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Staff Senate, May 14, 2019

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Staff Senate

May 14, 2019
Meeting Minutes

Note: The remarks of the senators and others are summarized and not verbatim. The recording of this meeting is available in the Staff Senate Secretary's office.

PRESENT: Sandra Baldrige-Adrian; Shaun Bannon; Carolyn Bender; Jean Bennett; Lisa Bernadyn; Allison Crandell; John Dooley; Lynn Fox; Mark Garrison; Sandra Hatcher; Dawn Hitchcock; Margaret Hurt; Judy Johns; Melanie McKeefery; Gregory Nance; Justin Poindexter; Wendy Singleton; David Yancey; Travis Youngblood

SUBSTITUTIONS: Ivy Sidley for Cecilia Dockery; Michelle Lewis for Marcus Holmes; Lauren Barker for Bryce Skipper; Gigi Dodd for Michele Varga

ABSENT: Dwayne Beam; Michael Cruise; Sharon McCants

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Dr. David DeCenzo; Travis Overton; BJ Landrum; Steve Harrison; Lori Cox; David Frost; Ashley Gaddy; Atiya Stokes-Brown; Amanda Craddock; Lydia Deeck; Caroline Madden; Jerry Rashid; Dan Lawless; Russell Tyler; Verne Walker; Frankie Weeks; Holly Legg; Stephanie Revels; Bertha Fladger; Franklin Ellis; James Johnson; Taylor Poth; Jean Ann Brakefield; Jennifer Overholt-Mau; Jake Rosiek; Kristen Olsen; Jim Wright

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approval of the April 9, 2019 minutes were moved by Mark Garrison and seconded by Jean Bennett. **The minutes passed (23 in favor, 0 not in favor, 0 abstain).**

SENATE PRESIDENT REMARKS:

- Welcome to Sandra Hatcher, replacing Alicia Stanley who left the university.
- The Provost has resigned and that was the focus of this meeting. We had a number of questions from individuals and Dr. DeCenzo was present to answer as many of those questions as possible.

PRESIDENT AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

President DeCenzo:

- No opening remarks but will be taking questions that were submitted with the understanding that there may not be a lot of answers.
- The plan is to have an interim Provost in place by the end of the week.
- Not filling the Executive Vice President position, but will be doing some restructuring so that we are in more of a traditional structure.
- Will not release the new organizational structure until everyone is comfortable that it has been done correctly.

- Questions will be asked in the order they were received. Any questions that were not asked because of time constraints will be sent to Faculty Senate to be asked at their special called meeting on May 15, 2019.
- **Question 1** – Why has the presidential search not begun, is there an internal candidate being considered, and did the Provost really resign? **Response** – “Yes the Provost resigned. The search is underway. You have to go through a process of selecting a search firm, that search firm should be selected by the August Board meeting, at which time there will be the commencement of the search process” **Follow-up by David Yancey** – Can you tell us a little bit about a search firm and how that works? **Response** – “We’ve got to go through the process of selecting a firm. What you end up with is a search firm which will then assign a consultant to the search committee. It is that search firm’s responsibility for sourcing possible candidates, they will handle applications, they will do a first cut to ensure that those applications submitted meet at least the minimum requirements that are stated. From there they will turn over all of those documents to the search committee, who will then vet the resumes. They will call the list down to a point where there generally would be airport interviews – the search committee decides how many, I don’t know how many but I can tell you when I was selected ten or twelve had airport interviews. From those ten or twelve, the search committee then pares the list down to three to five finalists. When the finalists are identified, that is the first time that the finalists are required by law to be made public. A candidate who desires not to have his or her name made public would withdraw from the candidacy. While the finalists are being arranged to come to campus, the search firm does all of the background investigations, they do all of the reference checking and provide to the search committee a pretty thick dossier on every candidate. They then work with the search committee in the schedule as well as the kinds of questions that would be asked during the search. They are really the conduit between the university search committee and the candidates. The hope is that we will start getting something out early fall. There is a belief that we might be able to have someone on board shortly after the first of the year in 2021. The question is what will the overlap look like? The response that I’ve given to the Board is ‘if you find the perfect candidate and that person wants to start in the spring semester, that person starts and I will step aside.’ My retirement will be June 30, 2021, but the last few months could be as president emeritus. It will depend on how much that new president wants input into the budget process, the state budgeting process, so we are looking at some overlap but that will be a negotiated term between the new president and the board. At this point nobody has applied for the job because the job hasn’t been posted. Whether there will be internal candidates is yet to be seen. My guess on that is I will not know if there are internal candidates and search committee members cannot disclose because of confidentiality who has applied. So it is only until the finalists are announced that you will have any indication as to who the candidates are.”
- **Question 2** – Why is the Executive Vice President role being dissolved? Does this have anything to do with financials? Is CCU financially stable? **Response** – “No, the EVP position is being dissolved. If you go back historically we did not have an EVP position – and I’m going back to 2007 during the presidential search, the two finalists were Eddie Dyer and me – the Board was very split, there were some issues, and quite frankly, Eddie and I went offsite and solved the problem. The Board at that point felt that there were some things that they would like to see and they created the EVP position. When Dr. Dyer left, there was a discussion at that point of do we continue the EVP position and the response was we probably shouldn’t but there was a strong desire by Dr. Byington to have the EVP position and the Board agreed and so we continued with the Executive Vice President position. As we start this whole process of

reorganizing to be a little more traditional, at this point the Board feels that as we've evolved that we probably don't need the EVP position. It doesn't say it would never come back, that will be the next President's choice to build the case as to why they need it, but the reality is it's not a financial reason why that position is being eliminated. It's basically trying to make sure that we don't overburden anybody with so much work and I think if you looked at a lot of the reporting relationships we did put way too much on one person's shoulders and I don't think that's healthy for anybody else in that position. Financially we are still very strong."

- **Question 3** – Any plans on pay raises for Public Safety Officers and Investigators? Seasoned Officers make well below surrounding agencies starting salaries and a lack of raises is becoming a concern throughout the department. I heard about a 2.5 percent possible raise at some point but that's literally to absorb the increased deductions we have no control over. **Response** – "We're waiting to see what the state is going to do. I know that Human Resources periodically reviews areas to ensure that our salaries are consistent with what we're paying versus the market." Follow-up – What is the action on that? I've heard from a number of different areas basically that same concern and just what their steps, if any, could be. Response from BJ Landrum – With the approval of Administration, we will analyze a department.
- **Question 4 – Part 1**, I heard there is a new chair of the presidential search committee and some reshuffling of Board of Trustee representation on the committee. Is this true? When will this be announced to CCU faculty and staff? **Response** – "It was announced in the notice on Friday (May 10, 2019) Larry Lyles retired as of July 1, Lee Belcher becomes the new trustee, Carlos Johnson has resigned as vice-chair. As they were looking into positions, Bill Biggs was re-elected chair, Delan Stevens was elected vice-chair, and Chuck Lewis was re-elected as treasurer, and that all went out in the public notice after the Board meeting." **Part 2**, Has a timeline for the Presidential search been adjusted? Time period to find a search firm advertised? Conduct a national search and interview candidates and transition them to CCU typically takes a year. If the plan is for the interim to shadow Dr. DeCenzo for a year, time is limited to make a hire in less than 14 months, I wonder if there is an agenda already in place. Can you address this? **Response** – "I think I already did that at the beginning. Start to finish should not be more than about 9 months. The other thing that enters into this is to try and go out in the middle of the summer and advertise a president's position is not the opportune time. What generally happens is those who were unsuccessful in February, March, and April, in getting a presidency, they're the ones primarily looking in the summer. So search firms have traditionally worked off of advertising in early fall – late August, early September. My guess would be, like I said, I'm a bystander in this, but my guess would be in the February Board meeting it would not surprise me if a new president was announced at that time. At the latest I would suspect it would be the May meeting, so we're looking at nine to twelve months. There still will be an opportunity for overlap; again, if there is a strong desire that the individual chooses not to have the overlap, then my agreement with the Board is I will step aside immediately when that person steps on campus. I could argue it both ways but I can understand if you've just been elected president you don't want to come in for six months and not be." **Part 3**, Is there a timeline on when the Interim Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs will be named? How will direct reports to the former Provost be notified? Have decisions been made as to which VPs will assume some of the EVP departments and which departments will stay under the Interim Provost? Clear communication on this is critical as departments and staff need to do their job. Will they know this week or will it take longer? It was very disappointing to be notified via email after 12pm that the Provost was no longer in his position. With technology as it is today and 24/7 email, it would

have been a courtesy to notify those staff members in advance of all-campus email. My Horry News online states the Provost resigned on Saturday, May 11th. The President should've communicated this information to his direct reports over the weekend. **Response** – "I can't necessarily argue with a lot that is there, but there was a whole lot more information and things happening that I cannot discuss. But let me also say that the announcement was coordinated with Dr. Byington as to when it would go out."

- **Question 5** – Someone mentioned that there is a two to three percent raise that will be heading to all staff employees this year. Could you please verify that this is correct? **Response** – "Today the conference committee of the General Assembly meets. It is totally up to them as to what they do. There is a state pay raise that is on 'recommendation' but until the state does in fact pass a budget, I can't answer that. The recommendation was two percent. Which is why we could not pass a budget. There are two things, we actually came out very well in both the House and the Senate with our increase in state appropriations, but there was a caveat. That caveat was 'we are going to allow universities to raise tuition'. On the Senate side it said 'we're going to allow them to raise tuition up to 2.8%'. On the House side they said 'we are going to only allow institutions to raise tuition a maximum of 1.8%'. That's what is at the conference committee and will be resolved. Now the catch was if you raise your tuition greater than the amount indicated, then you forfeit the increase in state appropriations that have been put on the line for you. We were not real comfortable that 2.8 was going to be the exact number. If they compromised and came out at 2.4 and we had announced a 2.8 increase in tuition, we would've lost over \$2.1 million in appropriations. And so because of that, I opened up the Board of Trustees meeting with 'we need to delay any decision on budgets as well as tuition' because I can't run the risk that if it's at 1.8. Whatever the state agrees to, that's what's there. The reason they're allowing us to increase tuition is there are things called Pass-Throughs in the state that deal with retirement and with health. Those two numbers are several million dollars in cost to us. During our budget discussions, that was one of the issues we raised – if you don't allow us to raise tuition to at least cover the cost of the pass-throughs, plus if there is a pay raise, we have almost 1400 employees and only about 196 of our employees are state FTEs, which means the others we have to pay for out of our own funds. Or the state says give it only to those that have the (state) FTE and I'm not doing that. There were so many unknowns that we decided not to pass a budget or tuition increase. As soon as the conference committee and the governor sign off on a budget, we will then have an emergency meeting of the Board of Trustees to pass tuition and budget."
- **Question 6** – What is the timeline for appointing an Interim Provost? (*answered above*) Can you explain the rationale for dissolving the Executive VP role? (*answered above*) Will there be reorganizations? (*answered above*) Is anyone considering, drafting, or implementing a reduction in force plan? **Response** – "Absolutely not." **Expounding upon the EVP question** – "Remember that you have two unique jobs, that of Provost and that of EVP. The new President will be hiring a Provost. The likelihood of finding a Provost who is also well versed in the financial aspects is highly unlikely. We've been fortunate that we've had two EVPs that understood both sides of the equations. If you look traditionally, most of your Provosts are out of the academic areas and most do not have CPAs. Because of that, you're probably not going to find that combination again, that's why the Board is saying we want to separate that out and we want to ensure that we're going to have an opportunity to get good Provost candidates rather than burdening somebody with areas that they may not have the ability or the skills to address."

Staff Senate Meeting Minutes

Chief of Staff Overton:

- No remarks at this time.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

All submitted topics will be addressed at the July meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Student Pay Ad Hoc Committee – no report
- Take Your Child to Work Committee – no report
- Policy and Welfare Committee – no report
- Membership Committee – Welcome Sandra Hatcher who is replacing Alicia Stanley
- Communication Committee – no report

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business at this time

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Remember Faculty/Staff Benevolence Fund
- Any questions not answered today, Faculty Senate will be having an emergency meeting tomorrow at 4:30 in WALL 309.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:32 am