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Staff Council Meeting Minutes

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Georgia Southern University
Personnel Advisory Council
February 18, 2009

Members Present: Jo-Lyn Bender, Amber Blair, Cindy Durden, Jill Forehand, Jane Harkleroad, Patricia Hendrix, Bryan Hooks, Laura McCullough, Paul Michaud, America Minc, Melanee Morales, Nicki Newton, Kimberly Robinson, Laura Saunders, Sandy Seibel, Kent Tatum, Krey Tinker, Janet Walker, Michael Waters, Alan Woodrum

Absent: Linda Smith (excused)

The meeting convened at 9:00am in the Marvin Pittman Conference Room.

Opening Remarks

Bryan Hooks called the meeting to order.

Cindy Durden made a motion to accept the 01/14/2009 minutes. Laura McCullough provided the second. The minutes were approved.

B. Hooks encouraged Ed Begley Jr.'s philosophy to take one more step in reusing, recycling and reducing, including precycling. B. Hooks informed the committee that the USG Staff Council meeting was canceled due to poor RSVPs. He explained that the Georgia Southern University Presidential Search Committee has been named.

Guest Speaker- Haroun Hodayun, Campus Architect

Haroun Hodayun gave the council a virtual tour of campus architecture, including recently completed and newly conceptualized projects. He explained the new focus on creating intimate, aesthetic spaces on campus, where courtyards connect the old with the new. The importance of recycling and rehabilitating old buildings was shared. The next building to be built will be the Biology Building. The new alumni center is 55% complete; the new softball facility is complete; and Centennial Place is well underway. America Minc asked about LEAD certification in new projects. H. Hodayun explained that they are looking at that project by project. The Biology Building should be platinum status, but it is as important to recycle old buildings. A 3-D modeling of campus is being developed.

Open Issues

B. Hooks indicated that a subcommittee still needs to be formed to discuss PAC name, Treasurer position and Guidelines revisions. Alan Woodrum volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

2009 Merit Awards

C. Durden passed around a signup sheet for merit ceremony duties. She asked that continuing members sign up for the same duties as last year so they can serve as mentors for new members. B. Hooks said

that he is trying to have the gifts available on-site immediately after the ceremony to eliminate post-ceremony delivery. Regarding nominations, Jane Harkelroad indicated she is unable to access the SharePoint site. B. Hooks will contact Jamey Bland about these issues. He explained that the spreadsheets are at the bottom for scoring. Nominated PAC members will not participate in the rating process. Scoring needs to be completed by February 27, 2009.

Sandy Seibel asked about nominees without folders—B. Hooks said it may be a nominee that did not get endorsements. There are no minimum required endorsements.

The new ceremony date is scheduled for April 8, 2009, at 10:00am.

Website Updates

Jamey Bland has been busy but will continue the updates as able. Kimberly Robinson again indicated that it might be a possibility for CIT interns to assist free of charge.

A Day for Southern

Jill Forehand stated it may not be the best time to propose a new account to Billy Griffis due to budget concerns. A date closer to June 30th may be better. It was discussed to provide the list of TAP participants to J. Forehand to campaign for donations in time for the end-of-August campus event.

New Business

Regarding TAP benefits for family members, Paul Michaud stated we need a council resolution to start the state-wide conversation. Laura Saunders volunteered to lead this initiative. He was not sure if individual institutions can make such changes in policies or if there needs to be a state-level initiative. P. Michaud expressed the policy enhancement would be a great tool for employee attraction and retention.

There was discussion regarding a smoke-free campus initiative. A. Minc shared her experiences in a similar initiative in Florida and explained the phases of the initiative, beginning with relocating of smoking areas and ending ultimately with prohibited use of tobacco on campus. She explained the promotion of smoking cessation programs in partnerships with pharmaceutical companies. There was discussion of the positive benefits of helping students form healthier habits and the healthcare cost benefit for employees. A. Minc will lead this initiative.

Human Resources-Paul Michaud

P. Michaud explained that a policy will be written to include Leave Without Pay (LWOP) status to include educational leave. He is putting together a proposal for the President's Cabinet. There are benefit implications regarding receiving the employee contributions.

Over 200 employees attended the Conflict Resolution workshop. It was a great turnout.

There will be changes to the performance evaluation forms for this year. There will be 4 options of forms from which to choose. Supervisors should be consistent with the forms for the same classification of staff. The new forms will be recommended to the President's Cabinet on or about February 26th. There was some discussion about changes to performance evaluations including the need for them at all.

HR is interested to see how the stimulus package will affect Georgia Southern. L. McCullough asked about the hiring freeze. P. Michaud clarified that there is still the 60 day hiring freeze. There was discussion about furlough, and P. Michaud indicated there should be updated information in the next few weeks from the Governor. Many institutions in our region and across the nation have already implemented a furlough system.

President Grube

Dr. Grube acknowledged that the status of the budget is *the* issue in front of all of us, and he carefully explained the current state of affairs. His number one priority is to protect people's jobs. The issue is whether or not Georgia Southern will be able to handle our budget reduction or if the way to handle the budget reduction will be mandated at the state level. The problem is with public posturing. We need a high accountability, high autonomy situation.

In November, the Board of Regents (BOR) officially implemented an 8% reduction for FY09 budget (July 1, 2008-June 30m, 2009 period). The Governor recommended a 9.04% reduction (a 1.04% increase from the BOR recommendation). Internally, Georgia Southern prepared for a 10% reduction. On February 17, 2009, the Governor signed off on a homeowner's property tax bill, which created greater reductions.

In Georgia Southern specific terms, the Yamacraw project was eliminated for FY09 (a \$140,000 budget reduction) plus the CIT operational budget reduction (1.2 million budget reduction) plus the homeowners tax bill plus the Governor's proposed state reduction equals about 11-12% reduction from FY09.

There was a growth assumption for revenue collections. The growth assumption was 6% in FY09, but in January, the revenue collections were down 10.8% of what was projected.

The General Assembly is considering furloughs. Dr. Grube indicated that he opposes them. It is an implementation issue. Furloughs are a possibility for FY09 (except for faculty, who are under contracts that could not be amended until FY10).

The one "wild card" that could change these discussions dramatically is the Federal Stimulus package. The General Assembly may not adjourn until June so that they can decide what to make of the stimulus package. Budget cuts and remedies will be finalized then. The side effect of late adjournment is that the setting of 2009-2010 tuition and fees will be delayed until the General Assembly closes.

The guaranteed tuition for Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors would not be impacted by tuition changes. The only new sources of revenue for tuition increases would be freshmen and graduate students. The increase in the Pell Grant will help.

The current FY10 budget recommendation from the Governor is 9.5%, but Dr. Grube expects them to be higher. In FY10, the Yamacraw impact will be for a full year's reduction, and there will be increased reduction for CIT.

What Georgia Southern is doing?

We are lobbying in the legislature, and it appears as though the Governor may oppose furloughs. We are working with local delegates and leadership.

Why Georgia Southern is hopeful?

Fall enrollment looks strong in early projections. Retention rates are good. The federal stimulus may impact us in a positive way. We may have some support against furloughs by the Governor. Internal plans have been put in place to sustain cuts. We are not currently facing layoffs. The increased tax credit and Pell Grant awards will help families.

Michael Waters asked Dr. Grube about the increased impact on a small town like Statesboro when the biggest employer is affected. Grube agreed that the effect would be felt more in a smaller town. There was discussion of the growth of online programs and the fact that enrollment often increases during hard economic times.

Meeting adjourned 11:00am.

Professionally submitted,

Amber Blair
Secretary