  - In presenting this proposed award to the Board of Regents, we have to be careful not to portray this as a self-serving award for members of CUSS only; we have to illustrate the global applicability of the award
  - Do we need evaluation metrics? We should develop examples; the clearer we are, the better
  - Should it be opened up to group nominees? Two or three awards (Exempt, Nonexempt, Group)?
  - Would Employees included in collective bargaining be eligible for the award?
  - An Employee doesn't have to be formally involved in Shared Governance to be eligible for the award; the important part is they have an impact on Shared Governance
- BOR Awards Process Review (Chris Thomas)
  - Deferred until the next meeting

VI. JoAnn Goedert, Assistant Vice Chancellor, USM Office: Voluntary Separation Program (VSP)

- State plan: \$15,000 plus \$200 for every year of service
- State exempted USM from the VSP, but encouraged us to explore a VSP of our own
- Felt positive about the VSP opportunity as a potential win-win going into it
- State expected 1,500 voluntary separations; received 1,400 applications, but just more than 500 actually took the separation, and most of those were retirements
- In State plan, positions were abolished, but USM went into discussions knowing that positions could not be abolished (never part of any option considered)
- Institutions said they think it could work for Faculty, but it's going to be hard to achieve cost savings with Staff; on average, 33-38 percent difference in salary between new and experienced Faculty members; it was less than half that for Staff
- When group met on May 9, they put forth a good plan for Faculty and a plan that came out to be too stingy for Staff to recuperate cost savings
- Have brought findings back to the Chancellor, and he will make a decision about whether or not there will be a VSP; if he decides to implement it, USM would have to create a plan that is acceptable to both Faculty and Staff (proposed Staff plan was not at all generous)
- Potential consequences

- Expectation in Annapolis that we are going to do a program that will achieve X dollars in savings; if we don't do it, the question is how will we achieve the cost savings?
- There's still a budget hole that the USM is going to have to fill, and the Chancellor is committed to no furloughs; the hope was that the VSP would've contributed to making up those dollars; now the Institutions will have to make up those dollars somehow
- Karyn Schulz: If Institution is expected to give back X amount, if we don't offer some sort of VSP, concern is where money will be taken from
- Dave DeLooze: most people at his campus that he's spoken to would be happy to retire (people who are already thinking about retirement) and receive the State plan (\$15,000 plus \$200/year)

VII. Old Business

- BOR Awards Process Review: deferred to next meeting
- Retreat discussion: deferred to next meeting
- Newsletter

Next meeting: University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, June 28, 2011

*Respectfully submitted by Giordana Segneri and Karyn Schulz, CUSS Co-Secretaries*