Minutes of the Staff Advisory Committee to the President  
February 7, 2013  
Alumni Center of the School of Education, Health and Human Performance

Attending: Meredith Chance, Elizabeth Dixon, Herbert Frasie, Susan Hallatt, John Inman, Aron Kuch, Jennifer McClerklin, Brian McGee (ex officio), Anne McNeal, Amy Orr, Ashleigh Parr, Katherine Pezzella (ex officio), Ed Pope (ex officio), Amanda Smith, Marcia White, Marlene Williams

Not attending: Clara Hodges

Marcia White called the meeting to order at 10:36 AM.

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the January 10, 2013 meeting were distributed and unanimously approved as submitted.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Chair Report

The report of the CARTA survey was sent to the president for approval before sending to Jan Brewton.

Marcia encouraged members to review the Board of Trustees meeting minutes and encourage their colleagues to review them. Anyone can attend meetings by letting Carla Hodges know. The next meetings will be about the budget, so it behooves us to attend.

Treasurer's Report

$119 has been paid to Physical Plant for the materials used in the suggestion boxes. The account balance in the SAC budget is $2,881.

Subcommittee Reports

College Relations Subcommittee

John Inman reported that he attended the Faculty Senate meeting where the smoking ban was voted down 15 to 14 because of enforcement requirements, so it is a non-issue for us. SGA had already passed it although a majority of students at their meeting spoke against it.
At the same Faculty Senate meeting, President Benson spoke at length about New Charleston and the Senate is meeting February 12 just on that topic. Staff can attend and discuss. Amy Orr recommended that we invite Pres. Benson to address the topic with staff. Marcia recommended that we ask him to address our major concerns at the same time.

Silvia Hanna and Jim Kindley are adjuncts who will be working with the subcommittee to address adjunct issues.

The College Relations Subcommittee met with the Faculty Advisory Committee to the President. The Faculty Advisory Committee meets with the president three times a semester for open discussion. They bring approximately ten agenda items. Their job is to represent the work being done by the faculty committees and bring it to the president's attention.

Amy Orr reported that joint concerns for SAC and FAC include evaluations for deans, chairs, AVPs, EVPs, etc. Ashleigh Parr pointed out that the Faculty Administration Manual has been revised to say that evaluation of unclassified employees is up to the discretion of the supervisor. Staff are also concerned lack of evaluation affects eligibility for employees to receive merit increases. Previously, we were told that roughly a third of all regular staff employees are not evaluated.

Other joint faculty/staff concerns are the perception that administration is top heavy, the low levels of staffing to support students, and the projected image of the College versus the reality. We promote ourselves as having 15-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio and a “private college” feel, which does not always accurately represent reality.

The subcommittee did not find as much commonality with the FAC as expected since the FAC is just a conduit to report to the president, not a working group.

Ashleigh Parr met with the ECDC Director, Faculty Welfare Representative, Memminger Elementary School principal, Fran Welch, Dean of the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance, who is on the Memminger planning committee, about child care. Memminger opens in July with 400 child care spots, 200 of them open to anyone for children three years old and older. It is a Race to the Top school and will submitting their IB application. This school will with lots of advantages and is hoping to be similar to Penn Alexander School.

Memminger plans a town hall meeting. Ashleigh will post the information and provide paper flyers when it is announced.

Amanda Smith moved that we change our communication process with the president to no longer require indirect channels and that we invite him to our meetings. We request parity with the Faculty Advisory Committee in regard to access to the president and consultation with him on staff-related issues. Amy Orr seconded the motion.

John Inman amended the motion to include the provision that SAC will ask the president to meet with us at least two times a semester at regularly scheduled or other meetings.
The motion passed.

**Communication Subcommittee**

Anne McNeal reported that the subcommittee has met twice since the last SAC meeting. Minutes of the two subcommittee meetings were distributed.

Anne reported that she learned that all staff members are automatically subscribed to the Staff Forum. As of November 8, 2012, there had been 13 posts and 554 views.

Marcia recommended that we notify staff again about accessing the Staff Forum.

Anne has posted the campus-wide staff awards for 2011 and 2012 on the SAC website and provided the URL for the page to Alicia Lutz to include in the next issue of *Portico*.

Anne also posted Aron Kuch’s spreadsheet of constituent concerns and their outcomes on the website and sent an email to the All Staff ListServ with a recap of SAC activities and a link to the constituent concerns spreadsheet.

The Communication Subcommittee presented a proposal for the first SAC staff awards to be presented in August at the Back-to-School Picnic. Three awards were proposed: Temporary Staff Employee of the Year with up to five awarded and one being the Presidential Award; Permanent Staff Employee of the Year with up to five awarded and one being the Presidential Award; and the Open Gates Award which rewards collaboration across campus. The first two would be nominated by staff members campus wide and selected by SAC, while Open Gates would be nominated and selected by SAC members. Recipients would receive trophies and gift baskets and their departments would receive plaques.

The consensus was that contract employees such as Aramark, Barnes & Noble, and housekeeping staff will not be eligible.

Amy Orr felt strongly that the recipients should receive cash awards and moved to table the proposal. The motion passed.

Cash awards must come from a Foundation account. Brian McGee said that President Benson’s Foundation account is very limited. We will have to submit a request for a Foundation account from which to pay the awards. The awards would go through payroll as bonuses, although they cannot exceed the bonus maximum for a year for a given employee. However, temporary employees are not entitled to bonuses. More research has to be done concerning how to go about paying cash awards.

Susan presented two trophies that the subcommittee selected as options. Ed said that there is a $50 limit on award objects such as trophies. Another possibility is an origami creation by Regina Semko. We need to look into procurement regulations before purchasing from an employee.
Constituent Concerns and Wellness Subcommittee

Amanda Smith reported that a letter to President Benson detailing our primary concerns has been presented to SAC officers and is being edited and refined.

Amanda also reported that 100% of concerns submitted by staff members have been addressed. Of those, 58% have been closed and the other 42% are still being considered.

Amy Orr reported that the HR/Benefits working group is scheduled to meet next week with Ed Pope.

Brian McGee said that the CARTA survey has been approved by President Benson and can move forward for presentation to Jan Brewton.

Ed Pope was acknowledged for the access to MUSC fitness facilities, and for attributing the initiative to SAC.

Membership Subcommittee

Meredith Chance reported that a few nominations have been received for the SAC elections. She personally emailed her division and will forward her email to the other SAC members to use to encourage their colleagues to self-nominate. Current at-large members were reminded that they need to submit nominations. The next SAC meeting is February 21 to certify nominations. The location has been changed to the Marketing and Communications conference room on the second floor of Robert Scott Small (room 206).

Aron Kuch will set up the election slates online.

Other New Business

Susan Hallatt announced that ExCel Awards nominations have opened and have been enhanced with more recognition of staff.

Marcia White adjourned the meeting at 11:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne McNeal, Secretary/Treasurer