OSU STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

May 8, 2002    412 Student Union    1:20 PM

Present:        Beeler, Blackburn, Cimino, Higgs, Hundley, Hunt, Jacobs, Magness, Miller, Mitchell, Payne, Richardson, Shields, Traynor

Absent:         Bergbower, Brooks, Cameron, Collins, Cookerly, DeBock, Fletcher, Good, Hart, Hays, Ingham, Reedy, Rogers

Myra Traynor called the meeting to order at 1:20 pm, and Diana Jacobs called roll. Myra asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes and asked if there were any changes to the minutes. The minutes could not be approved because there was not a quorum. Myra went over the agenda. She had a change – Lisa Collins is not here so there will not be a report from University Committees today. We have IT Policy to discuss under New Business and Wes Higgs has a report on Strategic Planning Committee under Old Business.

Executive Group Update – Natalea Watkins, Assistant Vice President, Communications Services.
Commencement is Saturday. They are having two ceremonies in Gallagher-Iba. They have separated the big colleges. If it is raining, they will not have the grand march. College receptions are being continued.

OSU received $19 million in sensor funding for homeland security. This will have to go through the Regents and Legislature before anything can be finalized. The budget will be a standstill budget, meaning we will get less money than last year. The budget was reduced by about 2% this year. The budget will probably be reduced 2% next year. Costs are going up to a tune of $5 million.

Burns Hargis is our new regent. You can see him Sunday mornings on the television show Flash Point.

Our Scholars Development Program was again successful. They put 3 or 4 new scholars on the wall this year. These are all great kids.

The Wheelchair Basketball Bash was successful and brought in about $8,000 – 11,000. The attendance wasn’t great but hopefully word of mouth will help attendance next year. Our wheelchair team is really good. The event was a lot of fun.
Two events going on in the legislature: Some people work for OSU, go to work somewhere else, come back and want to buy back their retirement. They used to have to do with after tax dollars, but now can be done with pre tax dollars. There’s other discussion going on that might result in a study to see if OSU and OU can buy out of OTRS. Has not been voted on yet.

There will be a 7% increase in tuition; except at the Medical School and theirs will go up 10%. For most freshmen taking 15 hours, this would be about $68 increase.

One other change – OSU has changed the refund policy. If you drop a class during the first week, you get 100% refund, but if you wait until the 2nd week, you will only get 50% refund. This is to encourage students to decide to drop in the first week to open space in the class for students who want the course to enroll before the deadline.

Communications Services is working with High School & College Relations to put more information on line and on the web. Since postage is going up, mailing information could be expensive. They will be going more to email. Department information sheets that will be updated in the departments. Communications Services will be updating Things About OSU. Feel free to email Terri Livsey if you have any information that might be included.

The survey that was given out at the President’s Open House – the number one concern was parking.

$375,000 has been approved to repair the S. U. Parking Garage. They will keep portions of the garage open during the repairs.

Departmental Performance Appraisals – Randall Dahl, Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs

Administrative Department Review – they are trying this in Academic Affairs. Academic departments undergo reviews periodically (about every 5 years). Some are part of a formal accreditation process and some an internal process. It is rare that administrative departments are included in that. Reviews tend to happen when there is a problem. The department itself drives the structured periodic review and it pretty much follows classic evaluation procedures. It occurs at regular intervals. They conducted a review for High School & College Relations this year and will re-do in 5 years. The world is changing rapidly. Many of the offices are affected by technology. This will provide a regular opportunity to review what is going on. The structure Dr. Dahl uses is:

1. Establish a review committee composed of individuals representing constituencies and other areas that could contribute to process. (Dr. Dahl appoints)
2. The unit does a self-study and it will vary depending on way unit is set up. Includes unit’s role and function, organization, key accomplishments, leadership, management issues including budget & personnel, staff training and professional development, operational efficiency, customer service, coordination, cooperation in unit and with other units, institutional support, commitment to institutional goals and objectives, key planning issues, opportunities for improvement and obstacles to continue to improve.

The committee needs enough people at high enough levels to contribute to areas. The chair should be the department head, associate dean, or higher. Include one staff member of the unit, have a director from another unit (their unit could be next in cycle so they can better understand the process). It’s important to involve outside members (somebody who can be helpful in asking
good questions, has interest, but who may have limited knowledge about the department), and a
totally outside person (possibly someone who works at another university in a similar area).

The review committee needs to be able to seek additional information. Everyone in the unit
should have their say. Group interviews are often held. The review committee comes up with
their report that then becomes resource information for the unit to look at what they should be
doing and becomes part of the planning process. The report is not published, but is a working
document. A review costs more time than money.

New Business
Bonnie Richardson – Bonnie passed out the Faculty Council’s goals of the IT Policy.

The Oklahoma State University Staff Advisory Council endorses the Information
Technology Policy goals of the Faculty Council
- Simplicity
- Generality
- Longevity
- Compliance with State and Federal laws without restating those laws
- Acknowledgement that CIS has grown and so have their responsibilities

While SAC understands that the policy will change during the review process, the
Council feels strongly that any variation should continue to meet the above goals.

The main concern of SAC is that any IT policy be easy to understand for both IT
professionals and non-IT professionals. The Council suggests any policy include a
statement to the following effect: “If an IT professional or other OSU employee is not in
compliance with this policy, the individual will be notified and given adequate time to
conform to the policy before the legal/personnel action is taken. Access may be
disconnected during this time.”

There was a quorum at this time. A motion was made and seconded that we accept and endorse
the Faculty Council’s goals of the policy and submit to CIS. This passed unanimously by a show
of hands.

Myra mentioned that the orientation lunch is scheduled for June 12th, in the Oklahoma Room at
noon. Plan on devoting most of your entire afternoon to SAC. Dr. Birdwell has agreed to pay for
the lunch. Leslie Miller will bring the camera for new pictures. If you like your current picture,
you can use it. Rita’s committee will prepare packets for new council members.

Branch Campus Reports
(No one was in attendance from any branch campuses; therefore, there were no branch campus
reports.)
OSU-OKC
OSU-Tulsa
OSU-Com
OSU-Okmulgee

Report of Standing Committees
Awards & Recognition – Leslie Cimino
We sold 443 carnations. We haven’t received an invoice yet, but it should be $332.25. We
grossed $1368.00, of that $32.00 was donations. After we pay the bill, we should net $1035.75.
Rules & Procedures – Duane Hunt

Letters have gone out to the new members. The people in Academic Affairs who did not win have agreed to have their names put on a list to fill out terms if openings occur. The people elected are:

- **Academic Affairs and Research Classified** – E. Joan Sanmann and Chris Williams – 21% ballots returned
- **Academic Affairs and Research A/P** – LaDawn Conner and Trisha Gedon – 13% returned
- **General University A/P** – Deborah Shields – 8% returned
- **Student Affairs A/P** – Marilyn Thomason – 28% returned
- **Business & External Relations A/P** – Leslie Miller – 34% returned

The deadline date for voting on the constitutional change is May 10th. It appears the change will be passed by the staff and the constitution amended to prohibit SAC members from receiving prizes.

Public Relations – Rita Hundley – No report

Policies, Benefits and Budget – Leslie Miller

The University Budget Committee met twice last month to allow the deans to make their budget presentations. Tonya attended the first meeting (Leslie was unable to attend the second meeting.) Tonya reported a lot of departments are not filling positions or putting a hold on them for six months. A&S is not appropriating the one time money and are cutting their budget $337,000. If budget continues a decline, 10 faculty positions will be affected. When faculty positions are filled, departments are hiring younger faculty at lower salaries. That’s how they are saving some money.

CEAT said 25% of their budget was soft money. Since 1996, it has been reduced and is now about 16%.

CBA is outgrowing their facility. They are teaching more credit hours (470-492). The university average is 439.

HES talked more positively. Their college is producing more scholarship students, one will get to serve an internship in Europe this summer. 95% of their graduates get jobs within 3 months of graduation.

Dr. Warde has not finished compiling the statistics for the Day Care Survey, so the committee has decided to put off making a recommendation on this issue until the fall semester.

PB&B was asked to look over the administration’s interim Long Term Disability policy. Unfortunately, we did not feel we could endorse it at this time. Firstly, we feel that if they’re going to make changes to the policy, we’d really like them to go ahead and rewrite the entire policy so that it makes sense and can easily be interpreted. As it is currently written, it is very hard to understand. Secondly, since it is our task to act in the best interest of staff, we did not like the idea of endorsing a change that would potentially reduce the LTD benefits for staff members who have been working here for less than four years. Under the new policy, it is our understanding that staff who elected to enroll in the insurance overage of 50% or 60% would have their LTD pay percentage dropped form 66 2/3 to 50% or 60% accordingly. The new policy
links LTD to the percentage of elected insurance coverage, so it would be, in effect, a reduction of a benefit for these staff members.

The issue of fee waivers for staff/faculty and their children has been brought up again, this time with a slightly different twist. Apparently the usual staff fee waiver does not apply to internet or correspondence courses, and a staff member believes this is an unfair practice. This is not the first time this has come up, and Tonya has some information that can be passed on to the next PB&B chair. The new committee will also need to decide if they wish to revisit the issue of fee waivers for the children of faculty and staff members.

And finally, last month I presented council with a recommendation on Maternity Leave. I would now like to call for a vote on this. Currently, the recommendation reads as follows:

“The Staff Advisory Council recommends that OSU Human Resources revise the university policies regarding Maternity Leave (1-0701), Sick Leave for Faculty (2-0113), and Sick Leave for Staff (3-0716) to include the use of sick leave for maternity, paternity, and adoption purposes.

The revised policies (or policy) should be clearly written and defined so that they are administered uniformly throughout the university as well as equally between faculty and staff. Furthermore, the policies (or policy) should include reference to the Family Medical Leave Act (OSU policy 3-0708) where appropriate.

Background for this recommendation:
OSU is the only Big 12 University that does not allow some use of sick leave by parents who have just adopted a child. Furthermore, several staff members have complained to council members that “maternity leave” is not administered uniformly throughout the university, and that the policies concerning maternity leave are confusing and hard to understand. Unlike many other universities, paternity leave is essentially not addressed at all. Current sick leave policies do not reference FMLA, adding to the potential confusion. Today’s workplace is more dynamic than ever before, and we believe this is an opportunity for Administration to improve morale for current employees as well as provide better recruitment tools for quality candidates in the future.”

We will be adding an attachment to the recommendation containing first-hand accounts illustrating some of the problems staff members have encountered concerning maternity leave. Because these are confidential, we will not be distributing them to the entire council at this time, however, we have received permission to pass them on to Administration if the recommendation passes.

The motion was made and seconded to accept this recommendation. It passed by voice vote.

Old Business:
Wes Higgs presented a strategic planning committee summary and final report. He thanked members Holly Hannah-Bergbower, Billie Blackburn, Dawn Good, Leslie Miller and Bonnie Richardson for serving on the committee.

Strategic Planning Committee Summary and Final Report

Members: Wes Higgs, Chair; Holly Hannah-Bergbower, Secretary; Billie Blackburn; Dawn Good; Leslie Miller; Bonnie Richardson.
Our first priority was to establish a vision/mission statement. The committee used the SAC Constitution and Bylaws, as well as the University Mission Statement to arrive at the following vision statement, which was approved by the Council:

**OSU Staff Advisory Council Vision Statement:**

The Oklahoma State University Staff Advisory Council diligently strives to foster a working environment that enables staff to achieve the mission of the university, which is to make OSU “The University of Choice in Oklahoma.” The staff contributes to the mission of the University by providing the services and support that directly enhance the quality of academic programs; therefore, the services and support provided by staff are essential to the welfare of the university.

The mission of the OSU Staff Advisory Council is to represent the interests of the staff in the development and implementation of policies and procedures that directly affect their morale, well-being, working conditions, and professional welfare.

Staff Advisory Council will accomplish this mission by:

- Improving communication and collaboration between council members, staff, other campus advisory groups, and University officials in order to make policies and procedures easier to evaluate, develop, endorse, or implement;
- Pursuing projects that elevate morale and increase the visibility of the staff and the council;
- Ensuring recognition of staff as important assets of the university.

After brainstorming, we identified the following areas of needed improvement:

**Expanded and improved communication, collaboration between groups:**

- **Logo** – Resurrected former logo and it is now on the SAC website. *PR Committee should be tasked to look at way to improve it by adding our four-part mission.*

- **Improved website** – We must have a more dynamic and interactive web presence that improves the communication and the dissemination of information between staff and staff council, as well as between other campus groups, and University officials in order to make policies and procedures easier to evaluate, develop, endorse, or implement. Our web presence could be enhanced by taking advantage of technologies available but not currently being tapped by Staff Advisory Council. A new website is currently in the design phase and will include features that will allow us to conduct detailed surveys and questionnaires, the ability to search the site for specific information, gather feedback from visitors, and much more. This interactive site will be up and running by the end of May and will be field-tested for accuracy and completeness before going into production. *This site should be maintained by the PR Committee.*

- **Quarterly newsletter** – A preliminary study demonstrated that money could be saved and our constituents more strategically targeted by a spring/summer/fall distribution of our newsletter, in contrast to an annual newsletter. Need to identify groups without web access and target for newsletter distribution. Groups with web access could be mailed a post card or sent an email to read the newsletter from the web site. The newsletter layout
would include carnation and mum order forms, in lieu of “stuffing,” as well as other timely information. Significant savings could be realized by identifying the most cost effective ways to reach our constituents. *A more thorough cost/benefit analysis should be conducted.*

**Open forum** – New Business has been moved near the beginning of the meeting. *Ensure members take an active role in promoting this to their constituents.*

**Improved relations (collaboration) with other campus groups** – *Proactive liaising with Faculty Council, possibly a new council position.* Attend SGA Meetings, etc.

**Increase number of SAC Lunches** – Some ideas for topics include an explanation of academic units, presentation by University Budget Committee, parliamentary procedures, guest motivational speakers, etc.

**Council member surveys** – Need to poll council members to foster ideas on what they think the council could do accomplish its mission.

**Elevate morale:**

**SAC Salutes** – “Thank You” to staff for a job well done

**Guidelines:**
- Awards and Recognition Committee
- Serve as a morale building program
- Any staff member is eligible for recognition
- Anyone can submit a name for recognition (must not submit own name)
- Set some limits on nominees and nominations
- Develop a form of submission
- Develop a form of recognition

**Staff Appreciation Day** – This is our largest and most important event of the year. Every effort and resource should be utilized to make it outstanding. As a result, producing this event should be a joint effort combining PR and A&R committees, with a redistribution of certain duties that take advantage of committee resources and expertise. The details should be handled between these two committees.

**Chi-O Clock renovation** – This would be a major morale building project with cooperation and coordination between and among several campus groups, with Staff Advisory Council leading the project.

**Recognition of staff as important assets:**

**Professional development available to all staff** – including classified (especially Physical Plant)

Request that only Vice President’s give E-Group update to council - We don’t receive as much information about “University” affairs as when VP’s attend and report.

**Task Force** – Physical Plant employees should have a stake in how they do their jobs. There are many things about the operations of the physical plant, as it relates to its
employees, which should be investigated. Supervisors are not allowed time to attend supervisor training programs that many of them desperately need. This lack of supervisory skill has an adverse affect on the morale of Physical Plant employees being supervised and a panel of experts should be assembled to investigate the matter to arrive at solutions for improvement.

Myra said this is the final report for the committee. There was not a quorum so council could not accept the report.

Myra announced that Bea Peters had agreed to accept a one-year appointment, but has accepted a three-year term in Business & External Affairs and Dell Livsey accepted the seat that Teresa Reedy is vacating.

Duane Hunt made the motion to adjourn, motion was seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:36pm.