

University of Southern Maine
Professional Staff Senate
Meeting Minutes for
Wednesday, March 3, 2004
2pm - 4pm, 11 Baxter Boulevard, Portland Campus

I. Attendance: Meeting was called to order at 2:10pm

Present: Sharon Bannon, Donna Bird, Joy Britting, Robin Day, Dana Gray, Sheera LaBelle, Joyce Lapping, Pat Marston, Mark Menezes, Kathleen Pease, Thomas Wood, Sara Treible.

Excused: Sondra Bogdonoff, Norma Charette, Kat Schorr.

Absent: Casandra Fitzherbert, Anita Higgins, Pamela Roy.

II. Acceptance of the January 7, 2004 and February 4, 2004 Minutes.

January 7 minutes accepted after changing a spelling error to Pat Marston's name from Marton.

February 4 minutes accepted as submitted.

III. President's Office Report

Beth Shorr reported that the USM community is invited to attend the USM Café, to be held in the Field House. She also reported that the university is engaged with Community Counseling (a fund raising firm) to examine possible fund raising projects aimed at the greater area community. Also the university will be using the architect group EYP to work with the City on behalf of the University to update the Portland Campus Master Plan. At this time Senator Gray, who sits on the committee for Portland Campus Master Planning and Overlay Zone asked if a member of the Senate would be interested in attending meetings of this committee as a representative of the Professional Staff Senate. Senator Wood said he would do so and Senator Marston offered to as well if Senator Wood is unable to attend any of the meeting.

IV. Executive Committee

a. Updates from Chair

Senator Day offered information about Dr. Gerry McKenna from the University of Ulster. Dr. McKenna will be presenting "The University's Role in Northern Ireland's Economy." Senator Day submitted a welcome packet to be sent to new senators after the next election. The Chair asked that senators submit a biography to the co-secretaries to be posted on the ProSen website. Time will be allotted during the next meeting, if necessary for senators to submit their biographies. Senator Day announced that Senator Warsinsky will be leaving the University and has resigned from the Senate. This Senate as suffered an unprecedented number of resignations due to staff leaving USM. Beth Shorr said she will bring this to President Pattenaude's attention. Senator Day asked the Senate to think about whether or not it should continue the News Letter. She will bring this up again at the next meeting under Old Business. Senator Day also asked the Senate to consider a retreat in the summer. This retreat would take the place of the regular business meeting introducing new senators to the Senate. The retreat would include an opportunity for the Senate to discuss it's meaning and priorities. Senator Wood

suggested, that like USM as a whole, the Senate should plan an outline looking at the Senates projected interests over the next several years.

b. Treasurer's Report

Senator Marston reported that \$50.19 was spent on the printing of the nomination memo and labels. It is projected that an equal or slightly greater amount will be spent on follow up flyers and ballots. \$849.81 remains in the treasury.

V. Committee Reports/Updates

a. Elections Committee

Senator Bird presented sample ballots for the upcoming election. The ballots will be color coded for ease in counting. Nominations are still needed in order to have enough candidates to fill open seats. The Chair encouraged the Senate to speak with co-workers about serving on the Senate. Senator Wood asked if “virtual meetings” might be used to make Senate meetings more convenient for members off-campus. He offered the facilities of the Muskie School for such meetings. The Senate agreed that this might be a viable way to meet on occasion. Lewiston/Auburn Campus may not have the technology for such meetings.

b. Bylaws Committee

Senate Bylaws have been updated and the committee has disband.

c. Communication Committee

A link to *Transforming USM* has been added to the ProSen Homepage.

d. Space Planning Committee

Signage is of main concern. Newer buildings are more likely than older to conform to approved standardized signage. Approval for signs has been slow in coming, taking years in some cases. Senator Gray suggested a sub-committee should be formed in order to address the need for immediate signage. There is concern that a lack of appropriate signs on USM buildings is creating a disservice to the USM community and that a timeline for implementing appropriate signage is needed. Carol Sobczak reported to the committee that another computer classroom was needed. It was suggested that room 241 in Luther Bonney Hall might be converted to meet this need.

e. Parking Committee

No report.

f. Recognition Gathering Committee

Senator Marston reported that the gathering will take place on Tuesday, May 25 at the Brook's Dinning Center. Dessert and refreshments will be served. Senator Treible suggested naming the gathering “The Professional Staff Senate Recognition Reception”. It was discussed whether or not to have ARAMARK set up the function. This would include cleaning up after the event. The cost is approximately \$200. To save money, names of award nominees will be posted on the web and one printed list will be placed at each table. Concern was raised that the small sum needed to continue the function as a

luncheon was not attainable. Lack of outside funding, including that from the president's office, was discussed. Senator Wood asked about soliciting sponsors for the event to provide food rather than solely using senate funds. Beth Shorr expressed concern that this may be inappropriate. Senator Wood suggested asking the Union to offer funds. Senator Day expressed concern that employee dues would be coming back to support an employee recognition function. Senator Britting expressed embarrassment that the Senate must attempt to sponsor an employee recognition without being offered the proper funding to do so. She suggested that such functions be cancelled until proper funding is available. Beth Shorr offered to bring all these concerns to the President's attention.

g. Other Committees

1. URIC

Implementation of the submitted ideas is in process. All matrices are being organized. Beth Shorr explained the structure of the Café. Conversation will be focused on a specific question. Participants will "travel" from table to table to discuss the specific question at each table. There will be a host to facilitate the discussion at the tables. The facilitators and questions are still to be determined. Senator Wood asked about the possibility of a virtual component to the Café via "chat rooms" to allow staff member unable to attend the function. This might include staff members funded by soft-money.

2. UPBIC

Senator Bannon expressed frustration over the tediousness of categorizing the ideas submitted by the USM community. Senator Wood admitted to his comments as being off-topic but expressed concern at this time about the poor quality of PeopleSoft training offered to employees. Senator Wood suggested having USM take bids on training contracts. Senator Wood asked what the role of the Professional Senate is in regard to training and consultants. There was a consensus that all concerns regarding the professional staff at USM can be brought to the Senate who will bring these concerns to the President's office.

3. UPBAC

Senator Wood announced that the President's message of Transforming USM has been submitted to the USM community for discussion.

The Professional Senate's place within this message was discussed:

Assumptions: The professional staff is the largest growing body at USM.

Incentives: Allow for paid differentials for geographical locations within the U-Maine system. Allow USM to pay employees based on the cost of living per area. Senator Gray mentioned the difficulty of hiring personal within Facilities Management because of the lack of competitive wages.

VI. Senate Reports

a. Classified

No report

b. Faculty

No report

c. Student

Members of the Student Senate and Senator Pease of the Professional Senate attended Texas A&M's leadership seminar. The senate is struggling with voter turnout. The Senate is considering indexing the student activity fee to reflect a cost of living increase.

VII. Open Forum

Senator Menezes asked if meeting at LAC was necessary for our April meeting as we may not have a representative from the campus. Senator Marston feels LAC should not be excluded regardless of representation since LAC is a part of the USM community. Senator Day felt that although it is important to include LAC, our next meeting would not be enhanced if we were to meet there next month. She suggested structuring future meetings at LAC to encompass more information about the campus and its participation within the Senate. The senate decided to meet in Portland next month.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn, seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Next meeting is April 7, 2004 from 2pm - 4pm at 11 Baxter Blvd, Portland Campus.