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STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL

OSU STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

January 11, 2006, 408 Student Union, Case Study 1

Present: Beeler, Blackburn, Campbell, Castle, Condit, Conneywerdy, Eynon, Ford, Forsythe, Gladden, McIntire, Phelan, Reece, Reim, Teague, Ward, Warner, Welliver, Whitmore, Wieder, A. York, S. York, Zweiacker

Absent: Barber, Hoffman, Hunt, Kelley, Peters

Hank Welliver called the meeting to order at 1:15 p. m. and Carey Warner called roll.

Hank asked for approval of the December minutes. Corrections included clarification of those grandfathered into broadbanded positions and the Policies, Benefits, and Budget report was modified to state the committee did meet rather than will be meeting. A motion was made to approve December minutes as amended, seconded and approved by a voice vote.

One item was changed on the agenda; the Faculty Council Report will be for January 2006. A motion was made to approve the agenda as amended, seconded and approved by a voice vote.

E-Group Update – No Report

Report of University Committees

Flexible Compensation Benefits Committee Report – Brad Barnes

Brad Barnes summarized a handout on current issues with the Flexible Compensation Benefits Committee. The handout read as follows:

1. During discussions with University Administrators FCBC Chair Carol Moder learned that continued retirement program enhancements are not being considered in current budget. President Schmidly originally reported these enhancements in his June 6, 2003 letter to OSU Faculty and Staff.

2. The development of employee training strategies for retirement planning appears to have stalled. The FCBC Retirement Subcommittee recommended a comprehensive educational effort for all OSU employees including the opportunity for no cost financial counseling by certified financial planners prior to the need for an employee to make a binding decision about the future of their retirement program. This is binding decision that is extremely complex in nature and could have a dramatic impact on funds available to an employee during their retirement. We expect that the IRS will issue a ruling on our request for an alternative retirement plan in the near future. During a recent FCBC meeting Anne Matoy reported that her interpretation of IRS regulations is that the election must occur within 12 months of receiving plan approval. We are very concerned that without adequate preparation many employees will not be able to make an informed decision within the specified time period.

3. Healthcare issues continue to be addressed as a high priority item. At present we are conducting research to understand more fully our existing healthcare options and possible future directions. We fully understand that spouse and children coverage are beyond many of our employees ability to afford. In the near future employees will have an opportunity to express their needs and desires for healthcare coverage in response to an electronic survey.

4. FCBC has been working on an initiative to provide a tuition waiver program for employee family members. Chair Moder reported during her meeting with Dr. Bosserman, data from Instructional Research was shared and discussed. The FCBC felt the data supplied to Dr. Bosserman contained several problematic assumptions. We continue to work with administration on this initiative.

5. We have received reports of problems with the Flex Benefit Debit Card by PBS (card supposed to be issued by MBI), cards were mailed mid December, if you signed up for Flex and have not received a card, please contact Marsha at 1-800-800-0133 (#2) to re-issue a card.

6. We are currently researching a problem where OSU employees are not considered for OSEEGIB purposes and thus are not eligible to receive free benefits offered to other state employees with regard to wellness options (as outlined in a recent OSEEGIB flyer sent to OSU employees), and further do not qualify for benefits of the OK Health mentoring program of the State Wellness Program. This is a concern because the programs are offered to other OSEEGIB plan members who pay the same exact premiums as OSU does.

7. All employees should have received information about additional retirement investment fund opportunities through TIAA/CREF.

In response to questions concerning the survey, Brad stated the FCBC will not send out a huge survey because no one will want to complete it. A small survey of approximately 20 questions or less will be sent electronically to all OSU employees with the expectation of 15% of OSU employees responding. Anne Matoy responded to a question as to if OSU would consider a health savings account versus the current Flexible Benefits option by stating that the IRS regulations for healthcare savings accounts are different than the Flexible Benefits, but such options are being researched.

Brad stated the retirement program enhancements including OSU increasing their contribution to 12% and if an employee chose to contribute, OSU would match their contribution up to 2%. Thus total contribution to an employee's retirement account could equal 16%. The IRS should make a ruling on if employees hired before July 2004 have the option to get out of OTRS in April 2006. If approved, those hired before July 2004 will have one year to make a decision to opt out of OTRS. The FCBC is trying to get OTR to

release data so that employees can know what they would make from OTRS before making such decision.

Brad also expressed concern that the FCBC has not been influenced enough by the Council. Those sitting on the FCBC have to devote three to eight hours per week to researching issues/attending meetings and must sit on one of the three subcommittees; Retirement, Healthcare, Cafeteria-Tuition. Hank requested anyone wishing to be part of the FCBC to send him an email as to why you would like to sit on this committee and if you can devote such time.

Faculty Council Report – Lori Wieder

Christie Hawkins: Reported on academic ledgers for the Strategic Plan. They are broken down by University as a whole, college, and department. Each section is then further broken down. Student information examples: headcount, ACT rates, degrees granted, credit hours, entry information, awards, retention, class size, demographics. Faculty/Staff information examples: FTE, head count, faculty to student ratio, salaries, awards, demographics; these are further broken down by rank (AIP etc.). Institutional Research maintains these ledgers, but some data may be inaccurate. IR gets some data from HR, and the ledgers are given to departments to review and make corrections; IR relies on the departments to make sure information is correct. Some information such as ethnic background may be inaccurate because those who choose not to answer ethnicity questions are lumped into the "white" category. The ledgers are available for review on the IR website.

Alexander Rouch: Reported on the Smoke Free Campus at OSU Center for Health Sciences. College of Medicine has a smoke free environment; on Stillwater campus, the rule is supposed to be no smoking within 25 feet of a door. When the smoke free environment was investigated, a "smoke room" or "smoking area" was considered, but was decided against. If a student or staff member wants to smoke they must do it off campus. Smoking in private vehicle parked on campus is not permitted. Regents approved this action, as did OSU Legal. A free smoking cessation program was offered to those interested. There has been a very positive response, both on campus and in the media. OSU Center for Health Sciences was a leader in this movement.

Dr. Bosserman: Status of Efforts to Place Print Shop Employees: 15 employees involved: 1 turned in OSU application & has interviewed with no offer; 4 accepted positions at OSU; 1 accepted position at OU; 2 resigned; 1 current application at OSU, but has not chosen to have it sent for any open positions; 6 no application filed at OSU. They are currently on leave without pay for one year; they can apply for any open position; priority is not given to them, however. The ratio of old salary to new salary is not available at this time. There was an executive motion to recommend the President keep helping staff try to find jobs until a satisfactory situation is found (within one year). (it passed). Dr. Bosserman asked for clarification of what the Council was asking. They want the University to take care of the people involved. Dr. Bosserman indicated they had made more than one attempt to visit with each person individually so they are doing this already. Dr. Bosserman as reported on Custodial employees: (about 200 could be affected); the people who came in October represented a firm who contacted the University to come do a free evaluation to put their template in our space to see if there is anything to pursue. No decision has been made at this time. Data has been received, but it has been determined to be flawed. Recommendations can be from training to outsourcing, but they are just gathering data at this time.

President Schmidly remarks included: Athletics gift--\$165 million (\$300 million total gifted). President Schmidly said the donations were a result of a lot of discussions and negotiations. Boone says he is not done giving. President Schmidly said Boone "understands the additional needs on campus and we can look forward to additional gifts". Boone put the money in his energy fund on December 30, and it is being managed

for free; it will hopefully grow at a high rate and OSU will receive all interest earned. We can then draw down the money as it is needed, allowing us to build debt free. If the money grows as expected, athletics could then be totally self sufficient. Mike Holder gets accolades for securing this gift. President Schmidly said we needed to keep showing Boone our appreciation as he will continue to donate to charity. (He gave one of the largest donations after Hurricane Katrina). He also indicated that Boone Pickens wants people to stop using "T Boone Pickens" and just call him "Boone". He said the "T" part is related to his past and he wants to portray a kinder Boone. President Schmidly asked that someone look into how the data is reported for the academic ledgers.

Greg Bell-Retirement and Fringe Benefits update: There is a proposal to increase tuition waivers for Faculty, Staff and dependents. Institutional Research gave an estimate of costs and Dr. Bosserman's office has given estimated costs. The committee determined the cost is not exceptional. They are furthering research on this topic and hope to have something for the Council in April. Estimate approximately \$200,000, but the number may be incorrect. VP office estimates it at over \$600,000 per year. They would like to have a 50% tuition waiver for dependents, with a full fee charge 75% tuition waiver and full fee waiver for faculty and staff. It was noted this would not be a cost, but instead revenue lost. Joe Weaver stated there is no revenue lost if the student would not have come without the waiver, but it would be lost if the student would have come anyway. Earl Mitchell recommended hard dollars be received to cover the cost of the waivers prior to giving them. It is suggested that it be viewed as a benefit to the faculty and staff. Many Big 12 institutions have these waivers. They wanted a new RFP for health care, but instead they decided to be undecided. They want to lower cost for dependents and retirees who are under rule of 80 and before Social Security benefits kick in. They are trying to find ways to make it happen. (One possibility to lower cost is to increase deductibles). The decision from the IRS on being able to choose between OTR and someone else has not been received.

Treasurer's Report – Donna Whitmore – No Report

Branch Campus Reports

OSU-COM – Jan Barber – No Report

OSU-Okmulgee – Allen York – No Report

OSU-OKC – Ronda Reece

Ronda stated OSU-OKC trying to increase enrollment. The holiday luncheon was a success and they will not be meeting this month.

OSU-Tulsa – Karen Castle – No Report

Report of Standing Committees

Rules & Procedures – Duane Hunt, Chair

Donna Whitmore reported for Duane. The committee is currently working on the election and timeline and it should be ready for vote at February meeting. If your term expires this year, please let Duane know if you would like to be re-elected.

Public Relations – Jeremy Zweiacker, Chair

Jeremy stated the committee is still working with Anne Matoy to obtain access to a staff listserv containing all staff email addresses. There is still a need for a greeter for the next NEO seminar scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on February 2, 2006.

Policies, Benefits and Budget – Tara Gladden, Chair

Tara announced committee will be meeting to review and discuss the grievance and attendance/leave policies as well as the Peer Meditation program.

Awards & Recognition – Katie Reim, Chair

Katie stated the Staff Appreciation Day luncheon has been set for April 6, 2006. The committee will be meeting with Public Relations committee to discuss the raffle, vendors and food for the luncheon. A sign up sheet was passed around for volunteers to man the booth for the men's basketball tickets raffle. The carnation sale is being reviewed with thoughts towards selling something other than carnations. Discussion of the Environmental Award included who is responsible for such award and if departmental awards should be announced at the Staff Appreciation Day luncheon or the Staff Awards Day Program.

Old Business

Hank announced the SAC Scholarship Fund Endowment Request has been sent to Administration.

New Business

Announcements

Liz Condit announced the Staff Scholarships for spring 2006 semester will be awarded soon. The information for such will be sent to the Public Relations committee to send to appropriate personnel in the Bursar Office.

Anne Matoy announced 34.1% of staff positions (1,108 positions) have been broadbanded to date.

There being no further business to come before the Council, motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,
Carey Warner, Secretary