

**Staff Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 9, 2003, 2:30-4:30 p.m.**  
**S401 PBB**

**Present:** Christine Annicella, Ella Born, Julee Darner, Charlie Eastham, Susan Felker, David Fitzgerald, Julie Gilmore, Donna Hirst, Pamela Kacena, Hazel Kerr, Kathy Klein, Karon Kolek, Joy Kross, Mark Long, Dave Martin, Bonnie McIntosh, Donna Muller, Mary Lee Neuberger, Sara Nichols, Cheryl Reardon, Christine Remmert, Janice Simmons-Welburn, Rachelle Stewart, Jennifer Tucker, Jan Waterhouse, Rhonda Weaver, Michelle Wichman, Kathryn Wynes, Al Young

**Absent:** Matthew Anderson, Cheri Arneson, Anna Beadle, Vicki Brown, Jan Christensen, Wendy Ford, Jo Ann Franklin, Dongwang Liu, Deb Pfab, Sandra Reed, Rebecca Stamy, Jeffrey Wasson, Amy Welter, Jeanette Wigim

**Administrative Liaisons:**

Sue Buckley, AVP of Finance & University Services and Director of Human Resources (HR)  
Kevin Ward, Interim Associate Director of HR and Director of Employee and Labor Relations  
Richard Saunders, Assistant Director of Human Resources, Benefits

1. **The meeting was called to order at 2:35 p.m.**
2. **Review/approval of minutes**
  - a. 6/11/03 Staff Council meeting minutes were approved as presented.
  - b. Reviewed minutes from the 6/18/03 Executive Committee meeting and the 6/25/03 Executive Committee meeting with President Skorton.
3. **Comments/Regents report—Sue Buckley**
  - a. The Board of Regents (BOR) will meet next week at UNI. There will be two items on the docket that might be of interest to Staff Council: 1) Discussion of the University adding a technical position and; 2) Approval of the FY04 Budget.
  - b. Sue said that July 18<sup>th</sup> is the target date for posting salary letters on the self-service web site. She also said that a mass email would be distributed to notify employees of this.
  - c. Sue discussed a project that the senior HR leadership group would be undertaking, under the guidance of Bob Millsap. This group consists of lead HR reps from every division and college. The project is a review of the Professional & Scientific (P&S) generic job descriptions with the intent to make them more accurate. The project will include removing irrelevant descriptions; there are over 200 titles that we do not currently use. The group will modify the job titles kept to make them more current. And, the group will have the opportunity to suggest new job titles. Sue said this will be quite a lengthy process and they will welcome input from P&S staff through their lead HR rep.
  - d. Sue mentioned a new web-based campus wide learning opportunity. Skill Soft will be available beginning in September, at no charge, to all employees. Employees will be able to use the courses offered to enhance their professional development and they will be able to

access the program either at work or from their home. Sue suggested to Charlie Eastham that he might consider asking Maureen McCormick, HR Staff Development, to attend a Staff Council meeting to discuss the program. It was asked if an employee's department would be expected to allow that employee to access Skill Soft on work time. Sue said it would be a local decision, but they hope departments will be supportive of their employees and the program.

- e. Sue said that Workflow is on track for further improvements such as adding merit requisitions, P&S requisitions, and Affirmative Action forms and processes. They also hope to increase the number of areas that use Workflow to do their time reporting.
- f. Sue mentioned that this fall, HR Wellness will again be offering the three wellness programs offered previously: smoking cessation, stress reduction, and weight management. Sue said that 75% of the cost of the program would be waived if the participant completes the program. The program is open to employees who participate in the flex benefit program. Sue asked Councilors to encourage coworkers to participate in the programs and she also suggested having someone come to discuss the programs at a future Staff Council meeting.

#### **4. Staff Celebration Day report and planning for next year—Hazel Kerr**

Hazel encouraged Councilors to participate, and to ask coworkers to help, in the planning for next year's event. She would like to find ways to make it a more exciting event and suggested the possibility of asking for monetary support from departments. A Councilor inquired about having a Staff Council internal committee for Staff Celebration Day. Dave Martin mentioned that when Staff Council first had been approached to participate in the planning of the event, it had been discussed whether to have a standing committee or an ad hoc committee. Then it seemed that the Executive Committee (EC) took on the responsibility. Charlie Eastham believed this to be a good opportunity to initiate planning and seeking funds, with the hope to increase the quality of next year's event and to increase staff participation.

#### **5. Nominations for Professional Research representative**

Charlie Eastham reported we were unable to determine that anyone was a runner-up for a Staff Council seat in the Professional Research category in the last election. In an effort to fill a vacancy on Council created by Mary Freitag's resignation, Charlie called for nominations from the floor. One nomination was made to consider Mary Maher Sturm. There were no other nominations. Charlie closed nominations and asked Mark Long, Chair of the Elections Committee, to talk with Mary.

#### **6. CIC Professional & Academic Staff Conference Report—Michelle Wichman and Hazel Kerr**

Michelle and Hazel attended the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) Professional and Academic Staff Conference on June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. They distributed to Staff Councilors a report on that conference, a description of the CIC, and a draft of data compiled from a CIC Benefits Survey. Michelle briefly went over their report highlighting a few of the items discussed at the conference such as: descriptions of each university, reviewing the mission statement, reporting on salaries and benefits, and how staff are evaluated. During a short break later in this Staff Council meeting, there was a brief discussion of the CIC benefits survey and the support our Staff Council receives from University administration compared to peer institutions.

## 7. **Announcement**

Charlie Eastham mentioned that David Grady, Director of University Life Centers, had asked him to recommend a staff person to serve on the IMU Building & Design Advisory Team that will be involved with the plans for renovation of the IMU. Charlie asked Bonnie McIntosh if she would be willing to serve on the team and she agreed.

## 8. **Mandatory Health Insurance—Sue Buckley, Richard Saunders, Kevin Ward**

The Funded Retirement and Insurance Committee (FRIC) has raised the issue of mandatory health insurance with the question: "Should health insurance be made mandatory for all benefit eligible Faculty, P&S, and Supervisory Exempt staff?" Charlie Eastham provided an information sheet, "Mandatory Health Insurance," by email to all Staff Councilors. Sue Buckley explained that the FRIC recommendation was introduced to the Vice Presidents group last week, that it was briefly discussed at the recent Executive Committee meeting with President Skorton, and that the Staff Council Human Resources Committee also just discussed the idea. The Vice Presidents wanted to have the various constituent groups "weigh in" on the issue. Sue then asked Councilors for their comments or questions. Significant discussion ensued.

The information sheet listed three suppositions made as to how the University could lose productivity of an employee that does not have health insurance. It was asked how the University could support or verify these suppositions.

It was stated on the information sheet that there were approximately 1000 employees that do not have health insurance coverage with the University. It was asked, if and how the University could verify that the 983 married employees have health insurance coverage elsewhere and/or that the single employees do not have coverage (as assumed).

It was also asked how the University would respond if for whatever reason (i.e., monetary, religious, etc.) the employee simply chooses not to have health insurance. Richard Saunders stated that as the employer, the University could require an employee to have some sort of health insurance coverage as a condition of employment.

Some additional questions were asked. Would it be worth the cost to the University to investigate the various scenarios for those few single employees who seem to not have health insurance coverage and/or determine that the married employees do indeed have health insurance coverage elsewhere? Could this possibly raise an invasion of privacy issue? Could this matter be construed as the University demanding that its employees purchase the University's health insurance products?

Before moving on to the next agenda item, Sue Buckley asked if we could take a straw poll, just to know how Staff Councilors would vote for requiring health insurance as a condition of employment. Fifteen Councilors were in favor of requiring health insurance, four were not in favor, and nine were undecided.

## 9. **Background information regarding development of annual salary and health insurance cost sharing policies—VP Doug True and Sue Buckley**

VP True thinks the sequence of events will work very well. Administration will be meeting the end of this month with the Faculty/Staff Budget Committee and there will be a more robust meeting in about three months. He has heard the plans for a broader discussion at the September Staff Council meeting and believes this is a good idea. With regard to the current fiscal year and

what has happened: VP True said that there will be much more information available and sooner than in the past. Final close will be the end of June. At that time we will have the first estimate of health care costs and projections of employer's share of contributions for next year. VP True hopes for good communication between the Budget Committee and Staff Council. And the Executive Committee should be able to communicate pertinent information to Staff Council after meeting with President Skorton. VP True believes that there will be tradeoffs between salaries and health care costs because these are such dominating factors, and they are inevitably connected. Generally, benefits are more important to retain employees while salaries are used to recruit. Approval by the Board of Regents is another important step when adopting any policies. VP True said that he believes administration has made it clear that they are committed to improving the situation. VP True asked for comments or questions. A short discussion followed.

10. **Adjourned** at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ella Born, Staff Council Secretary