Staff Advisory Committee to the President
Communications & Concerns Subcommittee
October 10, 2013

Minutes

Attending: Susan Hallatt, Amy Orr, Phil Stevenson, Rudy Alisauskas, Walter Brown, Herbert Frasier, Frank Budd.

Regrets: Meredith English Perrone.

Susan Hallatt called meeting to order at 11:35am

Minutes from previous meeting approved via email

Old Business
Fitness/Gym facilities for staff – Phil confirmed that a link to the Campus Recreation Activities website is now up on the SAC website. Susan emailed Andrew Bergstrom to ask about adding CRS as link on MyCharleston/Employee tab under Employee Services.

Tobacco-Free policy – Walter Brown brought up the concerns of staff in his area, follows:
1. Has the college received any grants to fund this anti-smoking effort?
   If YES, who is funding the grants? And are any of these grants from pharmaceutical companies who produce smoking cessation products?
2. Would the college entertain the idea of creating 2 to 3 designated smoking areas rather than a complete ban? (such as the area behind the pergola at Stern Center garden, or the back of Rivers Green).
3. Will the college provide smoking cessation products at no cost to the smoker?
   If YES, what type of products will be offered and when will they be available?
4. Where does the money that is taken out of a smoker’s paycheck go, in regards to Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC?
Committee still feels that enforcement is the biggest hurdle in creating the tobacco-free policy.

Temp Employee Status – committee reviewed/discussed Ed Pope’s report from the SAC meeting the week before. Susan Hallatt asked if the committee thought it would be appropriate to send a formal thank you to President Benson for his support of staff salary increases at the August Board of Trustees meeting. It was agreed that the committee would present this idea to Ashleigh Parr for the SAC committee’s take/approval (Susan). Amy Orr suggested that we obtain a copy of the benchmark institutions chosen by HR to conduct their survey of staff compensation; Susan Hallatt agreed to email Ed Pope with the request. Also discussed the plans for HR’s new orientation website and the potential to create a link for both permanent and temporary employees. It was also suggested that HR agree to meet one-on-one (or in groups) with temp employees who are interested in the retirement benefits or any other benefits available to them, once the temp has completed the on-line orientation session. These recommendations will be expressed to both the SAC committee and to Ed Pope.
**CARTA requests from Marlene/Rickey** – the CCS discussed Rickey’s request, to get a CARTA stop further out on Bus Route 3, and determined that there is not anything the committee could do with this request. As for Marlene’s request for an addition/change in Express stops to include one at the Physical Plant, Herbert agreed to get more information from Marlene as to how many people would be interested, exactly where the stop would be, what time the stop would be made, which bus route would be affected.

**New Business**

**Concerns from Student Affairs** – Mandi Bryson presented a list of 9 concerns, collected informally from Student Affairs:

1) Tobacco free policy update - What are staff opinions about going tobacco free; no formal surveys of staff have been conducted regarding the new policy.

2) Timeline for Presidential Search (should fall under resignation item) Brian McGee addressed this at the SAC meeting the week before; the BoT will choose the search committee. CCS decided to ask Ashleigh Parr about the potential for having a staff member on the search committee (Susan).

3) Timeline/status of EVP for Student Affairs Search unknown at this time, search may be held up to wait on new president.

4) Feedback From Staff on Access to George St. Fitness Center; Grand Opening of new center imminent. CCS curious about staff’s ability to attend Grand Opening. Susan Hallatt will contact Gene Sessoms at CRS to see if staff can attend. If YES, then information on the Grand Opening should be added to the SAC website.

5) Update on IT Projects for 2013-2014. CCS expressed concerns regarding the list of IT updates and projects, and the delay seen in finishing specific projects. The perception is that projects are often considered low priority by IT but high priority by the campus. The Budget form was mentioned as an example.

6) Academic Calendars for 2014-2015, 2015-1016, 2016-2017 (creation and posting of) Susan Hallatt agreed to contact Cathy Boyd to see how far out the Registrar’s Office can project to create and post the academic calendars.

7) Will we periodically get updates on the possible merger with MUSC? Those have been prolific in the last couple of months.

8) Is there any improvement in staff morale after all the changes made by the initial interim SAC? The Great Places to Work survey says maybe not. It was suggested that the CCS formally request that Ashleigh Parr have the GPTW survey analyzed and summarized (for staff data, temporary vs permanent) to be presented to the committee (Susan).

9) How is the mechanism or process of gathering feedback from staff around the campus going? Phil reported that submissions to the SAC’s online suggestion box has dropped off dramatically in the last year. It was suggested that an email be composed and forwarded to ALL STAFF reminding staff that they have this resource and encourage them to use it; said email would be sent quarterly. Susan Hallatt agreed to speak with Meredith English Perrone regarding this, as Meredith has access to send the email.

**Newsletter** – Meredith English Perrone informed Susan Hallatt that she would be pleased to help edit, but that the CCS would need to designate others who could take contributions and format the newsletter itself. Phil Stevenson volunteered to create the template, and Frank Budd agreed to ask his office manager Deena Kroeck to assist him. The newsletter components would include any SAC
accomplishments, a piece on the staff celebration (success, suggestions for improvement), a campus calendar, a list of SAC members/bios/contact info, and a section that would highlight members of staff. The newsletter will come out quarterly, be sent electronically via email, and would begin in January. It was also suggested that the newsletter be disseminated to all staff who meet regularly within their areas, to be added to their agenda. Frank Budd agreed to compile a list of those who could be used as a contact for this.

Staff Forum – following the previous suggestion of holding a staff and SAC only forum, the CCS determined that the date would be determined by the availability of the venue. Venues suggested: Stern Center Ballroom (Mandi Bryson), the Hospitality Suite at TD Arena (Mandi/Josh) and the Alumni Hall (Alexa Thacker) – Susan Hallatt will contact for availability. Date for consideration: Thursday December 12. The first Thursday was taken off the board for consideration, as that is the week of the staff Christmas party and many grounds and physical plant staff will be too busy to come to the forum. Amy Orr agreed to arrange the food with Aramark for this event. Susan Hallatt will find out about arranging for sound. Procedures suggested: a) index cards provided for staff who do not wish to stand up and ask questions, b) Ashleigh Parr, as chair of SAC, give a welcome and brief overview of the committee itself and its accomplishments in the last year, c) a reminder of the existence of the on-line suggestion box, and d) a request for submissions for staff recognition (given confidentially) for the newsletter.

Susan Hallatt composed a short list of suggestions taken from the online spreadsheet:

1. Changes to parking policy – this suggestion has already been acted upon, and all potential avenues exhausted. No further action required.
2. Staff training scholarships
3. Expand tuition waiver benefit to other local campuses
4. Child care facilities

Items 2-4 were included in SAC’s report to the President in 2013. It was suggested by the members of CCS that SAC ask the president to update SAC on the status of all recommendations given to him previously in his meeting with SAC in November. It was also suggested that President Benson be prepared to discuss how he plans to facilitate the changeover with the incoming president.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45.

Phew.