UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
STAFF ASSOCIATION MINUTES

FINAL Approved 5/9/18

April 11, 2018 - 1:00pm-2:10pm GSU335 | Meeting called to order by Katie Cox, Chair

In Attendance

Executive Board: Katie Cox, Chair; Carla J. Fuller, Ben Ide, Ellen Levasseur, Rachel Yacouby, Linda Zigmont

Staff Members: Jessica Abbott, Kelly Anderson, Lisa Belanger, Ann Brown, Donna Clarke, Barbara Dessureau, Laurie Fasciano, Valerie Gilleran, Laura Heemskerk, Pam Masi, Geralyn Merrill, Katrina Mill, Cindy Oppenheimer, Sean Park, Chris Rizzio, Kate Sheely, Dianne Silliman, Julie Spring, Bonnie Taylor

I. Introductions

Katie Cox opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. by having members introduce themselves.

II. Discussion and Approval of Minutes from the March 14th Meeting

Prior to voting on the March 14, 2018 minutes there was a discussion about the changes made to the final version of the February 14, 2018 Minutes. While initially sent to the membership as 2/14/18 Draft Minutes and finalized with changes and approved at the March 14, 2018 meeting and so noted, there was some disagreement with this recording and corrections process. At issue was whether what was actually reported by a Committee Representative at a SA meeting should stay in the final minutes, even if corrections (or clarifications of University Policies) are made to the minutes. Currently the minutes are “Finalized” with the corrections only and the exact changes are recorded in the minutes of the following meeting (in this case, 3/14/18) when the corrections were actually discussed and approved. Recording Secretary, Carla Fuller, suggested that going forward all University Committee and Staff Association Reports could be sent to her in writing by email prior to SA meetings to then be inserted verbatim into the minutes. Katie Cox felt there were good points made on all views of the procedure process and stated the EBoard will discuss the issue further for clarity. She and the EBoard are appreciative of the feedback by SA members.

The Membership approved the March 14, 2018 minutes without changes. Motion to approve by Cindy Oppenheimer and seconded by Rachel Yacouby.

III. Annual Report – Katie Cox

Katie Cox gave the Annual Report of the Staff Association for 2017-2018. This year:

- There were changes to the EBoard with a new Chair (Katie Cox), Vice-Chair (Laura Eldridge), Treasurers (Gina Signorello followed by Rachel Yacouby) and Recording Secretaries (Catherine Rose followed Carla J. Fuller).
- The University now has a new President (Gregory Woodward).
- President Woodward came to speak to the Staff Assn. in October (2017).
- The EBoard now meets quarterly with the President and the Administration.
- Katie Cox, Chair, meets privately twice a semester with Pres. Woodward.
- The Staff Assn. has been invited to have representation on the new Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Task Force.
Katie Cox was invited to a Board of Regents meeting in the fall.
The Chair of the Staff Assn. was invited to the Service Recognition Ceremony.
Approval has been given to allow Staff to participate in the annual Hawks Helping Hartford without turning in personal or vacation time.
The EBoard sent a survey to the membership to collect data on issues and they received a good response.
The late fall fundraising project was well received and was successful.
Discussions have begun to move the Staff Assn. to a new Staff Council structure.

Katie asked for at least three people to volunteer to be on the Academic Affairs Service Excellence Award Committee. Ellen Levasseur, Laurie Fasciano, Bonnie Taylor and Kelly Anderson volunteered. One member will be chosen by the Provost’s Office to be on the Committee.

IV. University Committee Reports

a. Budget Advisory Team – Randi Ashton-Pritting, Valerie Gilleran
   Nothing to report at this time.
b. Wellness Committee – Lindsey McKeegan, Barbara Dessureau
   Nothing to report at this time.
c. Benefits Taskforce – Cindy Oppenheimer, Lynn Galvin
   Nothing to report at this time.
d. Presidential Commission for the Status of Women – Donna Clarke
   Nothing to report at this time.
e. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force – Christine Lapierre reported:

1. “Task force met Thursday, April 5th to begin discussions on goals & objectives set forth by President Woodward.
2. “This task force will be doing the following reviews into:
   1. Affirmative Action Plan
      1. Reporting requirements
      2. Definition of job groups
      3. Review of workforce analysis
   2. Current Staff Recruitment Practices
      1. Applicant tracking system & process
      3. Staff Job Posting Process (automatic vs external)
      4. Supervisory Training
      5. Employment & Hiring Guide
      6. Department Hiring Protocols
      7. HR Support through the hiring process
   “Our first meeting ran 2 hours and the task force agreed as a group that we have a lot of work to review, identify areas of concern, how to address concerns, and how we as a task force will implement steps for new action plans or corrective plans to address President Woodward’s areas that he has identified.
   “The group has initially identified the following areas of concern:

1. “Develop a dialogue for a directional program for all.
2. “Change in raises based on job/work performance by staff (unequitable across the board)
3. “Work ethics across the board is not the same and how to address the climate of this.
4. “Lack of accountability across the board for staff who are not doing their job and there is no accountability of them by a manager/supervisor for discipline.

5. “Lack of sharing of resources/information among all departments/colleges (how to develop all employees to share information/resources that benefit all customers - i.e. parents, students, staff, faculty). We have to work at doing a better job of being resourceful with each other and sharing our resources to improve internal communication.

6. “How do we do a better job of being diverse? Recommendation for minority recruitment fairs 4x a year to recruit women & men of color.

7. “Retaining good quality employees - we lose a lot of good employees to other institutions. Need to address this.

8. “Begin to address why staff is not a part of college dept meetings. This is a mindset and needs to change. Call the meetings "college meetings" where ‘ALL” employees are invited and stop being called "staff" and "faculty". We are all employees under the University and our customer is the student and parents we serve on a daily basis.

9. “People have forgotten who our end customer is - the student & parent, community and external stakeholders.

“We covered a lot and it was determined that this group will meet 1x per month for 2 hours over the next year to address a lot of internal problems that must be fixed in order to move forward on the path that President Woodward is moving the organization in the future.” END OF REPORT

A discussion followed this report (which was read into the minutes by Katie Cox in Christina Lapierre’s absence).

Lisa Belanger, Chair of the DEI Task Force, clarified in the meeting and later in emails the following:

“…it was important to note that our first meeting was a kickoff and that the focus of the committee was defined by the President (please see below). I also explained that, consistent with the stages of new group development (forming, storming, norming, etc), I wanted to make sure that our kickoff meeting provided with both time for the committee members to get to know each other so that they are/will be able to talk freely moving forward as well as a baseline of information on established institutional protocols so that we are all on the same page as we begin to our work. “

“I think it’s important to clarify the charge of the newly-formed Staff Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. President Woodward’s Action Item # 5 formal charge is as follows: The Department of Human Resources, in coordination with the Office of the Provost, will immediately create a campus committee to enhance our diversity efforts in hiring and training of faculty and staff. Its goal will be to develop new guidelines, strategies, and structures to ensure that diversity remains a high priority in faculty and staff recruitment and hiring.

“The President’s detailed 12-point Action Plan can be found at http://www.hartford.edu/aboutuofh/uhart-unity/12-point-update/default.aspx.”

V. Staff Association Reports

a. Web Advisory Committee – Barbara Dessureau reported:

“The Office of Marketing and Communication (OOMC) has hired the firm of IDFive from Baltimore Maryland as the company to design the new University web site. OOMC is in the process of setting up interviews with departments to allow for an exchange of ideas before the process begins.” END OF REPORT
b. Faculty Senate – Ben Ide reported:

“President Woodard spoke, outlining points he later sent in an email message to all staff (March 27). He also debuted his proposal for redoing the schedule of classes. This new schedule makes better use of classroom spaces but removes “happy hour” on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:15 to 1:55 in favor of meeting times on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 12:45 to 2PM. The new schedule also has morning classes starting at 8:30 instead of 8AM, an option for evening classes that start at 6PM instead of 5PM, and equates to creating six new general purpose classrooms.

“Lynn Baronas, the Director of Strategic Partnerships, talked about the Purposeful Pathways Project (P3). P3 is being implemented with the fall incoming freshmen. It focuses on lasting outcomes: Experience + Reflection = Learning. She wants students to connect to faculty and staff, feel like they are part of a cohort with the rest of their entering class, gain exposure to activities outside of their narrow focus of study, and think about their vocation as freshmen.

“ENHP Associate Professor Claudia Oakes talked about the Age-Friendly University (AFU) global network. This is an international initiative from the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education and the Dublin City University, aimed at making colleges and universities more appealing to older adults through educational programs, gerontology research, and community engagement. Central Connecticut State University has already joined. By adopting the AFU’s 10 principles, they have earned their status as an Age-Friendly University.

“More briefly, Provost Fred Sweitzer gave an update on the dean searches for ENHP and Barney; Kate Pendergast, the VP of Institutional Advancement gave an overview of what IA does; and Bo Vieweg, the Interim Chief Information Officer of OTS, introduced himself - Ellucian is busy recruiting Andy Hillberry’s replacement.” END OF REPORT

c. Treasurer’s Report – Rachel Yacouby reported:

“The Staff Association has $765.53 in its account as of 11:00 a.m. on 4/10/18.” END OF REPORT

d. Membership Director Report – Ellen Levasseur reported:

“There are currently 120 members of the Staff Association. An increase of one.” END OF REPORT

e. Fundraising Committee – Valerie Gilleran

The Committee is currently on hiatus.

VI. Old Business / VII. Business (as one discussion)

Katie Cox reported that on April 9, 2018 she had a very positive meeting with President Woodward. He does not want to cut any staff. However, the current allocation of staff is not meeting the University’s needs. The President and others are currently working on how to better utilize our current work force and possibly redeploying people in some fashion. Student Service areas on campus are in desperate need of more staffing and part of any potential reorganization would include the opportunity to increase resources in these areas. A major part of any reorganization process will be to look at the jobs being done now and thinking about ways to become more efficient with those tasks. The President is open to ideas and suggestions from Staff via the Staff Association. The membership had an open first discussion of these concepts.
Katie asked for a motion to adjourn. Rachel Yacouby put forth a motion to adjourn and Laurie Fasciano seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS: 1-2pm GSU 335

5/9/18
6/13/18 President Woodward (pending)

Respectfully Submitted by: Carla J. Fuller; Recording Secretary