MINUTES

UW-Madison University Staff Congress

7.20.15

All members recorded as ‘present’ with the following exceptions:

Excused Absent: J. Priebe (118), C. Corbet (125), C. Butterbaugh (129), T. Hogensen (154), B. Shore (168), B. Timm (173), H. Udelhoven (203), B. Petters (USEC – 3)

Absent: K. Woelke (136), M. Adem (139), M. Jacobson (141), M. Diebold (149), J. Zamora (144), T. Witte (151)

In addition, 8 Alternates were present.

At 2:30PM, in the absence of Vice Chancellor Bazzell, Provost Mangelsdorf called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum was present.

Provost Mangelsdorf paused to accept public comments. None sought recognition.

Provost Mangelsdorf took the opportunity under the ‘Vice Chancellors Report’ to welcome members who were attending their first Congress meeting and to thank those who returned for a second term. Provost Mangelsdorf noted that the State Budget process is now complete and recommend members examine the university website on this topic for up to date information. Provost Mangelsdorf noted that HR Design policies are now being implemented and thanked Congress for their recommendations in regard to suggested changes in the policy drafts. Provost Mangelsdorf repeated the commitment of the university to implement a ‘Living Wage’ for campus employees.

(Applause heard in the hall)

Provost Mangelsdorf recognized Mr. Russell Kutz, for the purpose of providing a report from the Executive Committee.

Mr. Kutz noted that packets were still available for those who unable to attend the orientation session. Mr. Kutz welcomed the participation of members of Congress at the public meetings of the Executive Committee. Mr. Kutz introduced Mr. Jake Rebholz and Mr. Peter Schneider, candidates for the post of Congressional Liaison.

(Applause heard in the hall)

Mr. Kutz recognized Ms. Linda Meinholz, for the purpose of providing a report from the Congressional HR Design Policy Advisory Committee. Ms. Meinholz reviewed the action that took place at the meeting of 30 June, and introduced the members of the committee in addition to herself; Nathan Maney, Terry Fritter, Tom Handland, and Lucas Zeimet. (Applause heard in the hall) Ms. Meinholz noted that as a result of the meeting, two additional amendments that had been previously proposed by Congress, were adopted by the Administration. Ms. Meinholz read aloud a letter from Vice Chancellor Darrell
Bazzell that praised the work of the committee and the productivity of the meeting. (Applause heard in the hall).

Provost Mangelsdorf recognized Mr. Jeff Novak, Director of Housing, for a report regarding the work of his Division.

Mr. Novak informed the audience that he was pleased to be able to address the Congress on the occasion of his one year anniversary with the UW-Madison (applause heard in the hall) and provided details regarding his own professional and personal background. Mr. Novak described working with University Staff as “an honor” and thanked his predecessor for his service to the campus and the division. Mr. Novak provided some statistics regarding the work load of the division, noting that the Division serves 7,400 undergraduate students in 19 halls and 3,000 residents in apartment communities. The staff responds to an average of 70 work orders a day. Over the summer, 120 groups utilize campus housing with over 17,000 guests attending. Mr. Novak informed the Congress that the budget of the division is $86 million which is generated by food revenue and rent. Mr. Novak noted that employees in his division were recognized for an Administrative Improvement Award regarding the recycling and move-out reuse program. Mr. Novak provided some details regarding the capital master plan, including the renovation of the ‘Liz Waters’ building. Mr. Novak also noted the importance of campus childcare. Mr. Novak concluded his remarks by noting that the success of the division is credited to the dedication of the staff.

Representative of District 130 made an inquiry regarding a perceived discrepancy in how managers in Housing are communicating a policy to employees.

Reply came that that matter will be reviewed and responded to.

Representative of District 103 inquired what the role is of the division in regard to construction on campus.

Reply came that day to day construction management falls to capital projects and facilities, Director remains involved regarding the budget and the prioritization of needs.

Representative of District 101 inquired as to the status of the revamping of the alcohol policy.

Reply came that a 45 day initiative was launched with 4 campus partners to break the drinking culture in terms of access, acceptability and availability. The initiative was described as having positive results. Director noted that drinking in residence halls far exceeds the national average.

Representative of District 161 inquired as to use of student fees in the Housing Division budget.

Reply came that the Division does not utilize student fees for revenue, only rent, dining, and summer conference fees are used. Reply also came that in the Big Ten, campus rent rates are among the lowest.
Representative of CSEC seat 4 stated that, in response to a notation of the Director that increased energy and food costs has an impact on housing rents, that under the same circumstances an increase for the lowest wage workers, many of whom are in the Housing Division, should receive consideration.

Mr. Novak thanked the members of Congress for the invitation to appear and invited ongoing communication with his office. (Applause heard in the hall).

Provost Mangelsdorf opened discussion on ‘Action Items’ as listed on the agenda.

Representative of District 132 moved to change the name of the ‘Classified Staff Congress’ to the ‘University Staff Congress’. A second to the motion was heard. No discussion was heard. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Provost noted that members of Congress would receive paper ballots via inter-d mail in regard to the election for the post of Congressional Liaison and therefore a motion to approve the appointment of the Congressional Liaison would not be in order as there was more than one candidate.

Representative of District 161 moved to create a Congressional Communications Committee to be comprised of 5 members of the University Staff, nominated by the Nominations Committee and confirmed by the Executive Committee, with terms to expire 1 July 2016. A second to the motion was heard. No discussion was heard. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Representative of District 161 moved to create a Professional Development and Tuition Committee to consist of 5 members of the University Staff, nominated by the Nominations Committee and confirmed by the Executive Committee, with terms to expire 31 July 2016. A second to the motion was heard. No discussion was heard. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Provost Mangelsdorf recognized the Congressional Liaison for the purpose of accepting District Reports and suggestions for future agenda items.

Representative of District 124 noted that they have emailed their constituents without getting much in the way of responses.

Reply came that it is not unusual for the emails of Representatives to generate little in way of replies and that the Communications Committee will be tasked with addressing more effective means and messaging in communications with constituents.

Representative of District 174 suggested that Districts of similar constituencies should meet in conjunction with one another for District meetings.

Reply came that there has been some success in the past with joint District meetings and that Representatives are free to organize Districts meetings in the way that they deem to be most effective.

Representative of USEC Seat 5 described the success of the outreach conducted by the Representative of District 152 who approached the Department Head for cooperation and assistance in setting up the time and space for a District meeting.
Reply came that if reasonable flexibility in the workplace is not granted in order to hold a District meeting, Representatives should reach out to HR or anyone in the shared governance leadership to address the issue.

Representative of District 162 expressed concern regarding getting information to those members of the University Staff who are in districts without representation.

Reply came that this issue should be brought before the Communications Committee as well as the Executive Committee and the Secretary’s office.

Representative of District 194 suggested utilizing ‘Box’ technology to encourage information sharing with constituents and with each other.

Representative of USEC Seat 5 encouraged those in un-represented districts to participate in shared governance by sharing their ideas through the public comments section which appears on each agenda of every University Staff shared governance meeting, including the Congress.

Reply came that a variety of different plans have been considered regarding how to address vacant districts but the analysis of such plans has always had to take into account not creating a rival system to the election schedule already successfully in place.

Representative of District 109 suggested informing all University Staff of the content of scheduled Congress meetings.

Representative of District 166 suggested adding to the shared governance website a message of encouragement for those in vacant districts to take part in ‘public comments’.

Representative of District 133 proposed a possible workplace ‘suggestion box’ type arrangement to get feedback, and to designate specific times in the workplace in which one can communicate between constituent and Representative.

Representative of District 112 noted that people are not familiar with either their District number or the names of their Representative and greater outreach is needed in this regard.

Reply came that the Communications Committee will focus on such outreach.

Representative of District 108 inquired if there is a possibility of combining districts.

Reply came that it has not been ruled out.

Representative of District 170 inquired if it is forbidden for elected Representatives to include those on their mailing list who are in vacant districts.

Reply came that there is no written policy to prohibit such communication but caution is advised that such communication doesn’t lead to confusion among constituents as to what District they are in and who their Representative is.
Representative of District 122 stated their belief that the subject of vacant districts merits its own committee.

Representative of District 109 inquired as to how suggestions for agenda items are evaluated.

Reply came that the Liaison attempts to prioritize agenda items based on demand.

Representative of USEC Seat 4 made an inquiry regarding Congressional support for a committee dedicated to the topic of district vacancies.

At the Direction of the Parliamentarian, Provost Mangelsdorf cautioned the body that any displays of a ‘vote’ in terms of applause, raising hands, or similar gestures would be out of order in this regard.

Congressional Liaison concluded the agenda item by requesting those with suggestions for future agendas, and in particular those who support the creation of a committee to address Congressional District vacancies, contact him directly. (Applause heard in the hall).

Provost Mangelsdorf recognized Mr. Brian Vaughan, of the UW-Madison Office of Legal Affairs, for the purpose of providing a briefing regarding the draft policy on Hostile and Intimidating Behaviors.

Mr. Vaughan noted that the Faculty and Academic staff had previously adopted such a policy and noted the challenge of a public entity that recognizes First Amendment protections to address bullying. Mr. Vaughan then provided key details of the policy which covers such areas as written or spoken abusive expressions, intimidating gestures, inclusion and isolation that hinders work or harms reputation, sabotaging someone’s work, and abuse of authority. Mr. Vaughan noted that existing laws regarding race, gender, and age have limitations and are different from the type of material covered by the policy under discussion.

Representative of USEC Seat 1 inquired if there is a note regarding timeliness of beginning the informal process of a bullying complaint.

Reply was in the negative, but it was noted that sooner is better.

Representative of USEC Seat 1 inquired about the role of the 7 steps of Just Cause in regard to this policy.

Reply came that the 7 steps would be used if dismissal was sought and it was noted that the policies that apply come from the work category from which the perpetrator belong to.

Representative of USEC Seat 1 inquired about time limits as it relates to grievance filings and if a written complaint and a grievance could be filled in combination with each other?

Reply came that it is suggested to hold the grievance until the other action is pursued.

Representative of District 110 inquired if the informal process referenced in the policy applies only to University Staff.
Reply was in the affirmative with the notation that it is nearly identical to the other two, Faculty and Academic staff.

Representative of District 110 inquired if the consequences differ greatly between the various staffs.

Reply was in the negative.

Representative of District 124 expressed concerns regarding consistency of the policy language. Representative noted that it currently seems faculty and academic staff have different work rules from university staff. Or at least, if they do have such prohibited conduct rules, the misconduct by faculty and academic staff is not being consistently reported.

Reply was that the goal is to maintain a consistency between the effects of the policy across the various staffs.

Representative of District 103 made a procedural inquiry regarding the ability of Representatives to make motions, particularly as it related to the request to add items to future agendas.

Parliamentarian provided clarification regarding the need for motions to be related to listed agenda items slated for action, in order to comply with open meetings laws.

Representative of District 133 expressed concern regarding the vagueness of the language and suggested the solution to such problems would be more training and less focus on punitive measures.

Reply came that the point of the policy is to avoid Part II, Sections 1 and 2 of the policy and that ideally the issues will be addressed by employees invoking the parameters of the policy. Training will also make others aware of the areas addressed in the policy.

Representative of District 174 moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes. A second to the motion was heard. No discussion was heard. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Representative of District 174 expressed concern regarding witnesses raising issues rather than the actual victim in a bullying situation.

Reply came that nothing precludes a group of observers or bystanders from taking issues to an HR representative, but HR would have to follow up with the individual in question to verify.

Representative of USEC Seat 5 expressed concern that a person may put themselves at risk if a complaint was filed against a person who can affect wages. It was further suggested that a flaw exists in both the Performance Management Policy as well as the Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policy.

Reply came that despite it’s imperfections, the policy is preferable to none at all.

Representative of District 133 stated their agreement with the analysis of the Representative of USEC Seat 5.

Reply came that reminded the audience of the availability of the OMBUDS office as a resource.
Representative of District 109 stated that employees need more information about how to pursue such complaints and that they have found it difficult to understand the appropriate processes and that the necessary mechanisms to resolve issues in a timely manner is lacking.

Reply came that one of the tools that has been lacking has been a policy of this type.

Representative of District 110 stated that confidentiality is a key element when pursuing the OMBUDS office or EAP.

Mr. Vaughan thanked the body for their interest in the policy and for their questions. (Applause heard in the hall).

At 4:11pm a motion to adjourn was heard. A second to the motion was heard. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes were prepared and submitted by: J. Lease / Secretary