UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
STAFF ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES
April 10th, 2013, Gengras Student Union - Room 345 - 1:00 pm

PRESENT: Karen DeGrace, Marlene Hall, Jamie Harlow, Cheryl MacMath, Jessica Abbott, Bonny Taylor, Connie Yoczik, Erik Pavesic, Ben Ide, Evelyne Haldimann, Carla Fuller, Nancy Clubb, Lynn Galvin, Chris Dupuis, and Nancy Fields.

MINUTES: The March 2013 meeting minutes were discussed. Lisa Belanger requested updates to the Pure Wellness section which included removing the word “Pure” from the first sentence, “Pure Wellness activities are continuing on campus.” Lisa also requested that the BTF section be modified to indicate that benefits and benchmarking University benefits is being reviewed to “similar benefits offered by other institutions across the country (using the CUPA-HR benefits survey) and Universities in the area.” The meeting minutes were approved with these modifications.

ANNUAL REPORT
Staff Association Chair, Evelyne Haldimann began the Annual Report by announcing that the Executive Board election dates have been moved forward with nominations being accepted in April, voting taking place in May, and installation of officers occurring at the June meeting.

Evelyne then provide a “year in review” recap of Staff Association and related committee activities for the year.

- Benefits Task Force items brought up for discussion included:
  1. Bank of Time Options - it was determined that because it is not budget neutral to combine personal and vacation time into one bank of paid time off, that the policy remains as is.
  2. Vacation Pay Carry Over - it was determined that the cost is prohibitive therefore the policy will stand as is.
  3. Tier Structure - After extensive review, HRD/BTF reported tiers will remain as they are.
- Budget Advisory Task Force - Foundations of the Future was the focus of the year as was contingency budget planning.
- Wellness - Many varied wellness initiatives were offered and taken advantage of by staff and faculty alike. Initiatives included (but not limited to) Pure Wellness, Yoga, Cardio Circuit, Weight Watchers, Zumba.
- Faculty Senate - Focus was also Foundations of the Future and we continued collaborative efforts between faculty and staff.
- Communications Committee - Began and planned (but currently stalled). Will refocus through the summer months.
- Continued communication with University Administration (President, Provost, VP of Finance and Administration and Director of HRD).
  1. Staff manual reworded to incorporate exceptions to mandatory 30-minute break policy for those employees working 5 to 7 hours per day.
2. Staff manual reworded to allow for flex time schedules less than two month’s duration.
   - Grievance Office - changes to Grievance Officer Position and confidentiality agreements were instituted by membership vote.
   - Community Representative Position Description and duties revised and accepted by membership vote.
   - Return of Thanksgiving luncheon was a success.
   - EmPOWER launched in response to UHSA survey and in conjunction with HRD initiatives.
   - Barbara Dessueau redesigned the UHSA web site on the University CMS system. We extend a BIG “thank you” to Barbara for her efforts.
   - Daffodil Days Cancer Society fund raiser was a huge success. We exceed our $1,500.00 goal. Many, many thanks to Jillian Holt for coordinating the fund raiser and to all Community Representatives who helped.

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE REPORTS

BAT
Evelyne reported that as of April 4, 2013 admission applications and FAFSA’s are up, however, the University is still waiting for deposits. University housing remains an issue as off-campus housing in the current economic market is very competitive to the cost of University housing. New branding initiatives are taking place. All faculty and staff are encouraged to continue to make better connections to students and to always remember that the students are why we are all here. It was reported that a 5-year budget plan is on-going and may require revisions after all Foundations of the Future reallocations are complete. A proposal has been made to implement performance indicators per college to determine percentage of budget hold-backs for the new fiscal year rather than holding back at a flat rate across colleges. This proposal is being further explored by the Provost and Deans. The Staff compensation study will be initiated in fiscal year 2014.

PURE WELLNESS
Jamie Harlow reported that the same wellness activities that have been running (Cardio circuit, Yoga, Zumba and Weight Watchers) are continuing through May. Weight Watchers on Campus will be going into its 8th series. She also reminded everyone to look for the UNOTES survey regarding the possibility of providing a Farmer’s Market on campus. The topic of providing Tai Chi in the mornings was raised again and Jamie thought this would be a good topic to add to a wellness survey the next time one is generated.

BTF
Chris Dupuis reiterated that the majority of February and March, 2013 discussions and research of the Benefits Task Force committee were about short and long term disability benefits and benchmarking. Current findings indicate that the University’s long term disability benefits are consistent with all of our peers. University of Hartford’s short-term benefits are richer in comparison.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
- No report. Lynn Galvin reached out to Holly Stevenson to ask if this committee was still active. It is thought that this along with many other initiatives have gone on the back burner due to Foundations of the Future. Holly believes that Jane Horvath might be the current chair of this committee.

STAFF ASSOCIATION REPORTS

WEB ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- No report.
FACULTY SENATE - Ben Ide reported that the Faculty Senate continues to review Foundation of the Future recommendations relative to divested programs. Additionally, President Obama’s recent visit to the University was discussed. Members expressed that they would have preferred a lottery system for tickets to this event, but the visit and ticketing details were run by the Secret Service and the White House.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE - No Report.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR’S REPORT - It was reported that we currently have 160 members.

TREASURER’S REPORT - Cheryl MacMath presented a fiscal year 2013 report. The current balance is $2,596.06. Expenses for the year were for the Thanksgiving Luncheon which ultimately cost the Staff Association $492.50.

OLD BUSINESS -

1. Bringing back the Bar-B-Q was discussed in further detail. Lynn Galvin reserved the Gengras Student Union Patio and Suisman Lounge from 12:00 - 2:00 pm for Wednesday, August 21, 2013. We still have to firm up specifics, but most of the discussions leaned toward having Aramark provide hot dogs/hamburgers for $11.00 per person. We would handle this event the same way we dealt with the Thanksgiving luncheon in that we would consider subsidizing some of the cost and either sell tickets or complete a registration sheet with Staff Association members having first notice/opportunity. Approximately one week prior to the event, we would provide a head count to Aramark. If it rains we will simply move the event indoors to the Suisman Lounge.

2. Fund raising events were briefly discussed. Nancy Club will contact a vendor in West Hartford to get prices for kites. We would really like to sell kites to students/faculty/staff and have a kite flying day. We would also like to participate in the Farmer’s Market (should it come to fruition) by sponsoring a plant/flower sale. Since pets are not allowed on campus, the idea of sponsoring a pet tagging event was dropped. We ask all members to email us with ideas/events.

3. The Eboard has decided to adopt membership annual verification as described in the March meeting minutes. Recapped as follows:

   An email will be sent to all persons currently on the membership email list asking members if they still want to be considered members or if they would like to opt out of membership. The email could begin with “You are receiving this email because you are currently on the Staff Association membership email list.” It was suggested that:

   a. All existing members would receive the email allowing them to opt out if they wanted.

   b. All employees (non-members) would be notified via a “UNotes” article which describes the Staff Association, Staff Association membership eligibility and contact information which will allow them to opt in for membership.

   c. All newly hired employees will continue to be contacted by our Membership Director, Nancy Clubb regarding membership.

   d. Community Representatives will be asked to email and personally recruit eligible employees within their community.
e. It was further noted that we need to prepare some “marketing” materials that will list some of our recent staff advocacy accomplishments and that will “sell” our new approach as primarily an advocacy group.

4. Ellen Levasseur contacted Nancy Fields that she had a banner for the Staff Association. The banner will be used at the Bar-B-Q.

5. **NEW BUSINESS** - Volunteers are needed for the Students vs. Faculty/Staff Softball game.

Respectfully submitted by

Nancy Fields, Secretary