

Staff Senate – Regular Meeting

December 15, 2011
East Carolina Heart Institute

Roll Call

In attendance: Jennifer Abbott, Shirley Bazemore, Justin Boulmay, Teri Coleman, Marianne Cox, Kendra Davis, Kelly Dilda, Johnnie Eastwood, Steven Foley, Pamela Fredrick, Jenny Gregory, Marsha Hall, Judy Havermann, Garrett Killian, Mande Lancaster, Stancil Lilley, Jean Merenda, Hong Li, Tony Miller, Lisa Ormond, Cindy Reaves, Thomas Santana, Derri Stormer, LuAnn Sullivan, Michael Tucker

Excused absences: Steve Ayers, Steven Asby, Stephanie Bailey, Jackie Daniels, Melissa Eakes, Leigh Fedash, Deirdre Harris, Kristen King, Mike Litwin, Crystal Morgan Scarlett Sawyer, Travis Taylor, Mary Susan Williams

Unexcused absences: Jared Brinkley, Jay Clark

Ex officios: Phil Hulsey, Robyn Slocum

Approval of the Minutes

There was not a quorum of regular voting members, so approval of the November 2011 meeting minutes was postponed until the January 2012 meeting.

Executive Committee

Chair

Chair Mary Susan Williams was not present for the meeting, due to a family matter.

Chair-Elect

Chair-Elect Mande Lancaster emphasized the importance of the Flex forums and continuing discussion with senators' constituents. She also discussed the importance of the Senate's volunteer groups reaching out to the community.

Secretary

Secretary Justin Boulmay had no items to report.

Treasurer

Boulmay read the treasurer's report on behalf of Treasurer Kristen King, who had an excused absence. As of December 14, 2011, the Senate had \$2,471.83 in its state account,

having spent \$28.17 on supplies for the holiday social (which was held later during the meeting). In the chancellor's discretionary account, the Senate had \$793.75. The Senate's total funds at the end of 2011 was \$3,265.58.

Committee Reports

Communications and Marketing

Senator Jenny Gregory said there were no additional Pirate Perks to report this month. She said the committee has also started looking for newspaper content.

Diversity

Senator Jane Moore said the Diversity Committee worked at the Food Bank on December 7, 2011. She felt they did a great job, and it was interesting what they had to do. They are going to start meeting in January for their monthly meetings.

Human Resources

Senator Garrett Killian said the Human Resources Committee met on December 1, 2011. Senator Kendra Davis reported from University Benefits committee that there are new limits on State Retirement Accounts. Employees under 50 years of age can contribute \$17,000/year pre-tax to a 403B or 401K. Employees over 50 years of age can contribute \$22,500/year. This is an increase from before, but Killian added that he wasn't sure what the old limits were.

Killian also said that the Kronos project, which will replace employee timesheets, has been pushed back. They're going to do a pilot group study in January to get some kinks worked out. They want to roll it out in production because it's been around for a while and they're ready to be implemented.

Killian also said that the Human Resources and Communications and Marketing committees have been working to consolidate feedback coming in through the Staff Senate website. Senator Crystal Morgan has worked hard on getting the comments from the inbox to the appropriate university official, as well as to get a response that is properly formatted to be published online. Killian said there are one or two questions up there now, and even though the committee wants to tweak the system, they are excited about it.

Killian also said he got an e-mail yesterday from the State Retirement System. They are going to be having discussions on how the health plan can better serve our needs. On January 1, the Treasurer's Office will take over the plan. On February 29, they will be at Pitt Community College from 5:30-7:00 p.m. to get feedback. State Treasurer Janet Cowell will be in attendance, as well as members of the SHP. Winterville is the closest location in the state for the SHP's seven N.C. offices.

Rewards and Recognition

Senator Cindy Reaves said the Rewards and Recognition Committee worked on the community service project this month, and they will be working on spring events in January, such as the health walk.

By-laws

Senator Johnnie Eastwood said the By-laws Committee met on December 1 and is currently working to reformat the by-laws to put it into an article-section format. A draft of that will be available for committee review in early January. They're also working on an onboarding program for the Staff Senate.

Senator Tony Miller has also been working on the SharePoint site. Miller said the committee had the idea of letting every member of Staff Senate see all of the content on the SharePoint sites, which he said would make sense for collaborative purposes. Everyone should be able to see committee documents. Miller said that a private folder has not yet been created that would store documents that aren't ready to be seen by the entire Senate, but such folders would be added to every committee's SharePoint site. Miller said he appreciates everyone who has been using the site and encouraged anyone with questions to contact him.

Community Activity Updates

Gregory said their team helped Angel Cops by collecting items such as blankets and food. They want this project to be ongoing because every Thursday, they have a need. People who rely on the program go to the soup kitchen and receive a hot meal. They divide it and carry it out to the tenant communities and to those they have helped to place in apartments. They give one hot meal a week. They are in desperate need for volunteers to do that. The second thing they want are people who are willing to help transport some of the residents. Some of them are in a tented community, which is on a privately owned land. (The owner is allowing this to happen.) Angel Cops is slowly helping these people progress into apartments and find jobs. A lot of them don't have vehicles and need to be taken to interviews and doctor's appointments. Right now, there's only a couple of people who are doing that. Gregory hopes to keep the project going throughout the year.

Senator Lisa Ormond said her group helped out at Give2TheTroops, an organization that supports deployed members of the Armed Forces with care packages. The organization has three locations throughout the nation, one of which is in Greenville. The Greenville location produces the most care packages, Ormond said. Its volunteers include ECU students. The Senate group worked on one of the organization's walls, which is devoted to soldiers who have died in Iraq. The wall is covered in stars that commemorate a person who was killed in Iraq by listing their name, date of birth, date of death, and, if there's room, their rank and branch of service. The farthest a person has ever traveled to put a name on that wall is from Italy. There's also an adjacent wall devoted to soldiers who were killed in Afghanistan. Ormond said the owner of the building will keep the walls

there as a memorial. Since 2002, the program has sent packages to more than 1 million soldiers. They always need people to help do something, such as send a letter.

Killian said that the Senate group that will help out at the Food Bank will go on Monday, December 19. The volunteer group has been collecting food in our respective departments. Killian said he personally has five big boxes to take with him.

Senator Tarrick Cox said his group was not able to compile care packages for ECU students and would instead join the Food Bank group on Monday.

Eastwood said Parking and Transportation had collected food over the past few weeks.

Lancaster said the Humane Society group is going out on Tuesday and Thursday of next week, and she also would be at the wrapping booth at the mall. People are welcome to attend both events. Lancaster also said she's really proud of the commitment to service that the group has displayed.

Old Business

Boulmay asked for people's responses to the UNC Flex Forums, which were held on Friday, November 18, 2011, on both the main and health sciences campuses.

Gregory on the forums said the issue was that people didn't know what to ask when they came because they weren't provided information. She heard a lot of confused responses. Eastwood seconded that and said that people didn't understand why this issue is currently being discussed.

Gregory said she thinks the problem was that people didn't have information about the proposal. John Toller, associate vice chancellor for human resources at East Carolina University, said the forums probably wouldn't have been perfect even if people had been provided a handout, because we learned that we probably need more staff forums so they're not foreign to people. Toller also said that some of the questions asked during the forums had nothing to do with the actual Flex proposal. If more forums are scheduled, he said, then that could change.

Toller noted that if there's a change that eliminates property rights, then there's no reason to go through with the changes. Toller said that Mary Susan Williams has talked about getting past chairs together to discuss issues and respond to them. The forums gave us a variety of questions, some of which were not easily anticipated. Toller thinks maybe there's a list of 20 questions right now, and that list might grow as some of the questions are refined.

Boulmay asked about posting a FAQ sheet on the ECU website. John said the UNC-General Administration is working on a sheet but it won't be released until it has been seen by the UNC-Board of Governors. He also noted that other issues could affect longevity pay, such as the budget issues. Longevity costs \$100 million a year, but Toller said that

he has not seen a bill in which that was stopped for current employees. (It would only affect new hires, he said.)

Ex-officio member Phil Hulsey said the question was raised as to why forums weren't scheduled last year; now, he said, we've seen why. From what he's heard, Hulsey said that the forum on the Health Sciences Campus was the most heated. Most of the crowd will be either apathetic or excited, Hulsey said, but the typical understanding is that this proposal is being portrayed in different ways. It's presented as a cost-saving measure to the legislature, and employees are being told that it increases the flexibility of their respective employers, and that seems to be a detriment to get employees behind it. Hulsey said that the only witness to how this proposal may work was from the community-college system, and that representative said that they work at the will of someone who could let them go if they choose. So people are worried about the proposal because that's the only evidence as to what the plan might bring. Hulsey said we need a follow-up forum and if we do, we need to try to have something from N.C. General Assembly to clarify their intentions.

Miller noted that SB 575 doesn't exist anymore. Having the Senate pass it, it's ultimately whether the legislators here that. He asked if there is a plan to reintroduce SB 575 to the N.C. Senate. Toller said that depends on the direction President Ross receives from the Board of Governors, as well as feedback from the chancellors of the UNC-system schools. Toller said that Ross has been clear that he doesn't want to do it if the campuses don't want it. There is no bill yet, Toller said. SB 575 could be reintroduced in terms of what's left, or it could be introduced separately as a new item. Toller said that it might have to take the original form of SB 575 since the legislature has short sessions to look at what's left over from last year.

Lancaster said she can talk to Philip Rogers, chief of staff for the chancellor at ECU, and ask him to come to a Staff Senate meeting to discuss the issue. Lancaster also noted that it might be better for him to come in February since he might know more then.

New Business

Lancaster asked the group to be thinking about the membership committee. It's made up of one member of the Executive Committee, one member of each Senate committee, and one member of ECU's human resources department. That committee does the election process from February to April. She wanted to let senators know so they can consider who in their committees wants to serve there. Lancaster doesn't need a decision right this moment.

Staff Senate Holiday Social

The rest of the meeting was devoted to a holiday party for members of the Staff Senate.

Announcements

The next Staff Senate meeting will be held on January 19 at the East Carolina Heart Institute at 3:00 p.m.