

USC Staff Assembly General Assembly Meeting Minutes

Date: February 1, 2007

Location: UPC – Waite Phillips Hall (WPH) B28

Present: Evelyn Alva, Steven Barnhart, Jane Bartlett, Timothy Boston, Steven Bryant, Denise Campbell, Latrece Cox, Lisa Escobar, Gloria Gamboa, Rita Gonzales, Claudia Gonzalez, Michael Grabarsky, Roshonda Harrison, Josie Herrera, Shannon Hinojosa, Erika Jimenez, Michelle Jones, Dawn Kita, Linda Lewis, James Lynn, Jackie Mardirossian, Tony Mazza, Yolanda Mora, Dolores Morales-Medina, Kathleen Neal, Lou Nieto, Ardell Nolan, Georgina Nutall, Bryan Ortiz, Joyce Perez, Veronica Pete, Richard Pinder, Janet Prince, Marian Purcell, Gloria Reyes, Lillian Rivera, Marty Ruggles, Rick Scott, Ruth Scott-Williams, Cristi Shinn, Rosie Telez, Wade Thompson-Harper, Lorna Tureaud, Lydia Vazquez, Pamela Wallace-Thompson, Carolyn Ward, Amy Yung.

Absent: Josie Amescua, Delfina Candelaria, Ingrid DeCook, Lisa Gallegos, Stanley Henderson, Ba Shai Lagarde, Claudia Ortega, Anthony Rodriguez, Joshua Schmidt, Chris Schweska, Bill Singleton, Mary Trujillo, Yvonne Unger, Tina Walsh.

Call to Order: President Rick Scott called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m.

Staff Monthly Recognition Award: The Monthly Staff Recognition Award was presented to Lois Nishimoto, Department Business Manager for the College Business Office who was introduced by Steven Wagner, Associate Dean of Financial Affairs for the College Business Office. Mr. Wagner was one of the founding members of the Staff Assembly in 1982. The College Business Office has a huge commitment to the Staff Assembly with several of the department staff as past or current members: Lois Nishimoto, Denise Campbell, Wendy Cook, and Denise Weigel, former Staff Club President.

Mr. Wagner talked about how Lois suffered a life threatening aneurism in June 2006 but was able to make a full recovery and return to work. Lois is a model employee, “the best a supervisor could ask for,” with a friendly disposition. Everyone is happy to have her back. Lois, who has been a Staff Assembly member for quite a few years, thanked her “Staff Assembly family” and her “work family” for their support and for their cards and virtual flowers which really lifted her spirits. Rick Scott presented the Staff Monthly Recognition plaque to Lois. However, due to some technical difficulties with Disbursement Control, a check in the amount of \$150 was not currently available but will be delivered to Lois. She is the first recipient of the \$50 award increase.

Approval of January 2007 General Assembly Minutes: On motion by Marty Ruggles seconded by Jackie Mardirossian, the minutes of the January 11, 2007 meeting of the Staff Assembly were approved with minor corrections.

Election of New Secretary:

Due to time constraints, Cristi Shinn was unable to fulfill her duty as Secretary of the Staff Assembly. Josie Herrera was nominated by Joyce Perez and the nomination was seconded by Jackie Mardrossian. Steve Barnhart moved to accept Josie's nomination by acclamation and the Assembly voted to have Josie accept the position as Secretary. It was moved by Jackie Mardrossian and seconded by Lorna Tureaud. Josie Herrera is the new Secretary of the Assembly.

Associate Sr. Vice President for Administration, Janis McEldowney: Ms.

McEldowney announced that Capital Programs has approved the building of a new Student Health Center that will be located in the vicinity of Vermont and Jefferson behind the parking structure. Mr. Dennis Dougherty will also fund the Faculty / Staff Center which will be housed in the same building as the new Student Health Center. There will be private entrances but shared services, i.e. lab and other ancillary services. Many of the faculty and staff were dissatisfied with the Faculty / Staff Center's move to the downtown office (EHIC – Executive Health and Imaging Center), so the move back to UPC is a very welcomed one. In addition all staff, regardless of the type of insurance he or she may have, will be able to see a physician at the new Faculty / Staff Center.

Ms. McEldowney said that there were no more Staff Appreciation tickets available. A question was raised regarding receiving the wrong tickets. Awilda Bregand suggested calling the USC Ticket Office to see if the tickets could be exchanged.

Ms. McEldowney informed the assembly that at the SBO level, there have been recent changes regarding compensation strategies and policy guidelines. The current structure is that the departments have autonomy over their employee compensation with very little requirements from the University. There is a “free market game with all employees regarding compensation.” The intent of the compensation structure change is to clarify guidelines and to provide more mobility within salary ranges for new and existing employees. In order to implement this process, salary guidelines and grade ranges were taken down. A department will have to call the Compensation Office to get salary benchmarks. This will ensure that the University salaries will be market appropriate.

Guest Speaker: Todd Dickey, Senior Vice President, Administration, and General Counsel, was introduced by Janis McEldowney. Mr. Dickey spoke about the USC Governance structure and provided a brief history and overview of the University's beginnings to present day. The University was incorporated in 1880 and was formerly a religious University. USC is now made up of 32,000 students and 12,000 faculty and staff. The governing body of the University is the Board of Trustees, which is comprised of a maximum of 55 members and 9 officers, with one Chairman. Reporting to the Board of Trustees is President Sample, under President Sample are the Provost and the Senior Vice Presidents and the fourth layer of this governing structure consists of the Deans, Directors and Vice Presidents of the University.

USC is a California Public Benefit Corporation or a 501 (c) 3, which means it is a private corporation that serves a public purpose, higher education and healthcare. In addition,

USC is made up of 5 Advisory Groups, of which the Staff Assembly is one. The other four Advisory Groups are the Academic Senate, Alumni Association, Board of Counselors and the Student Senate. The Advisory Groups are recognized arms of the University governance system and provide recommendations to the University Board of Trustees. There are also 11 Committee Boards: 1) Executive Committee, 2) Academic Affairs, 3) Alumni Affairs, 4) Audit and Compliance, 5) Board Personnel, 6) Campus Planning, 7) Development, 8) Finance, 9) Investment, 10) Public Affairs, and 11) Student Affairs. Each committee is responsible for a particular aspect of University operations with reporting oversight from a member of the Senior Administration team.

President's Report:

Two members of the Assembly were assigned as part of the President's Committee for the Annual Staff Achievement Award, they are Ingrid DeCook and Linda Lewis. Rick also thanked Jane Bartlett for stepping up and becoming the new chair of the Environment Committee.

Committee Reports:

Communications - Amy Yung:

The committee met on January 22, 2007 and discussed what their goals and charges would be for the coming year. One of the committee's goals is to publish three issues of *The Assembled Voice*, with the first issue due out in late March 2007 or early April 2007. The committee requests that articles for the first issue be submitted by February 16, 2007 via email to Amy, amy@usc.edu. The committee is also working on populating the website and Amy was pleased to announce a new photographer for *The Assembled Voice*, Tina Walsh. Amy asked that if there are any special events in your department that you would like photographed and submitted in *The Assembled Voice*, to email her the request. The next committee meeting will be on February 5, 2007.

Compensation and Benefits – Veronica Pete:

The committee met on January 12, 2007 in VKC 329 and elected to have alternate meeting sites to accommodate the committee members. Gloria Reyes was appointed as Vice-Chair. For any issues or concerns appropriate for the Compensation and Benefits Committee please contact Veronica, vpete@usc.edu, or any of the committee members and they will be happy to do some investigation. On behalf of the Assembly, the committee presented to administration the much anticipated proposal for health coverage for long term employees who retire under the age of 65. This was a project that started under Michelle Jones' presidency and a labor of love under the leadership of Evelyn Alva. Veronica introduced Evelyn and asked her to come forth to make the presentation to Janis McEldowney who was present on behalf of administration. Evelyn said this was a project with three years worth of work with herself, Veronica Pete and Steve Barnhart. There was a lot of work done by many people on the committees and Evelyn presented the Resolution to Janis for consideration by administration. Ms. McEldowney thanked the Assembly, commented on the hard work that went into the Resolution, and said she would pass it along to Todd Dickey. The next committee meeting will be on February 9, 2007 at noon in UGB 110, hosted by Shannon Hinojosa.

Environment - Jane Bartlett:

Jane Bartlett is the new Chairperson for this committee. This committee meets immediately after the General Staff Assembly meeting. The committee would like to continue the environmental events that took place the previous year, i.e. Environment Fair, E-Waste Collections, etc. In the fall, the committee is proposing another Crime Prevention Expo. The committee would also like to meet with the Provost to see if these environmental events could be year round and not just a once a year event. Jane reported that Trojan Services is doing their part in helping the environment by making available three trams that run on biodiesel fuel. In the USC Gas Station there will be a biodiesel fuel filling area. The committee is also charged with ramping up recycling and holding a battery collection event. They would like to market these two events without having to use paper products such as flyers.

Rights and Responsibilities – Ingrid DeCook:

Steve Barnhart represented the committee in Ingrid's absence. The committee's first meeting was on January 16, 2007 in UGB. There are two issues the committee is looking at this year so far: a) one issue crosses over with Compensation and Benefits and is regarding the severance pay policy of the University in terms of lay offs, which seems to not accurately reflect the cost of letting go of long term employees, and b) the other issue is something that has been of concern to the Assembly since the changes to what is now the tuition assistance program, in terms of staff professional development. Particular interest is that there are no classes offered after work so employees must have permission from their supervisors to take the time to go. The committee would like to take a closer look at this issue. The next committee meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2007 in UGB 210.

Rules and Elections – Linda Lewis:

The committee's first meeting was on January 17, 2007 in ADM 260. This committee will meet the third Wednesday of each month at noon. Linda reported that a main goal for the committee is to create a bank of nominated staff for the Monthly Staff Award. So far there is only one nomination in the nominee bank and that is one staff member on HSC. The committee is encouraging all assembly members to nominate at least one to two persons each. Nomination forms were distributed to the Assembly. The next committee meeting will be a conference call scheduled for February 21, 2007.

Transportation – Marty Ruggles:

The committee's first meeting was on January 18, 2007. The committee has a new member, Cristi Shinn. The meetings will be the first Thursday of each month after the General Assembly meetings, with two of the meetings to be held on HSC in April 2007 and October 2007. The committee is also looking for volunteers to serve on the Department of Transportation Services Citation Review Board. Please contact Marty at marty@usc.edu if you are interested. Any Staff Assembly members who would like to attend this committee's meeting should also contact Marty in advance since meals will be provided.

Marty gave a few updates on the committee's activities as well as issues that have been raised with the committee: a) tram service has been established to and from the Carole Little Building (CAL) on 3434 S. Grand and UPC, b) there have been numerous citations given to pedestrians crossing diagonally in the Jefferson / McClintock / Hoover area. This committee will be charged to find better alternatives thereby promoting pedestrian safety, c) there are complaints about the area on Flower and Jefferson by the Galen Center being congested after work and when there are events at the Galen Center. Also, drop off and pick up at the Child Care Center by North Campus have also been creating traffic problems for faculty and staff. The committee will see what other things can be done to alleviate the congestion at these areas during peak times, d) on HSC staff have been complaining that there are no more meter parking available due to construction. Capital Construction was made aware of this complaint and provided a response. They said that the construction crew is encouraged to park behind the construction trailer and not in the metered parking. The next committee meeting will be one week from today, on February 8, 2007.

Announcements:

Gloria Reyes asked the Assembly to get an identify theft flyer that they could share with their department. Gloria also informed the assembly that a Q&A on Social Security and Medicare will be taking place soon. More information to follow.

Jackie Mardirossian informed the Assembly that the next meeting will be in the same room, WPH B28.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 1, 2007, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., location WPH B28

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Michelle Jones and was seconded by Marty Ruggles. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Minutes submitted by: Josie Herrera

Staff Assembly Email address: staff.assembly@usc.edu

Staff Assembly Web page address: <http://www.usc.edu/org/staffassembly/>