UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
STAFF ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES
October 12, 2011, GSU Room 345 - 12:00 pm

PRESENT: Lynn Galvin, Nancy Fields, Evelyne Haldimann, Laura Pence, Ben Ide, Erik Pavesic, Maria Marques, Jessica Abbott, Lois Lindsey, Barbara Dessureau, Sally Henowitz, Karen Degrace, and Jillian Holt.

MINUTES: Meeting minutes for the September 14th meeting were approved.

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BAT
Evelyne reported for Sharon Scorso. The October census is down this term, but so is the amount being provided for financial aid. Therefore the University budget is not in a dire situation, but remains tight. When University of Hartford’s tuition and board/room fees are compared to other similar institutions via the National Clearing House, University of Hartford has the lowest increases. According to the National Clearing House, University of Hartford’s cost of attending is in the bottom third of other comparable institutions. It was discussed that we need to do a better job of marketing. An increase in the range of three to four percent was proposed. Even though the current cost of attending is in the lower third, we don’t want to make a huge jump in fees that could adversely affect current students.

WELLNESS
There are many health and wellness programs and initiatives happening on campus. There will be many meetings regarding the new Pure Wellness program associated with health insurance, a Health Hearts Initiative will be held on October 28th from 8:30-11:00 by two specialists from Hartford Hospital. The seminar will be held in the 1877 Club and actual physical screenings including blood pressure testing will be held in Gengras Student Union at 11:00. Staff was reminded of the free influenza shots. A new session of Weight Watchers on Campus will begin in November (a minimum of 15 participants is required). Yoga classes are available. A massage therapy open house will be held at Health Services on October 27th from 12:00 to 6:00 pm.

BTF
Lois Lindsey is the new Staff Association representative to the Benefits Task Force. Lois provided a list of some of the agenda items that the Benefits Task Force will address this year. Some of those items will be encouraging more employees to use the conveniences of direct deposits, the rollout of the new wellness program, discussions about adoption assistance, etc. Lynn asked Lois to continue to draw attention to reviewing the “tier structure” of our current employee share of health care premiums. Currently the percentage of employee share in health care premiums is graduated depending upon level of income. Many feel that the hierarchical levels need to be more realistic in order to assist most of the participating employees. Employees on the “cusp” of the hierarchical change in premium cost lose too much of their income when they receive a pay raise because the current jump in the tier structure is so extreme. People were also reminded that if they choose not to participate in the new Pure Wellness health care initiative, they are subject to a health care premium rate increase.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE – Sally Henowitz is the new Staff Association representative for this committee. Sally did not provide a report this month as Laura Pence, Chair of the President’s Sustainability Commission was the month’s guest speaker. For more information, please read the “guest speaker” section, below.
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WEB ADVISORY COMMITTEE - Barbara Dessureau reported. A link checking tool is being added to the CMS application. It will be available within the next three months. Project managers will receive reports of which links are broken.

FACULTY SENATE - Jennifer Keyo has been the Staff Association representative to the Faculty Senate. She has happily been promoted to a new University position, but unfortunately will not have time to continue as our representative to Faculty Senate. The Staff Association is therefore seeking a new individual to be our liaison to the Faculty Senate.

The Faculty Senate recently replaced their Staff Association liaison, Paul Siegel, however, another person may have to be appointed because of time constraints.

Fred Sweitzer requested that all faculty and staff be reminded of the NEASC visit taking place on October 16th thru 19th.

OFFICE STAFF COMMITTEE - The Staff Association Eboard will meet to determine major topics, other than training, that were identified as important action items by the Staff Satisfaction Survey taken last year. Training concerns and changes are currently being addressed by Administration and HRD. Other major action items will be presented to President Harrison, Provost Vasquez, Arosha Jayawickrema, and Lisa Belanger at the next Eboard quarterly meeting with Administration.

TREASURER’S REPORT - Lynn Galvin reported for Cheryl Mac Math. The budget balance is $3,142.98. There were no new expenses or revenues since the September report.

CONSTITUTION/BYLAWS - Discussions of the proposed changes to the Constitution resumed at the "MEETINGS" section. Changes to the "AMENDMENTS" section were suggested and agreed upon. It was decided that wording regarding announcing amendment proposals will be modified to the following: “The announcement will be posted, at a minimum, in the University Notes (UNOTES) and posted on the UHSA Website. It can additionally be communicated by other means which will be equally effective.”

Voting to ratify the proposed changes to the Staff Association Constitution and Bylaws will take place at the November 9th meeting in the Woods Family Classroom - Mortensen Library at 1:00 pm. Please attend and cast your vote.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR’S REPORT - No report

GUEST SPEAKER - Professor Laura Pence presented an update on progress made during the first year of the Commission. The 2nd Annual Residence Power Struggle will be held to determine which residence hall can sustain the lowest energy use for the month. Academic recycling challenges continue to be separating recyclables and trash as well as how to facilitate recycling in residential halls. Facilities will be purchasing one new bio-diesel fuel shuttle bus. Licensing is in progress to replace the current dam with a single span bridge. The current configuration is the first barrier to migration of wildlife beyond the dam. Replacing the dam with a single-span bridge will promote a larger fish population past the bridge. Fuller, Hillyer, and Auerbach Halls will all undergo heating, air conditioning, and ventilation improvements. Old switches will be replaced, new dampers will be installed, and all will be accessible remotely. Two new dishwashers are being installed in the Commons and the 1877 Club. Additionally, the University is now buying five percent of our
electricity from wind power. The timeline for improvements to the first set of buildings is one year from this November.

A question was asked about the handicap accessibility of campus. Lee Peters is currently working on handicap accessibility improvements. The University is currently considered to be handicapped “accessible,” but not “convenient.”

Respectfully submitted by

Nancy Fields, Secretary