

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: September 13, 2007

Location: University Union, Oak Creek Room

Present: Dina Barnese, Robin Long, Stan Clark, Susan Johnstad, Karin VonKay, Karla Brewster, Jane Thompson, Terri Hayes, Sharon Gorman, Tom Carpenter, David Forgues, Marcelle Coder, Franklyn Taylor

Ex Officio & Guests: Diane Verkest, TC Eberly, Rich Bowen, Susan Rain

Excused: Valerie Lundy, Eva Hatchner, Kim Knowles

1. Call to Order

Dina Barnese called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM

2. Minutes approved

Minutes of August 16 retreat approved.

3. Conference Center

Rich Bowen and TC Eberly presented information about the progress of the new conference center, the High Country Conference Center. The conference center will serve about 500 – 1000 participants, with 4 meeting rooms. The hotel will be run by Drury Hotels, a family owned company that operates energy efficient rooms and is well known for customer service. Conference participants will stay in one of the 160 hotel rooms or others in the Flagstaff community. Construction is scheduled to be done in February 2008, and be open for business in April. \$700,000 in business has been booked to date.

4. Optional Retirement

Susan Rain shared information about a draft plan for employees who are in the Optional Retirement Plan. The plan would be a phased plan allowing employees to gradually retire, reducing their hours over time. The plan will go to the Board for approval in December. Feedback or questions should be directed to Susan Rain.

5. Vice Chair Nomination/Election

Motion approved to elect Tom Carpenter into the Vice Chair position. Tom Carpenter will serve in the Vice Chair role for the upcoming year.

6. Proposal to Amend Bylaws

Motion approved to amend the bylaws to include treasurer role. Motion to elect David Forgues to hold the post was approved. David Forgues will hold the post of treasurer for the upcoming year.

7. Discussion of annual activities

Dina updated the group on the dispute resolution. Thus far it seems that 80% of those interviewed supported the need for dispute resolution resources. Dina will present findings to the President's cabinet.

Additional discussion centered around themes from the bi-annual Service Professional survey. Parking, salaries, and the needs for an ombudsman seemed to be consistent throughout the comments. The group expressed interest in helping educate the campus about costs associated with parking and transportation. The following ideas were generated:

- Put something in SPAC newsletter about costs; include testimonials of how specific people are dealing with parking (carpool, biking etc.)
- Invite the new parking services manager, Jack Shambaugh, to speak to the group
- Encourage communication about parking rate increases to be tied to salary increases with clear explanation about use/need for fees
- Possibly provide supervisors with training about how to constructively model and lead employees who are frustrated about salaries, parking etc. Diffusing the negativity associated with some of these topics can be challenging

The group agreed that HR has done an excellent job in communicating salary information to the campus. Diane shared that HR will be looking at the Classified Staff structure this year and may make a recommendation to the President to bring anyone who is not at the minimum to the minimum rate.

Discussion was had about including Distance Learning staff in all SPAC initiatives. The following items were discussed:

- Holding a SPAC meeting over ITV – inviting participants to feel included and share ideas about SPAC priorities
- Putting a spotlight both in the newsletter and on the website that highlights a person and their story – to help build community among Service Professionals. These highlights would not be limited to just Distance Learning staff. It was suggested that photos be used.

There was discussion about the requirement that employees must have 80 hours of leave accrued before they can donate their time using the compassionate transfer of leave policy. For small departments this is often problematic. Susan Rain suggested using groups, such as SPAC, to assist with the dissemination of information when someone is in need. Additionally, employees and retirees who are at risk of losing time are encouraged to donate what they might lose. Both Susan and Diane said they would check to see whether the 80 hour limit was an ABOR policy and check with the other universities to see if there was any interest in suggesting a change of the policy to ABOR but noted that such recommendations are made based upon the priority of policies currently in review.

Diane Verkest encouraged all to come to the open session interviews for the new Associate VP for Capital Assets. Schedules found at:

http://www4.nau.edu/insidenau/bumps/2007/9_12_07/cas.htm

Dina mentioned that the first newsletter for the group would go out in November. This is a little later than what has happened in the past; however, it should not be a problem.

8. Action Items

- Dina will invite Jack Shambaugh to the next meeting
- Susan Johnstad volunteered to write the first spotlight on a Distance Learning staff member
- Dina will schedule an upcoming meeting over ITV
- Dina to schedule Rich Bowen to discuss campus transportation

Meeting adjourned: 10:00 AM

Next meeting: October 18, 2007, Location: University Union, Havasupai C

Respectfully submitted, Terri Hayes, Recording Secretary