

STAFF Senate

Santa Clara University

Staff Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, March 19, 2009

Time: 11:15 – 12:00

Place: Benson Center, Parlor C

Present: Jim Rowan, Lorraine Alibi, Susan Babbel, Chad Benzel, Marquita Coe, Kari Craighead, Diane Cranor, Sam Florio, Jessica Gagnon, Joe Guidace, Christina Johnson, Phil Livak, Nikole Nichols, Sandra Renteria (for Alma McChesney), Apryl Roberts, Arcelia Rodriguez, Mary Sexton, Jenny Stoddard, and Julie Stone.

1. Approval of Prior Minutes

We approved the minutes from the January and February 2009 meetings.

2. President's Reports—Jim

a. Jim reported on his March 18th meeting with Bob Warren:

i. Tuition Remission

No decisions have been made that would change tuition remission benefits. A recent Benefits Committee report recommends no change to tuition benefits, but ranks possible changes in the following order, from possible to least acceptable: 1) imposing a three-year waiting period for graduate student tuition remission; 2) eliminating tuition benefits for spouses; 3) reducing the tuition benefit from 100% to 80%.

Retroactive changes that would affect those currently receiving tuition remission benefits are unlikely.

Changes to the tuition remission program for dependent children are least acceptable and least likely.

Representatives from the Benefits Committee have been invited to the next Staff Senate meeting. A special newsletter is planned to dispel misunderstandings regarding changes.

ii. Layoffs of Term Employees?

While the University is not laying people off, there are two categories of people who may no longer be working here.

Term employees are hired for a specific length of time: e.g., one year. When the existing terms end, the University is reviewing each position to determine whether the employee should be hired for an additional term. Some people have not been offered employment for an additional term.

People who contract with the University to work on a specific project are not considered “employees.” When the project is completed, the contractual working relationship also ends.

iii. Staff Faire

Next September’s Staff Faire has not been canceled, but will probably be scaled back.

iv. Occasional Parking Passes for Bicyclists

Jim and Bob discussed the Staff Senate’s efforts to obtain occasional parking passes for bicycle commuters.

3. Committee Updates

a. Elections—Susan and Jim

i. General Election—

Susan reported on preparations for the Staff Senate election in April. HR has assigned a small number of staff members to more than one department. Susan has been contacting these employees to determine which department they should vote from.

1. Reassignment of Business And Finance Department to University Administration group

The Business and Finance Department had been incorrectly assigned to the Business School group for the last Staff Assembly election. Reassignment to the University Administration group was passed without objection.

b. Communications—Jessica and Tom

Jessica is planning the next newsletter for after the April election, to include results.

c. Events—Arcelia and Apryl

i. Health & Wellness Faire-roundup

The February Health & Wellness Faire cost about \$2000.

ii. Staff Recognition Event Status

Arcelia plans to meet with Carrie Grasser to discuss this year's Staff Recognition Event. Jim will check on changes, if any, to Staff Recognition Awards this year.

d. Community Service Projects—Kari

Kari reported that 23 people have signed up so far for the March 28th Community Service project at Guadalupe River Park.

A second project, Restoration Work Day, is scheduled for April 4th at the Ulistac Natural Area Restoration and Education Project.

4. Bicyclist Parking Permits—Mary

See above regarding Jim's meeting with Bob Warren on March 18th. The Committee met with Charlie Arolla in December and received a response from Charlie on March 17th rejecting the committee's proposal. The committee will draft a counter-proposal and try to enlist the support of other campus groups.

5. Staff Volunteer Award Program—Diane

Diane will distribute information about the award in the Spring Quarter, clarifying the difference between Staff Recognition awards and the Staff Volunteer award.

6. Blue Star Mothers of America Request—Marquita

The Blue Star Mothers, a group of parents with children serving in the military, would like to place barrels on campus to collect paperback books, etc., to send to those serving overseas. Marquita will refer them to other campus groups, such as Campus Ministry, the Ignatian Center, or ROTC, because the Staff Senate isn't the appropriate organization to organize the effort. Jessica suggested we ask whether the group needed volunteers to assemble care packages because Staff Senate could organize a volunteer effort if needed.

7. Tuition Remission Discussion

See above regarding Jim's meeting with Bob Warren on March 18th. Jim noted that no changes have been made and no changes could take effect before 2010. A question was raised about vested tuition benefits for people who have worked for the University for 20 years.

8. Flea Market—Susan

At the March Executive meeting, Susan proposed that the Staff Senate sponsor a flea market on a summer weekend. She's been investigating possible dates and has contacted Campus Safety about using the Leavey parking lot.

9. Other business—Senators

There was a discussion of dogs on campus. They have recently been banned from the playing fields. Posted signs and a campus-wide e-mail were suggested to inform the campus. Campus Safety can be called about any dog that is not under its owner's control.

Arcelia asked about out-of-date mailing lists and campus-wide distribution of glossy university publications when one copy per department would probably be sufficient. That led to a discussion of online mailing lists. Groupwise is apparently updated much less frequently than People Soft.