



Minutes

Staff Alliance

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Audio call-in: 1-855-280-1855

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Voting Members:

Kara Axx, President, UAF Staff Council; Chair, Staff Alliance

Ryan J. Hill, Co-President, UAA Staff Council

Shiva Hullavarad, President, SW Administration Assembly

Kolene James, President, UAS Staff Council; Vice Chair, Staff Alliance

Brenda Levesque, Co-President, UAA Staff Council

Elaine Main, Vice President, SW Administration Assembly

Sue Mitchell, Vice President, UAF Staff Council

Staff:

Morgan Dufseth, Executive Officer, System Governance

Guests:

Myron Dosch, Chief Financial Officer

Tara Ferguson, UA Director of Compensation

Members Absent:

Kiwana Sutton, Vice President, UAS Staff Council

2. Adopt Agenda

MOTION: Sue moved, Brenda seconded; no objections. The agenda was adopted as presented.

3. Approve Minutes

3.1. January Meeting Minutes

Change: Agenda to Minutes

MOTION: Ryan moved, Sue seconded; no objections. The minutes were approved as amended.

[Reference 1](#)

4. Public and Guest Comment

4.1. Tara Ferguson – HR Updates

Tara provided an update on changes to the new hire process and the family medical leave (FML) process, as well as an update on the market analysis and pay equity/salary comparison study. Tier 1 training (PageUp e-learning courses that are replacing SkillSoft) will be distributed by each campus when they are ready to roll out. Open enrollment will still be available online this year but will be run through UAOnline for increased security. The temporary salary schedule includes two transition steps and those will be removed at the beginning of FY19.

4.2. Myron Dosch – ORP and PERS Floor Obligation

Ryan noted that some employees are on 10-month term contracts for three years and then their contract is over, so they don't have an opportunity to vest in the PERS system.

Myron noted the decision to remove ORP from the staff retirement options was a result of cost avoidance – trying to avoid \$3-4M per year in additional cost. The PERS/TRS plans were defined benefit plans and became substantially underfunded (projected benefits exceeded present value of the investments ~\$12B in Alaska alone). The PERS/TRS plans then switched to defined *contribution* plans and all employers were in the same pool and contributed the same amounts. The state requires an employer pay 22% of payroll, however, if their employee rates goes below that they are still required to pay 22%. For UA, that is \$28.1M (considered a fixed cost). Because UA has the ORP Tier 3 (which at the time was thought to be a cost-saving measure) and they would pay 12% contribution but they had not figured that in the cost of the floor obligation. As new employees chose ORP more frequently, it was seen as an addition to the fixed cost (\$21M). The Board ultimately made the decision at the end of FY15 to remove ORP from staff retirement options.

5. Chair's Report

Kara Axx

Kara reported the Board met on Jan. 19; noted they provided good information about advocacy for the university and how to present its challenges to external parties; discussed the budget for the university

Kara reported she and Kolene attended the Faculty Alliance meeting on Jan. 26 to discuss the letter faculty sent to Rep. Justin Parish with regard to a staff and faculty regent. The letter said faculty and staff were supportive of each other's efforts but would pursue their goals separately; up to that point, staff have been under the impression they were working together with the faculty. The Faculty Alliance apologized for the miscommunication.

6. Staff Council Reports

6.1. UAA Staff Council

UAA met last week and President Johnsen attended; they had a great turnout and roughly 20 guests attended. Discussed the UAA chancellor search, governance inclusion in SW councils, and the UA budget. The list of candidates is posted on the UAA chancellor site. Also working to have a set budget for UAA Staff Council and will begin reviewing draft proposals shortly. Asked for feedback from staff on professional development and will address some of those requests at their spring development week.

6.2. UAF Staff Council

Meeting is next week. Sue is on the provost search committee and they are reviewing a preliminary list of candidates to narrow down to an interview list, which will be followed by campus visits in early April. Will have the new VC for Students, Keith Champagne, at their next meeting. New members will be inducted for 2018.

6.3. UAS Staff Council

Using new video recording system and now have a recordings of their meeting available online. Cultural Safety and Equity – met once and will try to meet again next year. Provost Carey attended the Jan. 24 meeting and gave a report on academic activities, and also invited Staff Council to host training sessions in conjunction with faculty. First one will likely be a safe zone training. Working on bylaws and constitution revisions and will distribute shortly. Legislative advocacy training on will be held on Elizabeth Peratrovich Day and will be open to the public.

Ryan requested guidance on having grant funded employees participate in governance activities; there has been some general push back from supervisors that it is not allowable due to funding restrictions. Morgan noted SW HR was supportive of all benefited UA employees serving in governance and agreed to follow up and report back to the Alliance by the end of February.

6.4. SW Administration Assembly

SAA continues to work on its breakroom and AED/CPR training initiatives. They will begin shortly to work on the 2017 Outstanding Employee and Department Awards, as well as employee longevity awards.

7. Staff Alliance Committees

- 7.1. Staff Health Care Committee – Have not met; will meet after JHCC's February meeting
- 7.2. Compensation Committee – Will meet next week to review final recommendations
- 7.3. Morale Committee – Have not met
- 7.4. Ad Hoc Staff Emeritus – Will try to meet later this month

8. External Committees

- 8.1. System Governance Council: Meets on Feb. 15
- 8.2. Joint Health Care Committee: January meeting was cancelled
- 8.3. System-wide Councils: Kara, Ryan, Sue, and Brenda

9. Ongoing Business

9.1. Staff Regent – Next Steps

Kolene reached out to Rep. Parish regarding a staff regent but has not yet heard back from him. She plans to follow up with him when she sees him around town.

9.2. Staff Make Students Count

Nominations are open through March 19.

[SMSC Website](#)

10. New Business

10.1. Resolution on Staff Emeritus

Reference 2

MOTION: Ryan moved, Sue seconded. No additional discussion. Unanimously approved.

10.2. Staff Representation on Search Committees

[Reference 3](#)

Postponed to March meeting.

10.3. Layoff Notice for Hourly Employees

See resolution recently passed by UAA Staff Council (distributed on Staff Alliance list serv). The compensation committee will also review and will provide a recommendation to the Alliance regarding this issue.

11. Agenda Items for March 7 Meeting

- 11.1. Retreat Topics – SW admin in ANC?
- 11.2. Search committee resolution
- 11.3. Layoff Notice for Hourly Employees

12. Roundtable discussion

13. Adjourn

Sue moved and Brenda seconded. Meeting adjourned at 12: 10 p.m.