

STAFF SENATE MINUTES
April 16, 2009

The Staff Senate General Meeting was called to order by James Perkins at 9:00 a.m. in the Hurlburt Student Center Combo Room.

Senators and Alternates Present: James Perkins, Kathy Nester, Sandra Steele, Pam Caldwell, Sandra Long, Bobby Bell, Cheryl Myers, Betty Smith and Rhonda McKroskey.

Senators Excused: Jo Thomas, Connie Phillips.

Number of other attendees: 41 – *List to be made available upon request.*

Determination of a quorum was made.

There was a moment of silence acknowledging Virginia Tech and April 16.

Motion submitted by Sandra Steele, seconded by Kathy Nester, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Motion submitted by Cheryl Myers, seconded by Bobby Bell, to approve the recorded minutes from the March 19, 2009 general meeting. Motion carried.

James Perkins introduced speakers of the month, President, Penelope Kyle and Provost, Wilbur Stanton. Dr. Stanton opened the floor for questions.

Questions and answers:

- 1) When will the salary adjustments be made as a result of the 2008 Classified Staff Compensation Study?
By the end of May Human Resources will meet with supervisors of employees involved. Then supervisors will meet with the employees. There will be a two step process; 1) Individual lump sum payment in one paycheck to bring the employee within their pay range; 2) New level of pay will be reflected in a second and ongoing paychecks. President Kyle stated that following these adjustments the next step will be to identify other positions that may need to be addressed. AP Faculty has asked for a similar study. A suggestion was made to repost the Classified Staff study on the Human Resources website. What if adjustments are rejected? President Kyle asked Larry Ashby to inform her if any adjustments are rejected.

- 2) When will decisions for the Program Review process be made?
Dr. Stanton stated that the decisions are 99.9% done. He plans to meet with the deans on Monday and Tuesday, prior to the Board of Visitors meeting.
- 3) What is the projected enrollment for next year? The data is mixed. Dr. Debra Templeton provides the Provost's office with data daily. At present we have fewer applications than in 2006. The freshman class isn't getting larger. There is a trend of more continuing and transfer students, and a greater number of families are paying deposits.
- 4) Is community college enrollment increasing? They are seeing more in the first two years. Junior and Senior transfers and continuing student numbers at Radford University are up more compared to the freshman class. Dr. Steven W. Nape the new Vice Provost for Enrollment Planning and Management begins May 4th. Dr. Nape will concentrate on bringing in new students based on programs and resources rather than a number.
- 5) Is there a cap on the number of students we can have on campus? The number is 10,000. A master planner report to the Board of Visitors next week is expected to convey the need for more land if our needs go beyond current plans for 2 new academic buildings, a new fitness center, and 1 new resident hall. Dr. Stanton encouraged employees to tour Young Hall when completed. It will be a state-of-the-art facility designed for changing student populations over the next 20-30 years.
- 6) Will the stimulus money rejected by the state effect higher education? No. Stimulus money received by higher education is a separate one-time pay. The money should be spent on one-time items and cannot be spent on personnel unless they are considered "restricted employees" (12-18 months) by the state, e.g., athletics, etc. This does not include contracted employees. The \$55 million dollars received by the University must be spent by June 30, 2010. A committee of students, staff and faculty has been formed to gather suggestions. Expenditures are approved by the state after-the-fact. It helps to mitigate tuition and fee increases. Money can be used for "shovel ready" construction only. For example, if the fitness center were under construction we could use the money for that and offsetting student fees. We cannot use the money for the new business school because it is in planning stages.

- 7) Where are we in the budget process? The budget will not be determined until after the Board of Visitors meeting next week. Tuition and fees for 2009-10 will be determined at that time.
- 8) What are the numbers like for summer school? Not looking as strong this year as in the past.
- 9) What is Radford University doing about the negative press being received? Some of the negative press is based on misinformation. e.g., referral to Radford University being historically a liberal arts school when it was chartered in 1910 as a Normal and Industrial School for Women. There was negative publicity about program review when the state mandates review of all programs every five years. What Radford University did was not atypical to other colleges and universities. A recent protest involving the Physics program being cut was due to misinformation when the department was already advised that it would continue. There have been questions about why we continue construction in these economic times. Building money is awarded by the state and if not used it will be taken back. It's separate from operating money and cannot be transferred to different budgets or building projects. We all have to work together to communicate better and to continue to make things better.
- 10) Has the Provost's office website collected further suggestions regarding program review or budget? Not really. Generally it's been the same questions. The Provost's office welcomes ideas for better overall communication and to reach changing student populations, e.g. Facebook, texting, etc.
- 11) Do you foresee any staffing cuts? At this time - no. Costs will be eliminated by cutting already vacant positions or not filling recently vacated positions. 22-24 faculty positions will not be filled next year.
- 12) What about raises? State employee raises are under the control of the General Assembly. The vote was no for 2009-10.
- 13) Can you help with Housekeeping access to buildings? Department heads give access to employees by listing the employees name and buildings access is needed. A list of employees needing access was made. James Perkins will contact department heads. It takes less than one hour to process and activate.
- 14) With the freeze on raises employees are concerned about an increase in health benefits. The perception is if employees have to pay more in benefits they take a loss that can never be made up. Can administration help? President Kyle stated she will convey to DHRM and the Governor to make a suggestion to the General Assembly to cover any increases. Larry

Ashby reported that information about open enrollment information sessions and changes in plans was just received. Sessions begin tomorrow. Employees will receive email information later today.

- 15) A suggestion was made to provide athletic season ticket sales via payroll deduction. President Kyle will take this back for further consideration.
- 16) Where are we with the Registrar search? There is none. Dr. Steven W. Nape, Vice Provost for Enrollment Planning and Management begins May 4. A Registrar and Admissions search may occur after he is on board.
- 17) Is Housekeeping staff eligible for the 4 – 10 hour work days in the summer? Yes as authorized by your supervisor, realizing there may be exceptions in some areas but not as an entirety. The rules are: 1) The 4 – 10 work days was not intended to provide 3 day weekends. 2) Scheduled days off are rotated from week to week.
- 18) What about Telecommuting? The University is looking at telecommuting, e.g. what jobs can be done from home, supervisor approval, and is the employee a self-starter.
- 19) Is the campus bus operating in the summer? No. It never runs in the summer due to low utilization. Is it free to staff? Yes, on campus and within the campus loop. President Kyle discussed a free study conducted by transit consultants hired by the state and federal government. The consultants will determine transportation needs at Radford University and in Radford City.
- 20) Will recently vacated Housekeeping positions be filled? President Kyle has not received any hiring requests.
- 21) Why with economic times is VDOT giving out bonuses? Positions involving public safety fall into a different category,
- 22) Why the name change for Quest? Change to add summer orientation or new student orientation. Students and family members typically seek information based on this. Although the University community understands “Quest”, the external brand is not seen.
- 23) A website designer position is out to bid to work on the Radford University website.

Reports from Standing Committees

- a. Policies & Issues – no report.
- b. Elections and Nominations – A handout of the Senate Office Elections Process was distributed to include a list of senators eligible for nomination/election as officers in 2009-2010. Those eligible include, Sandra Steele, Betty Smith, Cheryl Myers, Sandra Long, Roland Beland, Pam Caldwell, Bobby Bell, Jo Thomas, Anita Woodyard-Dodson, Cindy Eller, Robert Underwood, Don Bowman, Cassandra Dove, and Samuel Shumate. Kathy Nester reported that nominations will be accepted following the Staff Senate meeting. Based on nominations received an election will be held at the May 21 Staff Senate meeting. Nominations should be submitted to a member of the Elections and Nomination Committee, Connie Phillips, Kathy Nester, Keith Crowder, Cheryl Myers, and Roland Beland.
- c. Communications – no report.
- d. Staff and Relations – no report.

Reports from University-wide Committees

Due to time constraints reports were tabled until the May meeting.

Old Business

- a. Staff Senator Retreat will be held on April 30th from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Muse Banquet Room. The theme is “Living in a Kermit World: Change – *It's Not Easy*. Guest speakers include, Dr. Patricia Easterling and Ms. Donna Spradlin. Dr. Easterling provided a copy of the book she will be speaking about asking Senators to review before the retreat. James Perkins will be sending that to senators via email.
- b. Summer Hours, Picnic, and RU Day – James Perkins reported that the AP/ Staff Senate picnic for May 14, observance of summer hours, and RU Day Fridays was approved by administration.

New Business

- a. Centennial Updates – James Perkins introduced Barbara Lynn Morris, Co-Chair of the Radford University Centennial Committee. On March 10, 1910 a charter was signed for the State Normal and Industrial School for Women at Radford. Radford University will be celebrating 100 years in 2010. Ms. Morris explained that the objective of the Centennial Committee is to engage the campus community and alumni to enhance a culture of service and celebrate this important milestone. A centennial website is being designed by Dr. Kovarik. It will provide an interactive map to highlight ongoing service on campus and around the world. Ideas for centennial events are being sought. A form to propose ideas will be posted on the upcoming centennial website. As an example, University Advancement is working on a cookbook. 100 signature events will be established toward the end of 2009. Ms. Morris thanked Staff Senate for having her stating, “Staff Senate is the

most organized group on campus.” James Perkins thanked Ms. Morris and encouraged current and incoming senators and alternates attending the Staff Senator retreat on April 30 to bring event ideas to share during a goal setting period. Information collected will be provided to Ms. Morris.

Comments & Announcements

- a. There was a suggestion to invite President Kyle to a future meeting.
- b. A suggestion was made to post flyer reminders of Staff Senate meetings.
- c. In a brief update on the ad hoc child care committee it was noted that the survey is still pending. Faculty Senate has taken over the request. A campus environment committee is working to bring child care to Radford University.
- d. Next Meeting – May 21, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., Hurlburt Student Center, Combo Room.

Adjournment: - Motion by Cheryl Myers, seconded by Kathy Nester to adjourn.
Motion carried.

*/s/Sandra Steele, Acting-Recording Secretary
Minutes pending review and approval.*