



## Salisbury University – Staff Senate

Thursday, March 10, 2022

AC401 GAC Boardroom

VIRTUAL OPTION: MICROSOFT TEAMS

### Minutes

**Members in attendance:** Vanessa Collins, Joe Benyish, Tabitha Pilchard, Lisa Gray, Steve Blankenship, Isabella Chow, Sara Heim, Candace Henry, Paul Gasior, Jennifer Ellis, Amy Waters, Matt Hill, Jessica Scott

**Absent:**

**Executive Staff:** Eli Modlin, Dr. Charles Wight

**Guests:** Lisa Lepore, Christine Benoit

Vanessa Collins, Chair, opened the meeting at 10:02 am.

I. Eli Modlin

a. *Updates and information sharing of staff-related issues and COVID Update*

- i. Once we get closer to the fall semester, will be re-evaluating the COVID protocols for the remainder of the year.
- ii. ODI searches are ongoing; reviewing applicants and starting interviews now for both open positions. Same search committee is running both concurrently.
- iii. Shared Governance Town Hall was not well attended; this seems to be a trend overall for meetings on campus due to the impact of COVID. Can also be attributed to most frequent campus communications.

II. Reports

a. *CUSS Update – Paul*

- i. Advocacy Day held virtually this year. Members were grouped off with legislators for discussion, but the conversations were not solely focused on budget issues. Most legislators said they were going to support the Governor's budget.
- ii. Board of Regent award nominees have been submitted.

b. *Dr. Charles Wight*

i. COVID

1. In process of relaxing COVID restrictions – masks are required in classrooms and instructional areas, but in most areas masks are not required. Keeping masks in classrooms/instructional areas is an access issue; specifically due to the fact that students must go to classes for their education, and for those that are high-risk/immunocompromised, being able to attend should not be threatened by SU requirements.
2. USM is starting discussion regarding ending vaccination requirements in the future

ii. ODI

1. New diversity training required for those that will be on search committees. Will require robust training & tracking schedule to determine that someone is qualified to serve on a committee before they are appointed.

2. Required diversity training for anyone as Assistant Director level or higher will be going into effect.
3. President's Diversity & Inclusion Champion Award nomination process is ongoing; encouraged everyone to nominate individuals.

iii. Crime

1. Have had several incidents in the past weeks regarding altercations were shots were fired. Since they were off-campus, Salisbury City Police holds the responsibility to investigate these. However, since they have been in areas where students live and/or have had students involved, it is SU's responsibility to keep the campus informed, which is why notices have been going out to campus. SU Police and Salisbury City Police are in constant contact, and messages only go out to the campus when the SU community is affected.
2. "Zoom bomb" issue had to do with the fact that the link to the event was widely publicized, open to the public, and not hosted using a SU Zoom account, etc. IT has now created a sheet of suggested ways to keep Zoom meetings secure so that the risks of this type of incident happening again can be minimized. IT is also available to assist with the meeting set-up or any questions at any time.

III. Human Resources

a. *HR AVP, Lisa Lepore*

- i. Started in the role in January. Has been tasked initially with focus on the Campus Climate Study and addressing issues brought up in that study.
- ii. Top priority is hiring Compensation & Total Rewards Specialist for getting the work done on reclassifying employees and updating job description, as well as retention & job satisfaction.
- iii. Information regarding future merit increases will transmitted to staff once legislature approves the budget. How the funds will be distributed is still being reviewed by Executive Staff/HR.
- iv. Vanessa brought up the subject of SU's Employee of the Month. The process for nominations and selection is rather vague and mysterious, and there is no information regarding how the process works for the campus community, or feedback to those who nominate. Would like to have a Staff Senate member involved in the process to be able to give the process more transparency.
  1. Lisa will bring this information to the HR staff so they can consider the addition of a Staff Senate member and also providing more feedback to nominators on the process.
  2. Vanessa also mentioned possibility of providing a link to the nomination form on the Staff Senate website.
- v. Joe asked regarding how holidays are distributed for use during the year, since explanations regarding the reasons why the recommendations were not accepted did not have details as to why this was something that could not be accommodated. Staff Senate has multiple examples of other USM institutions being able to provide additional times off or other considerations based on the prerogative of the President/Executive Staff. Concerns were expressed that staff issues, especially regarding morale, are not being addressed.

b. *HR Talent & Organizational Development Specialist, Christine Benoit*

- i. Current projects:
  1. Onboarding program is upcoming; looking for input on that subject.
  2. Putting training together for the PMP process for supervisors & employees, as well as new supervisor training.
  3. Annual Service Awards scheduled in-person on April 8<sup>th</sup>.
  4. USM Training on April 28<sup>th</sup>; full day conference for administrative professionals.

5. Updating HR website with correct, up to date information that is more user friendly; revamping the New Employee section of the site to provide more comprehensive information that might be helpful for new hires to have.
6. Updating New Hire and New Hire Supervisor checklists.

IV. Old Business

*a. Current/Pending Recommendation Status*

i. Fee Structure for SU employees (Vanessa)

1. Discussion had with Lisa partially discussing reasoning behind recommendation – making it possible for more SU employees to attend the institution they work for, and keeping their tuition remission money within SU.

*b. Finalization of Bylaws*

- i. Bella put forth recommendation to increase number of non-exempt individuals on Staff Senate to more accurately reflect current campus community.

V. Adjournment

*a. Next Meeting – April 14, AC401 GAC Boardroom with virtual MS Teams option*