

Council of University System Staff

Towson University

January 17, 2023

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order.

Welcome from Provost and Executive Vice President for academic and student affairs at Towson University, Dr. Melanie Perreault.

Dr. Perreault will step into the role of interim Vice President as Towson sends off Dr. Schatzel to the next step of her career.

Some updates from Towson University:

- New College of Health of Professions is under construction.
- Smith Hall will undergo a full reconstruction which will house the Communication and Electronic Film and Media programs when completed. This will also be the home for Towson's FACET program which is the Faculty Development Unit on campus, and they will have a facility for the first which is specifically built for their use.
- Towson has been approved by the Middle States, and the USM to offer Ph.D. programs. Converting existing programs into Ph.D. and proposing several new programs going forward including Ph.D. in sustainability, autism, and business analytics.
- Towson is looking to become a research one institution. Towson knows that the research going forward cannot happen without their staff and without increasing the number of staff, especially in the research areas.

Kailas's question: What is it that is exciting you most about coming in as interim President? Is there something you're really excited about, or hoping to accomplish, or just keeping Towson afloat in the coming months?

Answer: Dr. Perreault is looking forward to moving the agenda (10-year strategic plan) forward and this is exciting because Towson has the momentum to keep things going. The great thing about being an interim president at this university is there are no fires to put out. So, my role is to continue this forward momentum and just continue to execute the plan that has already been put in place by President Schatzel.

The strategic plan is on a dashboard for the campus community to see how the University is progressing with the ten-year strategic plan.

Approval of Minutes

- Dawn Stoute requested a change be made to the minutes. A program that was mentioned that translated- this is not a program to translate but to collect and review. Dawn is asked to send Susan the correction in an email.

Chair's Report -Kalia Patricia

- CUSS is looking at revamping the non-exempt Board of Regents Awards packets. The Chancellor's cabinet agrees and looks forward to seeing what the new packets will look like in the future.
- Student Councils are developing their own Board of Regents Student Awards that are starting this year.
- COVID Updates: no changes- they will keep the guidelines that are in place.

Chancellor's Liaison's Report – George Samuel

Good morning, CUSS Colleagues

1. Maryland legislative session for 2023 has started
 - a. USMO Staff are busy reviewing newly introduced bills and providing fiscal and policy impact notes on legislation impacting USM.
2. I am pleased to announce UMSO will be offering additional voluntary benefits through MetLife. We are expanding the offerings to include
 - a. pet
 - b. Auto & Home

Open Enrollment for these products will be scheduled for March 1-March 15. More information will come via each institution's benefits department.

3. Want to give a quick plug for the Employee Assistance Program.
 - a. The program is known as Guidance Resources and is provided by ComPsych. ComPsych is one of the nation's leading providers of behavioral health services.
 - b. Guidance Resources provides employees and their household members with no-cost confidential assistance to help with personal or professional problems that interfere with the successful management of work and family responsibilities.
 - c. Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via a toll-free number (855.410.7628) or online at www.guidanceresources.com, and include:
 - i. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for Confidential Counseling
 - ii. Legal Support
 - iii. Financial Information
 - iv. Work Life Solutions

Question: Cost of living adjustment that the Governor announced Does the system have any information about this?

Answer: Yes, the USM knows about it. What George has been hearing from Carolyn and others is there's a 95% chance that it applies to us, but we do not like to give a final answer until the budget is in place.

Question: is the budget already out or are we waiting for it to evolve? Is it something that comes out later on the session?

Answer: I am not exactly sure how the processing budget works. I can get you more information.

Andy Clark, University System of Maryland

- The budget will be released upon the Governor's inauguration, so it should be out on the twentieth of February.
- The Legislative session has opened. This is the 440 gathering of the Maryland General Assembly.
- The first time since 1919 that there have been no incumbents at the executive level.
- Also, a change over in the Senate and the House of Delegates. There are 188 members and 40 new general members to the General Assembly varying in experience in the legislature.
- This means that legislators are not well seasoned in introducing new bills which will slow the process down but only for this year because everyone will figure out how to do it for next year.
- The only bills, that are being handled legislatively at this point are pre-filed bills that were introduced early last year, either at end of term or in the midst of the fall.
- As soon as the legislatures start meeting regularly, more bills will start emerging.
- Right now USM is dealing with a light load but will ramp up in the course of the 90-day session.

What will be different about this year:

- Fiscal 2022 closed with a revenue surplus of 2 billion dollars. This growth was largely driven by an increase in personal income tax and Federal stimulus aid.
- Going forward the legislature will have to exercise caution with the surplus.
- As mandated 870 million dollars of the 2 billion dollars has to go into the Rainy Day Fund but it still leaves a good amount of money for the legislature to cover priorities going into the new year.
- A constitutional amendment was passed which allows the General Assembly to manipulate dollars within the operating budget. In the past, the legislator had very little room to move money around after the governor's budget was introduced but now they can move dollars around in the operating budget. This is a new dynamic that will be fully implemented this year. It will be interesting to see how the legislature uses this newfound power that they have to move dollars within the operating budget.
- When we have a budget, Andy does not speculate how negotiations will go. A lot can happen during the course of a legislative session, priorities can change.
- Every Monday, at 9:30 Andy will host a Zoom call for all of the councils to answer any questions about what is going on during the legislative session.
- The Legislative newsletter is being revived. This will give you a weekly update about what is going on in Annapolis and how USM prioritizes some of the legislation.
- The State Relations Council is Andy's and Patrick's advisory group for the USM. They are our government relations representatives on the USM campuses. If you do not know who they are on your campus, then let Andy know and he will tell you. The representative is always your best source for what is going on your campus in Annapolis.
- Advocacy Day started with CUSS and about six years ago it co-joined with the faculty and students. Our Advocacy work is prioritizing the USM budget because it is the bread and butter of what we do. We have to protect the budget and not let them slice and dice it. We need to show our value across the board, Students, Faculty, and Staff. Talk about the role of the USM and its unity and purpose.

New Business

- We did not have anything presented for new business.

Old Business

In-person meeting proposal: Adjust months for an in-person meeting (50%).

Kalia Proposal- 50% in-person/hybrid option meetings.

Meetings that should be in person:

- August- orientation for the new year
- November-Joint Councils Day
- February-Advocacy Day
- October- gives us another momentum for fall
- May- gives us momentum for spring/summer
- July-to have an end-of-the-year goodbye.

A discussion was held among the CUSS members as to whether we should meet 100% in person or 50% in person.

Some members think we should go back to having meetings in person 100% and some members like having in-person meetings 50%.

Kalia would like to have 50% in-person meetings next year and ease us into having 100% in-person meetings in the future.

A vote was taken among the CUSS committee members on this proposal.

Committee Reports and Action Plan Updates attached

Legislative Affairs & Policy

Governance people. When you get this, send it to all of your Staff People. Seeking information on staff/student/faculty status.

Drafted language to send to all Legislators.

Finding a list of legislator emails from MGA website, Will send by the end of the week

Agenda depends on committee schedules and other logistical information

I'll be sending out a template for this so we can asynchronously set some blocks up

Send Siobhan Social Media blurb! (FB and Twitter)

Send Advisory Chairs save the dates for introductions.

Staff Resources & Special Projects

Attended: Sara, Shannon, Meredith, Brian, Lei, Alicia, Kevin, Trish

- The committee needs to ensure that any email communications are received by Sara Wilhelm (slwilhelm@frostburg.edu) and Shannon Hardester (smhardester@salisbury.edu). We reviewed the December "to do" tasks related to performing audits via use of Google Survey Forms sent to our CUSS HR POC's on the following issues: Tuition remission fees VJ shared poll results on 1/17/23 prior to the CUSS meeting for discussion. Link below: 2022 Tuition Remission Fee Structure Memo with Poll Results The results are on the bottom of pages 2-5. The entire memo was included for background and summary reference. Vj will request actual Excel breakdown of

the poll results from Kalia who mentioned that Elizabeth Hinson (UMD) may have them. Use these results to refocus on the removal of barriers to benefit utilization while further exploring a proposal for a reduction of "OR" exemption of any home institution fees e.g. eliminating unnecessary, duplicate and burdensome fees.

- Parking charges ☒
 - This charge is being placed on hold; VJ confirmed this will be a part of system-wide collective bargaining discussion. If later determined that each individual campus will be responsible for their fees, discuss the possibility of circling back to this question toward the end of the academic year or possibly role into 2023-2024 academic year goal Staff Support Programs (OMBUD, FSAP, etc.)
- poll campuses through their CUSS HR POC to understand who has Staff Ombuds officers, reporting structure, and how are they funded Brian sent out the draft survey 1/12/23 asking for review and feedback <https://forms.office.com/r/APaxhUaRV5> --> need to determine next steps after we receive the answers
- Telework Practices and green initiatives
 - Identify the various remote work policies, practices, and conditions across campuses throughout the system It was discussed that this is a hot topic across campuses and one of our largest initiatives. We need thorough information that can be the most impactful, but need to also identify the best way to gather it. This area appeared to need another Google Form drafted that could 1 st gather the following:
 - Does your campus have a formal telework process?
 - If No please include any links to telework
 - If Yes, indicate/check all the apply: policy, practice/guidance, email
 - from senior leader/President, etc (include website hyperlinks)
 - What office determines telework? HR, Division, College,
 - Department, Unit Supervisor, Unknown, etc
 - What is the University's current frequency for remote work? 1 day, 2 days, 3 days, 4 days, 5 days
 - days, 4 days, 5 days
 - Please indicate which best reflects your institution: hybrid, fully remote, fully in Person
 - Are there any service requirements/timeframes to telework?
 - telework based on the position/job function?
 - Are there deviations across various departments?
 - What form of communication and timeline addresses expectations regarding reporting for in person meetings or specific project/tasks?
 - Does your campus utilize telework written agreements? If yes, who is responsible for getting a signed agreement?
 - As time permits, still continue to address and/or advocate for: (1) Prescription benefits for retirees, and
- (2) The pet insurance topic can come off our list based on George Samuel's USMO update indicating that MetLife Insurance expanded to include pet, auto and home, but Benefits Coordinators at home
- institutions will be communicating further (open enrollment in March with April effective dates).
- It was also determined that there is a need to meet outside of the once-a-month CUSS meeting in order to effectively respond to and make impactful change to our various initiatives. Proposed

email to gauge interested and availability for meeting e.g. to include a possible Doodle Poll of availability.

Awards & Outreach

Attendance: Tim Casey, LaVern Chapman, Vanessa Collins, Deniz Erman, Carol, Green-Willis, Siobhan Keplinger, Maureen Schrimpe, Nia Speaks, Dawn Stoute

- Winter 2023 Newsletter - Article request email sent out 2/13//23, articles due 2/20/23, Publication of Newsletter 2/24/23.
- Meeting on 1/12 - Lavelle, Tim, Sister Schrimpe, Shiobhan, Deniz
 - Needed to look at package to see if anything didn't make sense and to clarify
 - Changes to package - Change wording Awards will be announced in mid July 2023 to Summer of 2023

Page 4 - Change to 12 Arial or 12 TR - 1" margins, 500 per page

- Page 4- Eligibility - Change sentence #3 - Not at a USM institution for 5 years to deployed at a specific institution. Didn't want people to have to wait 5 years if moving from another USM institution.

Page 5 -Evaluation Process: Please use the following..... Nomination letter, reference letters so all the packages to look the same so no bias.

- What would happen if awardee no longer working at the university. Should CUSS handle or leave up to institution?
- Winning staff no longer works and winner not receiving it, does it go to the next person?
- Sister asked if moving from Exempt to Non-exempt or retired, clarify if still eligible to receive
- Per Deniz, looked into a similar instance and was left up to the institution.
- When the package is released for distribution, you need to have your 5 years in.
- Per Siobhan, University should not be concerned about putting in \$1,000
- Sister reiterates, needs clear guidelines
- Tim, Collectively where do we go with this. Can avoid by not worrying about the fact that they moved on or if there is a concern about moving to a non USM institution. Percentage is probably pretty low that you can't track the person, but just want to make sure that is okay.
- Vanessa, not looking at current employment status - not our call.
- Lavern - Any university come back and say can't give the person and award.
- Deniz - HR came to her once and was asked if particular person had a chance to win the award and didn't want that person to give that award, and the employee did leave.
- HR should not be involved - especially if President letter is received endorsing
- Deniz is just sharing some unusual emails and questions she gets
- Sister, The person's boss was not willing to support a nominee for BORSA and the person was eliminated -- very unfortunate.
- Shiobhan, Our job to vet the packages to help candidates move forward. Looking for clear language, not unusual nuances.
- . Deniz, all packages will move forward, if university has an issue, need to give reason why. If not a good reason, it is moving forward (for instance termination)

Meeting Adjourned

