STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL

Approved Minutes

OSU STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES
July 9, 2003  416 Student Union  1:15 PM

Present:   Beeler, Blackburn, Brooks, Collins, Condit, Dark, Ford, Gedon, Hare, Hunt, Livsey, Miller, Peters, Phelan, Rogers, Shields, Tanner, Welliver, West, Whitmore, Wyant

Absent:    DeBock, King, Leeper, Sanmann, Thomason, Williams

Sheryl Beeler called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm. Sheryl took a moment to thank everyone for his or her vote of confidence. She is honored to serve as chair. Sheryl expressed her thanks to all who have volunteered to chair the various subcommittees. Lisa Collins called roll. Sheryl asked if there were any corrections to the June 11 minutes. There were no objections and the minutes were approved.

Sheryl amended the agenda: Item #3, due to schedule constraints, Dr. Marlene Strathe could not attend the meeting. Item #11, under New Business, Duane Hunt had an announcement regarding Distinguished Service Awards. There were no objections to the amended agenda; it was approved by voice vote.

**E-Team Update – Dr. Lee Bird**
Dr. Bird was unable to attend and no report was given.
Committee members met on June 26, 2003. **Review of membership.** Since this meeting marks the beginning of membership terms and there are new members, Lehenbauer asked the members to introduce themselves. Peter Shull will replace Sally Henderson and Lionel Raff will serve the remainder of John Wilguess’ term. Greg Fox was reappointed as staff representative. Louisa Payne’s seat is in the process of being filled by Staff Advisory Council.

Lehenbauer briefly reviewed the **committee's charge** from the university and the structure of the taskforces. There was also a clarification of the chain of responsibility. Although the committee usually asks for a campus review of any recommendation, it reports to the Vice President of Administration and Finance and Controller (Dr. Bosserman) and not to either Faculty Council or Staff Advisory Council. It is considered the responsibility of the senior staff and faculty representative (the third year member) to act as liaison to their respective council.

Lehenbauer gave a brief overview of the progress made by the **Retirement Taskforce.** President Schmidly asked the Board of Regents to approve changing the OSU retirement program from the 7/11 formula to a flat 11%. In addition, present employees who were under the pre-1993 retirement program will be given the option to return to that plan. Recent legislative changes to OTRS include lowering the mandatory age for participation from 55 to 45, lowering the vesting period from 10 years to 5 years, and allowing interest to be paid on withdrawn contributions during the first seven years.

Still on the legislative table for next year is making membership in OTRS optional and fixing the inequities in the benefit formulas.

Oehrtman stated that retirees are concerned about whether the formula fixes will be retroactive. Matoy stated that the present sample bill calls for a recalculation of retirees after 1993.

Legal Counsel is still reviewing the option for the pre-1993 plan. If approved, the option period will probably be in the fall of 2003. Human Resources plan to set up an interactive calculation program to be used by employees. The employee would key in information to determine which scenario would be to their advantage. People who opt for it will be retro-ed back to July 2003. HR is asking Legal Counsel about the possibility of an annual option to return to the current OSU retirement plan.

**Maternity/Family Leave Recommendation.** Lehenbauer stated that he was concerned about possible delays in the passage of this recommendation if it remained part of the Cafeteria/Leave Taskforce’s first recommendation (Phase II). He will write a letter to Dr. Bosserman recommending passage by the administration.

Reed moved that, since Phase I of the taskforce’s recommendation had been reviewed by both Staff Advisory Council and Faculty Council, it be sent forward to administration with comments from councils. Fox seconded. Discussion followed. Passed.
Changes to the **sick leave cap**. Matoy recommended that the issue be turned back to administration for a **workable** plan. There is a good possibility of future long-term disability premium rate hikes. The current plan does not always promote good health or productivity.

**Vendor choice.** Matoy stated that added vendor choice for retirement plans should be no problem. The committee simply needs to submit a recommendation. One potential roadblock would be that at least presently, the State of Oklahoma is unable to submit contributions electronically (something required by most retirement plans.) Matoy will invite a representative from TIAA/CREF at the next meeting.

The new officers will be Sandy Cooper as Vice Chair/Chair Elect and Billie Blackburn as Secretary.

Panhandle State has recently adopted a shared leave plan that was approved by the Board of Regents. Lehenbauer will forward the details to the members.

Matoy offered to share a Big 12 survey on shared leave.

Next meeting date will be July 21, 2003 at 3:00 pm in the Wellness Center Conference Room.

**Branch Campus Reports**

**OSU-Com** – No report

**OSU-Okmulgee** - No report

**OSU-OKC** – No report

**OSU-Tulsa** – Terry Dark – The OSU-Tulsa campus continues to experience strong student enrollment growth at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Cross enrollment between the Stillwater and Tulsa campuses continues to grow as well. At the current time, enrolled student headcount for the upcoming Fall semester is 15% larger than that of early July 2002. Credit hour production is 19% larger over the same time frame. OSU-Tulsa expects an overall credit hour production increase of 20-25% for the Fall 2003 semester.

Terry encourages all SAC representatives to contact him with their questions and concerns relating to the OSU-Tulsa campus or its academic programs.

**Report of Standing Committees**

**Awards & Recognition** – Trisha Gedon

The A/R committee has set the day for the Staff Awards Day for Thursday November 6, 2003 at 10am in the Little Theater of the Student Union. Refreshments will be provided. The date for the Staff Appreciation Day picnic has been set for Friday April 16, 2004 on the Willard Lawn. The Administrative Professional Day carnation delivery is scheduled for Wednesday April 21, 2004.

**Policies, Benefits and Budget** – Leslie Miller
In the quest for better communication between administration and staff, Juanita Phelan suggested that there should be a webpage linked to the main OSU homepage titled “Rumor Central.” Some mechanism to be set up for people to (anonymously, if desired) post questions about the latest rumors they’ve heard. Someone assigned from administration would respond to these questions saying “yes, no, or maybe” as to their veracity. For example, when the rumor was flying that Anne Matoy was going to be fired, they could have squashed it quickly on the “rumor central” webpage.

According to Leslie, two employees from very different backgrounds and departments have approached separate SAC members about the possibility of forming a staff union. PB&B looked into whether or not state workers can legally unionize, and members found a website for the OPEA, Oklahoma Public Employees Association. Based on the existence of this organization, the assumption is that it is legal. Currently the committee does not know if there is enough interest among staff to actively pursue this, so they encourage additional feedback from SAC members and their constituents on this issue.

The PB&B committee is still discussing the performance evaluations. They feel it’s very important and want to get it right. Elements that will probably be included in any final recommendation include:

- Requiring supervisors to explain (provide comments) on exceptionally high and exceptionally low scores.
- Providing a place for rebuttals and some process (maybe an arbitration committee or third party person) to evaluate appeals.
- Supervisor evaluations.

Leslie’s report also included a recommendation for the forming of a worker’s compensation committee that would recommend ways for the university to reduce worker’s compensation costs. During discussion of the recommendation, Anne Matoy informed SAC there was a committee already doing this. According to Anne, when a worker’s comp claim is filed, it is asked what could have been done to avoid the incident. This information has been extracted and is being compiled and reviewed by the committee that includes individuals from Safety and Human Resources. They analyze what are the most common problems and what can be done to address them. Anne welcomes any support that SAC may provide and encouraged the PB&B committee to move on with the recommendation provided they include more current information and have a better understanding of the current body that is reviewing this information. In light of the new information from Anne, Leslie requested the recommendation be tabled until more specific information for it can be compiled.

**Public Relations – Hank Welliver**

Hank passed around the sign up sheet for the Faculty Council meetings. There are 5 slots open. He also passed around the sign up sheet for New Employee Orientation. Hank explained what is expected during the NEO meetings and explained that it would be a good opportunity for all to hone their public speaking skills, or not.

Hank addressed the issue of the Webmaster vacancy. Historically the SAC website has been maintained by a serving representative with the skills required to maintain the site. It was understood that although a serving representative may have those skills to perform the maintenance, their terms end or they have other duties that make it impossible for them to properly carry out that function. In recent years the website has been housed on the Physical Plant server, this was the most practical an expeditious route for SAC in order to establish a web presence. However, this required
a SAC representative to volunteer to maintain the site and have access to the server. Fortunately a SAC representative employed in the Physical Plant was willing to establish and maintain the website. However when this person transferred to another position on campus, that access was terminated. Presently the website resides on a non-university owned server. The Public Relations committee proposed that an IT employee be assigned the responsibility of maintaining the SAC webpage and house it on an OSU server. The committee believes it is a timely recommendation due to the changes in administration and structure of campus as far as IT goes.

Hank made a motion to recommend administration provide an IT staff employee be assigned to maintain the SAC website and its content on an OSU server. After some discussion, his motion was amended to include the maintenance of the SAC List serve as well and was accepted. There were no objections and was approved by a voice vote.

Hank ended his report by discussing the PR committee meeting that met on July 7. The committee is looking forward to the new year and working with the Awards & Recognition committee again for the Staff Appreciation awards day and picnic.

**Rules & Procedures** – Donna Whitmore

Donna passed around the SAC roster and asked everyone update his or her contact information. Donna has a meeting scheduled with Anne regarding the reorganization and structure of the university.

**Old Business**

**SAC Vacancy Candidates** – Sheryl Beeler

The two-year term vacancy left by LaDawn Conner was discussed. Sheryl pulled the election results from the last election and felt it would be fair to ask those that were not elected if they were still interested. Another individual was also interested and the E-team decided that the fairest way to do this was to allow those names left on the ballot, Jane Carpenter, Chad Blew, Greg Hulett along with Sally Wright, to have an opportunity to submit a statement just as they would on a ballot. After reading their statement there was some discussion as to how to vote for the candidates. The floor was opened up for discussion and SAC members were able to voice their support for a candidate. Some of the council members have worked with several of the candidates and had positive things to say about them. A motion was made to vote on the four candidates and was seconded. A hand count was made of those voting and Greg Hulett won.

There was also a three-year term left vacant by Diana Jacobs in the classified staff Academic Affairs division. Again resorting to the election process, the next person in line was Stacy Estes, because there was no other interest, Sheryl had notified Stacy of the vacancy and she was still interested. A motion was made and approved to accept Stacy for that vacancy.

Chris Hoffman, Assistant Manager Transportation Services, was interested in the AP Business/External Relations vacancy, which is a three-year term; there was no other interest. A motion was made and approved to accept Chris for that vacancy.

A General University Classified one-year term position is still vacant. Currently there are no candidates and Sheryl had e mailed Dr. Birdwell expressing the lack of representation from that area and had no response at that time. If any members of SAC know of anyone that may be interested, please contact them or have them contact Sheryl.
University Wide Committee Assignments – Sheryl Beeler

The council is aware that staff serves on committees throughout the university. Staff has been requested to serve on various committees such as the Diversity Advisory Board, but no one has signed up for that position, it is a classified vacancy. Flexible Compensation Benefits, SAC has recommended that Greg Fox be reappointed. Other names submitted to Diana LaFollette for the Flex Benefits Committee were Jonathan Hunt and Diana Ward. Duane Hunt has asked to be reappointed to the Student Conduct Committee along with the name of Lori O'Malley. Three people were interested in serving on Athletic Council, Joe Wilson, Teresa Reedy, and William Gentry, all of their names were submitted.

New Employee Orientation – Sheryl Beeler

Regarding the New Employee Orientation, Sheryl read a letter she received from Sandy Barth in which Human Resources thanked Staff Advisory Council members for participating in the NEO program and stated the presence of SAC members has made a positive difference in their program. In the letter, Sandy stresses their commitment to NEO and asks that SAC continue their participation in the program.

Announcements – Sheryl Beeler

Sheryl, Duane, Kathy, and Lisa met with President Schmidly on July 3, 2003 at 10:30 to get acquainted.

Sheryl thought the meeting went very well. President Schmidly is very interested in the work of the council and continues to express his commitment to communication and rumor control. He is interested in the work being done on the performance evaluations and has asked that he be kept updated on its progress. He is also willing to get the word out to the E Team about the importance of staff being available to work on SAC and other university committees. He would like everyone to have the opportunity to be involved if they choose, and does not want department heads or supervisors to be a deterrent to anyone with interest in being a difference maker and willing to be involved. Sheryl and Duane are drafting a letter to be sent to President Schmidly that would be sent to his E team members.

Sheryl thought it would be important for everyone to know that as Chair of the Staff Advisory Council, she is invited to a number of different functions. Sheryl and her husband attended a 4th of July cookout with President Schmidly.

Reception invitations for Sharon Whitney were available. Sharon has been a council member and is being honored for 20 years of service to OSU. The reception is on August 1 in Room 102 Ag Hall.

Sheryl thanked Anne Matoy for attending the SAC meetings and keeping the channels open between staff and administration. Anne has been very helpful and does her best to supply the council with information as requested and we appreciate the efforts she puts forth to make a difference here at OSU.
Hank Welliver brought up discussion of the Daycare issue. Sheryl did say that President Schmidly is on top of that issue. Duane included that the president is looking to the community for assistance.

Though it was not included in the announcement, Sheryl brought up that during the get acquainted meeting, parking in the Student Union for meetings with sub committees was discussed. President Schmidly suggested meeting at other areas on campus where parking was not an issue such as the Wes Watkins Center. If parking at Wes Watkins is a problem, he should be contacted and may be able to help.

**New Business** - Duane Hunt

Duane asked that if anyone would like to serve on the Distinguished Service Awards selection committee, they contact their sub committee chair by the end of July. Duane then gave a brief description of what the committee does.

Meeting was adjourned.