Minutes of Monthly Meeting
President Huddleston/DSC Staff Association Presidency
August 19, 2004
2:00 pm

Items of Discussion

<u>Old Business Updates</u>:

Salary Equity: Pam Montrello will present the yearly statistical report on salary comparisons/compensations at the September General Staff Meeting. This meeting is tentatively scheduled for the end of the month when Pam can finalize her calendar.

Reclassification: Pam, with approval of the President, has been asked to spend a half day with staff committee on reclassification – still need to set specific date in September. Pam is very busy at the present time, and we need to accommodate her needs.

UHESA (Utah Higher Education Staff Association) is also compiling institutional salaries for equity comparison.

President Huddleston favored us getting this done.

Staffing Concerns: While reportedly not an issue for staff involvement, there seems to be a continued concern with regard to the rehiring of key positions on campus being unfilled, leading to ongoing stress being created by those staff trying to keep department(s) going with limited personnel – creating heavy workloads to staff. We compared the analogy Stan Plewe gave at the President's General Faculty/Staff meeting
of the barley-fed horse being conditioned to a sawdust diet and what resulted: a dead horse. We stated that many of our staff have, little by little, been given more and more of a load to assume when positions are not filled in a timely manner, and just like the horse they are becoming so burdened by the continued extra work created by unfilled positions that soon they too may not be able to function to the best of their abilities. We urged the President to remind his administrative and executive staff of this tendency to ask staff to take on "just a little more, for just a little while" when soon the little while then becomes the norm.

President Huddleston said he would remind them. (administrative and executive staff)

Professional Development: the question was asked by President Huddleston at our last meeting with him if the staff association would be willing to contribute funding toward staff development. We, representing the staff, stated in the affirmative, and stated we are ready to discuss funding proposals and possible professional development programs. With this in mind, we asked the President,

1. Would the President be willing to contribute funds toward staff development?
2. Would professional development programs need President's approval before Presidential funds would be allotted?
3. Would there be a cap on funding for any fiscal year?
4. Would the President favor group development funding versus individual funding?

The President responded that he would like to hold judgment and consent until we came forward with specific proposals. He asked that we work with Pam on staff development since that is one of her areas of responsibility (Human Resources) to see what we might want to pursue. He also stated that we needed to work with (within?) our budget.

<u>New Business</u>:

Political Action Committee/UHESA (Utah Higher Education Staff Association)

We reported to the President our August meeting with UHESA and the issues facing our state in the upcoming elections with regard to Equity/Compensation and Unfunded Student Growth. Apparently, Dixie is not alone in its desire to achieve salary equity or the funds for student growth.

The DSC Staff Association is a member of UHESA, an association representing approximately 26,000 college staff employees in the state of Utah. As such, this organization has become active in representing the needs of higher education to the state legislature. This past year, UHESA representatives met with members of the state legislature during sessions, and have organized to make the voice of higher education needs heard this year. Laurie reported on this activity and asked for the President's input: how/where/when/ can the staff association assist in getting the legislature to hear and respond to higher education?

Representatives from each staff institution have been selected and are being urged by the state association to align themselves with their college legislative liaison to ascertain how they can best represent theirs and the state's higher education needs. Rob Snow and Nelda Kissinger have been chosen as Dixie's representatives.

Laurie also reported on the recent gubernatorial candidates visit to St. George and the Q&A they had at the St. George Chamber of Commerce luncheon with regard to Dixie College. She attended this luncheon specifically so she could gather information on the candidates' stand on higher education issues.

Laurie and Susan asked in what ways the staff association could get involved in the November elections process….some concerns here. We would not want to do anything that would cast any unpleasant repercussions on the college or its administration. Could we help sponsor one of the gubernatorial debates (if one is held here)? Could we invite the Utah League of Women Voters to a special staff meeting to have them present the platforms of each party and the each candidate's views? We feel it is imperative that the candidate responsive to Utah's higher education needs be our next governor. How do we go about this in the most effective way?

The President responded in a very positive manner that we make sure we get the message across as to what the views of the candidates are towards higher education. He stated that we could use the college email to "get the vote out" as long as we didn't endorse any specific candidate. He strongly stated that this was a critical year, politically speaking, for Utah higher education, specifically Dixie State, and we needed to urge voters to read/discuss and become informed on the issues at hand. Then, we all need to make sure our voices are heard in the November election.

Probation Policy Revision: **DRAFT 1** of new proposal. We are currently working on a new probation policy. As a staff, we feel the current policy (4-9 PROBATION: 9.4) is too long for an employee who has already served a one-year probationary period and moves (voluntary) or is moved (administratively) to a new position on campus. We wanted the President's input as we work on this policy revision to ensure it meets within the guidelines of sound policy. Thus far, we have proposed that a review of the current probation policy be conducted and a revised probation policy be implemented.

4-9 PROBATION

9.4 An employee who receives a new position at the College, or a person who was rehired after a break in service, will also serve a one-year probationary period. (current policy)

(changes in italics)

9.4.1 Should an employee make a volunteer lateral or higher position move to another position on campus, probation period will be six months.

9.4.2 Should an employee be reassigned to a lateral position, probation period will be six months.

9.4.3 *Should an employee be reassigned to a higher position on campus, probation period will be six months.*

The President conveyed that we were probably on the right track with this one and suggested we bring it back to him in its final form after our confirmation by the staff voting body.

Four-Day Work Week

The DSC Staff Association would like to thank the Administration for the continuance of the summer four-day workweek. Although there are still some wrinkles to be worked out on summer scheduling, we feel this has been a positive experience for the majority of the students, faculty, staff, and administration. Hopefully, we can fine-tune our summer schedules to maximize our campus efficiency while at the same time allowing more flexible summer hours.

Upcoming Staff Association Activities

At our July President/Staff Presidency meeting, President Huddleston asked what we (Laurie and Susan) might be doing to increase staff morale. In answer to this query, we felt that this year we needed to become a more pro-active, service-oriented association. With that in mind, we decided to dedicate our efforts to what we (as a staff) could contribute to our college community.

In discussion with the Staff Association Board, we proposed the following and the staff board approved our request to bring these requests before the President and the Executive Council:

1. In conversation with Ned Carnahan, we asked that the Staff Association be allowed to plant shrubs along the concrete wall bordering the north side of the family reflection pool. With the new Eccles Fine Arts Center now completed, this area has become more prominent. Ned was very receptive and said there were plans to plant shrubs in this area, and he would welcome our ideas and help. He, of course, would need to review exactly what was in the original landscaping plan. This planting would be done by staff volunteers with the costs of shrubs being covered by association dues.

   The President favored this proposal

2. In another conversation with Ned Carnahan, we asked what was the future of the carillon bells? These bells were, at one time, an integral part of our college campus. Ned told us there were some discussions being held on this matter, but no real plan of action had been implemented. We expressed our desire to work with campus personnel/entities in securing funds to repair/replace the bells. We believe we can raise the funds necessary to make this a reality.

   The President was receptive to our desire to help. He stated that presently there are conversations being conducted involving the possibility of building a clock tower with a carillon system and asked if he could hold off giving final approval while he continues with these discussions. We said we would still be interested in helping this project become a reality. He said he appreciated our desire to be a part of this project and our help.

3. In an effort to support our student body leaders, we will donate $500 toward the Christmas Angel tree this year in order that more children in our area will have a Christmas. This money will come from association dues.

   The President favored this action.

4. During the year we will be having various drawings for weekly prizes. These include contributed prizes such as two rounds of golf w/cart and a night's stay at the Casablanca in Mesquite, free pizzas from Papa Murphy's, movie tickets, Shakespeare Festival tickets, etc.

   The President favored this activity.

Works in Progress

Sick Leave Policy: While we are still working on the final draft of this policy, we felt we needed to get the equity a reclassification issues resolved and then complete this policy.

Any Further Business by the President?

The President stated that he had received the constitution and by-laws of the proposed exempt staff association and that he had given copies to his executive staff for review. He asked us what our feelings were on this proposed organization.

Susan stated that she had been thinking very seriously about this issue, especially since the President's general faculty/staff meeting of this morning. She said she had, in fact, written out her thoughts, which she felt was the majority of the feelings of the staff association considering the results of the recent staff survey. She read her remarks,
"We wish there was some sort of way these two factions could come together – some medication/arbitration/conflict management in order that we could go forward as one unified organization. We recognize there have been mistakes made by the staff organization over the past few years. We recognize there would have to be necessary changes made to our current staff constitution and by-laws and our organizational structure, but this can be done. Why can't we try to hammer this out? Let's rid ourselves of the personal agendas, the power conflicts, the strong egos and personalities, and go for 'what's right, instead of who's right'."

The President asked if we (Laurie and Susan) would like him to call Jackie to see if she and representatives of her group would consider meeting with us and representatives of the staff association to see if we could come to some agreement. We stated we would like that very much. The President said he would call Jackie and get back to us.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:55 pm

(President called Laurie at approximately 3:20 pm and told her that he had talked to Jackie, but she felt her group had gone too far now, but that they would like to visit with us after they had been recognized as an association.)