Minutes of the Staff Advisory Committee to the President
November 8, 2012
President’s Board Room

Attending: Owen Compher, Elizabeth Dixon, Herbert Frasier, Clara Hodges, John Inman, Aron Kuch, Jennifer McClerklin, Brian McGee (ex officio), Anne McNeal, Amy Orr, Ashleigh Parr, Amanda Smith, Marcia White, Marlene Williams

Not Attending: Meredith Chance, Ed Pope (ex officio)

Marcia White called the meeting to order at 10:35 A.M

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the October 4, 2012 meeting were distributed and unanimously approved as submitted.

Old Business

Anne McNeal reported that locked suggestion boxes, half-page suggestion forms and envelopes with SAC labels have been provided to Physical Plant, Grounds and Residence Life Maintenance.

Marcia asked whether the availability of suggestion forms had been communicated to employees in the three departments. Herbert and Marlene have notified their employees in Physical Plant and Grounds. Marcia asked Herbert to follow up with Cynthia Rivers in Res Life to make sure employees have been notified. Those employees should also be reminded in spring semester.

The suggestion boxes will serve as ballot boxes for elections. Paper ballots will be entered into the computer for tallying.

New Business

College Relations Subcommittee

John Inman, subcommittee chair, announced that representatives of the College Relations Subcommittee have been invited to attend the Faculty Welfare meeting November 20th.

Communication Subcommittee

The subcommittee met just before the meeting of the full committee and began brainstorming Awards and Recognitions.

The subcommittee will try to aggregate information about staff awards across campus and post them on an Awards and Recognitions page on the SAC website.

Staff awards should be listed on the College’s “About” page on the website like the faculty awards.

The subcommittee recommends creating awards on several levels: asking divisions to nominate staff within their division for awards; awards presented by the SAC; and “kudos” wherein committee members catch staff members doing something good.
One suggestion is to create a small framed award featuring campus photographs. Marcia suggested checking the Bookstore and Alumni page for existing artwork.

Aramark might donate some gift certificates to be given with “kudos.”

Anne has asked Brian to set up a budget for the Staff Advisory Committee to fund expenses and awards. He acknowledged receiving the request and assured the committee he will respond.

**Constituent Concerns and Wellness Subcommittee**

Elizabeth Dixon – Wellness Working Group

The working group has researched fitness and wellness programs at other campuses and found lots of options in regard to providing health services to employees.

Amy Orr – Human Resources and Benefits Working Group

This working group has had meetings with Ed Pope regarding staff compensation. They will draft a letter to President Benson detailing staff concerns from all four working groups. The letter will be reviewed by the Constituent Concerns and Wellness Subcommittee and then presented to the full committee.

Aron Kuch – Education Working Group

This group is looking at the staff training program and making sure that staff members are aware of existing training opportunities around campus such as Linda McClenaghan’s programs and the Staff Development Program. The working group members were surprised to find that there is an existing dependents’ scholarship of $2,000.

Amanda Smith – Business Affairs Working Group

The group has analyzed the CARTA survey and is finalizing its report for presentation. Highlights: concerns about buses not being on time, bus-stop location safety, and bus stop sites moved due to weather. Employees would like to see stops added to the Express schedule. There was a broad-based enthusiastic support of CARTA ridership being subsidized by the College among those who use the service and those who don’t.

Owen Compber commended Amanda for her work on the survey and resulting report.

When the report is published, Anne will send an email to the All Staff listserv containing some teasers about the survey results and directing staff to the report via a link.

Another email will let staff know about the threads currently in the Staff Forum.

President Benson joined the meeting.

Committee members introduced themselves.

President Benson asked for questions. Anne McNeal asked for his input on awards and recognitions. He wants more rather than fewer and will entertain a proposal for one or more “President's Awards.”

Marcia White asked about the Colonial Athletic Association, pointing out that staff members were anxious to have more information about the possibility of moving to a different athletic conference. President Benson said that the Board of Trustees has approved negotiation of a contract with CAA.
Joining the CAA will not require a large infusion of money to the College’s athletic budget. The College’s budget is funded by the athletic fee charged to students. An analysis of the budgets at other CAA schools showed that our athletic budget is comparable: we are in the middle of the pack. More money will come to the College from CAA than from the Southern Conference which generates very little revenue. The switch will have no impact on salaries whatsoever. Of the nine CAA universities, seven are aspirants for us. The SoCon is dominated by six very small universities which are not comparable to the College. They have little research, few or no graduate programs, and no community outreach. Charleston is booming and we need to offer the community what it needs rather than leaving those opportunities to other institutions.

We want to learn from CAA schools - they have research conferences, etc. that have nothing to do with athletics. CAA schools are in premium markets, creating awareness of the College among employers and thus benefitting students.

We cannot move just one sport. Right now, the CAA is not as strong a baseball conference as the SoCon. Other years it has been stronger. Being the southernmost school in the conference will benefit recruiting for baseball. In the majority of our 21 sports, the CAA is ahead of the SoCon.

Faculty and students were polled regarding the move to the CAA and the staff would have liked a chance to voice their opinions. The president agreed it was an oversight.

The subcommittee chairs gave brief reports to the president.

College Relations Subcommittee - John Inman explained that this subcommittee is working on identifying common interests with faculty and students.

President Benson suggested that a SAC representative should participate in his faculty advisory meetings to address common interests.

Communication Subcommittee – Anne McNeal recounted accommodations made for staff members who do not regularly use computers to submit concerns and suggestions on paper in sealed envelopes.

President Benson suggested a telephone hotline. Brian said the President’s Office can set up a phone number with a voicemail box and pay for it.

Anne also reported that the Communication Subcommittee has begun brainstorming ideas for staff awards and recognitions. The subcommittee will recommend awards on several levels: awards presented by SAC, awards within divisions for which divisional employees nominate candidates and SAC selects recipients, and “kudos” for staff members caught doing something good.

The subcommittee will also aggregate staff awards already in place such as Student Affairs Division awards and Excel awards and create an awards page on the SAC website.

The president suggested that Portico could have an awards issue once a year.

Constituent Concerns and Wellness Subcommittee - Owen Compher asked one person from each of the four working groups to report.

Business Affairs Working Group - Amanda Smith reported on the CARTA survey.

Education Working Group - Aron Kuch reported on the group’s work researching employee training opportunities at other institutions; and of their efforts to make sure staff members are aware of the
benefits already in place. The group is also comparing the College’s policies in this regard with state policies to determine whether the College is more or less restrictive than the state.

**Human Resources and Benefits Working Group** - Amy Orr reported on her meetings with Ed Pope regarding staff compensation and employee concerns about salary compression and inequities and bringing salaries up to market levels. President Benson is interested in working on a long-term salary plan to address these concerns.

**Wellness Working Group** - Elizabeth Dixon reported on the research done among other institutions about what health services they offer to staff members. The services fall in a broad range. The suggestion has been made that employees could pay a fee, like students do, to gain access to health services.

Jennifer McClerklin reported on concerns regarding child care and fitness. She has talked with the director of ECDC, which has space issues and cannot accommodate more children. There are few other options for child care on the peninsula.

The Wellness Working Group is also communicating information about fitness facilities available to employees such as the discounted fee for East Shore Athletic Club. They are exploring the possibility of using the MUSC fitness facilities at a discounted rate.

Jennifer McClerklin pointed out that employees need better communication about issues, and that such communication is inconsistent across divisions. Business Affairs receives a lot of information via a newsletter. Employees in Academic Affairs are not receiving as much information.

The concern was also expressed that all employees do not receive performance evaluations.

President Benson acknowledged that we need more staff to implement solutions to all the concerns. He is very interested in working with SAC to develop “top drawer” plans to address the highest priorities.

President Benson also complimented the committee on the work it is doing, pointing out that otherwise the considerations we are addressing would not “bubble up” and receive attention.

Marcia asked the committee members to review the Huron Group report on our IT capabilities and be prepared to discuss it at our next meeting.

The next SAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 6, 2012, at 10:30 A.M. in Craig 108.

There being no further business, Marcia White adjourned the meeting at 12:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne McNeal
Secretary/Treasurer