Minutes of the Staff Advisory Committee to the President
October 2, 2013
Stern Center Room 321

Attending: Mandi Bryson, Carl Crews, Elizabeth Dixon, Meredith English Perrone, Amy Orr, Ashleigh Parr, Susan Hallatt, Frank Budd, Phil Stevenson, Jessica Rodgers, Brian McGee (ex officio), Ed Pope (ex officio)

Not attending: Herbert Frasier, Clara Hodges, Walter Brown, Meredith Chance, Rudy Alisauskas

Ashleigh Parr called the meeting to order at 10:37 AM.

Minutes from the September 4th SAC meeting were approved with no changes.

**Old Business**

The draft Tobacco-Free Campus Policy was briefly discussed, and no SAC members had any specific comments regarding the proposed policy. Brian McGee indicated that several people expressed conceptual opposition to such the policy, and there were a few suggestions for changes that are being considered by the Executive Vice Presidents at this time. The EVPs are expected to present a final draft to the President for his review on Monday, October 7th and the President will present the policy to the Board of Trustees for approval at their October 18th meeting.

A budget is being developed for the implementation of the policy to include a communication plan and cessation options that may be offered to campus. HR is gathering information on available smoking cessation programs, and there appear to be several available in Charleston for a minimal or no cost.

**New Business**

There was no new business.

**Chair Report**

Ashleigh Parr attended the past two faculty senate meetings and offered some highlights regarding areas of common interest.

Presidential Search: The faculty passed a resolution that the Board of Trustees conducts a national search for the next President. While the BOT has not formed a search committee, the faculty proposed
that the committee include a staff member in addition to faculty members and that the candidates have strong higher education background.

Great Colleges to Work For Survey: The College was not recognized as a great place to work in any of the 12 categories surveyed; however, it is hopeful that the survey results will be useful to The College in making improvements. It was suggested that SAC work with HR to segregate and analyze the staff responses to identify opportunities for improvement.

Charleston School of Law: While the College is not engaged in discussions with CSOL regarding the sale of the law school, one of the three remaining founders proposed transferring the ownership of CSOL to The College. Currently State constraints prohibit the College from taking ownership of CSOL. CHE is scheduled to discuss the sale of the law school at their October 3rd meeting.

MUSC/CofC Merger: The need for a comprehensive research institution has been identified by the local and state business community, and the College and MUSC are currently researching options for meeting this need. There are four possible scenarios being considered:

1) Legislature designates us as a comprehensive research institution
2) Legislature enacts a merger and creates a foundation between MUSC/CofC
3) Significantly increase collaboration and offer doctoral degree outside medical field to meet needs of New Charleston
4) State creates a Charleston branch – Clemson or USC - Charleston

The two major barriers are the differences in the organizational cultures of the two institutions and money.

Faculty/Staff Salary Increases: The Board is expected to decide how to spend $837k that was set aside for cost of living increases at their October meeting. Their decision will be communicated by the President and Provost, and increases are expected to be effective in January 2014.

Ed Pope confirmed that the College has contracted with a consultant company to conduct a staff compensation study, and results are expected to be available by January. The study will compare salaries of 40-60 percent of the staff population to those of comparable positions at peer institutions in the southeast, MUSC, Citadel and the local private sector.

Outstanding Items/Concerns: Ashleigh provided a list of outstanding staff concerns and progress that SAC has made towards addressing those concerns. Primary topics of concern include Compensation; Employee Performance Evaluations; Staff Benefits – childcare; Staff Benefits – health & wellness; staff awards; Communication; and Great Places to Work For.

Ashleigh is working with Brian McGee to schedule a SAC meeting with President Benson.

Subcommittee Reports

Staff Liaison
The subcommittee formerly known as External Relations met 9.23.13 and voted to rename the subcommittee to the Staff Liaison Subcommittee. The group discussed the possibility of holding staff town hall meetings the first Thursday of December at 10AM and requested the input of the Communications and Concerns Subcommittee in the planning of the event. The proposed format would provide up to two minutes of open microphone time to air suggestions/concerns. We would request Brian McGee and Ed Pope attend to answer questions as necessary. The possibility of a newsletter was discussed and it was decided that it would fall under the purview of the Communications and Concern Subcommittee.

The subcommittee also discussed the Best Colleges to Work For study and the possible needs for an executive summary that focuses on staff.

The subcommittee will meet again on 10.28.13 at 11AM.

Communications & Concerns

The subcommittee met 9.12.13 and discussed the proposed tobacco free campus policy. The majority of the committee felt that a tobacco-free campus was a good idea, although concerns were expressed as to how to enforce the policy when it is put into action. Walter Brown brought to the committee’s attention the opposition his area has voiced to the policy, which has been quite widespread and forceful. It was suggested that along with the tobacco-free policy the college provide extensive information and opportunities for residents of the college community to quit smoking. Meredith English Perrone put forward the suggestion that the college might provide small cards regarding the policy for anyone who would wish to hand them out to smokers in violation of the policy.

At the subcommittee meeting Walter Brown brought up safety concerns with pedestrian crossing at the corner of George and Coming Streets. He strongly suggested the installation of a yellow caution light at the crossing, to slow down the oncoming traffic for pedestrians wishing to cross Coming Street. There was a great deal of discussion regarding the lack of safety for anyone attempting to cross Coming Street. Brian McGee confirmed that the City is planning on converting Coming Street to two ways as early as January 2014 although the College has expressed opposition to this decision. It is unclear what effect this change will have on pedestrian safety.

The subcommittee discussed the status of temporary employees and their current treatment on the campus. It was brought up that temps do not have voting rights for SAC. Also it was suggested that HR hold orientation sessions for temps similar to those already provided for permanent employees, and to make sure that ALL temps are included in HR’s “Welcome to the campus” emails. There is concern that temporary employees are not aware of the benefits that are available to them such as participation in the state’s retirement system. Ed Pope clarified that HR now has form that temporary employees sign if they decline retirement benefits.

The subcommittee briefly discussed and approved of the main committee’s decision to issue a SAC newsletter in November and to hold a Staff Forum in December. A brief discussion of existing Staff Training and the proposal that has been offered to President Benson from SAC regarding increasing the amount of courses available to staff.
Membership

The subcommittee obtained a roster of temporary employees and will be working with Jessica Rodgers to establish a temporary working group to focus on concerns that are specific to temporary employees.

Ed Pope queried SAC regarding staff interest in retirement seminars. He indicated that staff members who participate in such seminars seem to be at or near retirement age and he asked if SAC feels that it would be beneficial to continue offering such sessions. SAC members expressed interest in retirement related seminars and opportunities to learn about different retirement options.

Ed Pope also asked for feedback regarding the New Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options. Jessica Rodgers explained some temps were surprised to hear The College was not offering benefits in January.

Ashleigh Parr adjourned the meeting at 12:03PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Orr
Vice Chair
Staff Advisory Committee to the President