MINUTES
UW-Madison University Staff Executive Committee
09.17.15


Members Absent: None

Others Present: J. Rebholz, K. Kaplan, P. Sheehan, A. Rivkin, T. Check, D. Bazzell, S. Fowler

At 2:00PM, Chair Kutz, called the meeting to order and directed the attention of the committee members to the draft Minutes of the previous meeting.

Ms. Czynszak-Lyne moved, seconded by Mr. Pond, to approve the Minutes of the previous meeting. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Chair Kutz paused to accept public comments. Mr. Fritter cited examples of entry level positions advertised in the current classified ads of local newspapers that indicated a higher weekend and night differential than is available at the UW-Madison. Mr. Fritter noted that this week marked the anniversary of the founding of the Occupy Wall Street movement in 2011 and the anniversary of the publication of Upton Sinclair’s book, ‘The Jungle’, which while intended to illustrate the poor conditions of industrial workers, had the ultimate effect of leading to regulations regarding food safety.

Chair Kutz recognized the Secretary for a report. Secretary reported that the office had received compliments on the Blog in the past week from different parts of the campus community.

Chair Kutz provided a report that the statewide shared governance council of University Staff expressed interest if the Madison campus were to pass a resolution regarding fetal tissue/stem cell line research.

Chair Kutz recognized Mr. Jake Rebholz regarding the next Congress meeting. Mr. Rebholz reviewed the agenda and noted the action items that were scheduled.

Chair Kutz recognized Ms. Kayla Kaplan and Ms. Ariel Rivkin of the Associated Students of Madison for the purpose of providing a report regarding their priorities in shared governance for the upcoming year. ASM representatives provided an overview of the structure of their shared governance organization and also provided an update on the progress of the food pantry for students, which is operated out of the Student Activities Center. The pantry is staffed by three student employees. Question was raised if the pantry accepted cash donations. Reply came that for the time being they are focusing on non-perishable food item donations. Question was raised if the student employees are paid according to the Living Wage. Reply was in the negative, noting that they are paid above the minimum wage but not up to the Living Wage. Discussion was heard that the Living Wage was not intended to apply to student labor.

In regard to fetal tissue and stem cell line research the ASM representatives noted that while they support ethical and responsible research no resolution regarding the proposed legislation was planned.
at this time. Details were provided by the ASM representatives regarding shared governance financing and the administration of student fee for student organizations.

The ASM representatives were excused with the thanks of the committee.

Chair Kutz recognized Ms. Hilmanowski for the purpose of opening a discussion on the meeting structure and schedule of the Executive Committee. Discussion was heard that the content of the agendas do not merit a regular weekly meeting or that meetings be scheduled for as long as they are. Discussion was heard that the option is always available to adjourn early. Concern was raised regarding the perceived fractionalization of the committee itself. Discussion was heard that fractions are not viewed as unproductive in the setting of the committee. Reply came that some meetings have bordered on the uncivil. Discussion was heard that strong opinions are not to be viewed as unproductive as long as the comments do not become personal. Discussion was heard that the committee was purposely set up to include different voices. Reply came that different opinions are not unwelcome but unprofessional behavior is.

Chair Kutz opened discussion regarding shared governance structures. An updated chart was provided regarding the various models and a handout was provided regarding a new proposal as it is related to the organization of an Executive Committee. Discussion was heard regarding candidacy requirements, as well as composition of the electorate.

Mr. Whitesel arrived.

Discussion was heard that the more complex the structure is the greater chance of a decrease in both candidate and voter participation. Discussion was heard regarding the scheduling of the election. Discussion was heard regarding the merit of seats designated by employment category. Discussion was heard in favor of a campus wide electorate for the Executive Committee as a way to ensure representation. Discussion was heard that the equal opportunity exists for anyone to either run or vote for Congressional Representatives who can then be trusted to choose an Executive Committee of their own. Discussion was heard regarding voting methods and procedures was heard. Discussion was heard that voting in the workplace has potential to lead to interference from others as opposed to having ballots mailed to homes.

Chair Kutz recognized the Congressional Liaison for input. Liaison replied that by his estimation the option among the presented models most likely to be acceptable to Congress would be # 1, in which the Executive Committee was comprised and elected by members of Congress. Concern was expressed that in other models, groups from outside Congress could put a person into Congress that has full voting rights in Congress.

Discussion was heard that latest model lacks clarity and is overly complicated. Discussion was heard that a campus wide vote ensures that everyone is represented. Reply came that everyone has a chance to select their own Congressional Representative and those vacant seats are a sign of lack of participation rather than of disenfranchisement.
Thanks were extended to Chair Kutz for facilitating the conversation and the value of differing opinions on the subject was noted.

Question was raised as to the role of the Executive Committee and if it was to be ‘internal’ or ‘external’. If external, the question was asked, “How does it fit with Congress?” Response came that hybrid models in this regard are problematic. Discussion was heard of an Executive Committee that would be external and independent but without a vote in the Congress.

Chair welcomed Vice Chancellor Darrell Bazzell and recognized Congressional Representatives Tricia Check and Sandra Fowler.

The Congressional Representatives noted that after a recent District meeting, some of their constituents inquired as to the status of allowing for University Staff representation on workplace decision making bodies. Congressional Representatives inquired of the Vice Chancellor if it may be possible to communicate directly, preferably in writing, from the campus leadership to the Schools and Divisions that such representation ought to be recognized and encouraged.

Vice Chancellor Bazzell noted that such a communication should not be necessary, as such invitations to serve should be extended to all staff, and he cannot mandate that University Staff be included on all workplace decision making bodies, but that he would communicate his sentiments on the issue.

Discussion was heard that there would be a high value of a communication in this regard coming from campus leadership.

Vice Chancellor noted the upcoming Fall Leadership Breakfast where Regent President Regina Millner will be the invited speaker.

At 4:05pm, Chair Kutz entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Hilmanowski, seconded by Mr. Pond. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes prepared and submitted by: J. Lease / Secretary