

**USC Staff Assembly
General Assembly Meeting Minutes
July 12, 2007
SSL 150, UPC**

Present: Evelyn Alva, Steven Barnhart, Jane Bartlett, Tim Boston, Ingrid DeCook, Lisa Escobar, Valerie Fitzgerald, Gloria Gamboa, William Givens, Rita Gonzales, Claudia Gonzalez, Michael Grabarsky, Roshanda Harrison, Stanley Henderson, Erica Jimenez, Michelle Jones, Dawn Kita, Ba Shai Lagarde, Linda Lewis, Jackie Mardirossian, Tony Marza, Josie Nieto, Georgina Nutall, Veronica Pete, Denise Porter, Janet Prince, Marian Purcell, Gloria Reyes, Lillian Rivera, Anthony Rodriguez, Marty Ruggles, Joshua Schmidt, Ruth Scott-Williams, Sonya Sears, Cristi Shinn, Sylvia Stafford, Wade Thompson-Harper, Mary Trujillo, Lydia Vazquez, Veronica Villa, Pamela Wallace-Thompson, Carolyn Ward, Amy Yung

Absent: Josie Amescua, Apakama Camillus, Delfina Candelaria, Shannon Hinojosa, Yolanda Mora, Delores Morales-Medina, Kathleen Neal, Lou Nieto, Ardell Nolan, Bryan Ortiz, Richard Pinder, Chris Schweska, Rosie Tellez, Lorna Tureaud, Tina Walsh, Annie Willis

Call to Order

A quorum being present, President Steve Barnhart called the meeting to order at 9:04 A.M.

Staff Monthly Recognition Award

The Staff Monthly Recognition Award was presented to Sandra Ament, Senior Library Assistant, Student Coordinator for the Library of Philosophy. Sandra was introduced by Carolyn Ward, Library Supervisor for Gerontology. Sandra Ament has been with USC for 33 years and is known as the “Doheny Lady”. Carolyn mentioned that Sandra is a very dedicated and serious worker. She is also a dedicated Trojan.

Sandra thanked everyone for acknowledging her. She thanked Carolyn and her current supervisor of four months. Several staff members from her department were present as Carolyn received the award.

Steve Barnhart presented Carolyn with a plaque from the Assembly; Wade Thompson-Harper presented a check for \$150 from the Staff Club.

Approval of June 2007 General Assembly Minutes

On a motion by Veronica Pete, and seconded by Jane Bartlett, the minutes of the June 7, 2007 meeting of the Staff Assembly were approved with corrections.

Associate Senior Vice President for Administration Report – Janis McEldowney

Janis’s report was combined with the Personnel Council Report.

- They were both proud and disappointed with staff in completing their documents for the retirement plan. 60% completed and submitted the documents and 36% defaulted to the Vanguard Targeted Retirement Fund with the maximum employee contribution of 5% and maximum university contribution of 10%. The Benefits office was happy that the staff who submitted their documents were contributing at the highest level. Deductions will begin being taken with the July paychecks. Employees are able to make changes only for future pay periods.
- A new complaint office at the HSC campus for Equity and Diversity will be opening in the 2007-2008 fiscal year.
- At the Harley Norris Towers a new position will be filled for budget issues.
- The compensation office has conducted several surveys and concluded that many jobs at the university are under priced.
- The Employee Benefits Advisory Committee made a report on the “bridge coverage” proposal from the Staff Assembly for early retirees. Lisa Macchia and Sharon Haymond are looking into putting together a consortium of plans like Aetna, Blue Cross and others which would provide better coverage for those leaving the immediate southern California area. There is some resistance from the Administration due to the potential costs and financial impact on the university’s balance sheet – especially if the faculty were to be included.
- A concern that many aging and long-term employees have left USC has resulted in a committee being formed to look into retention issues. This is important in regard to keeping long-term, knowledgeable employees.
- Childcare is being reviewed for better options to serve the disparate needs of the university community. A series of surveys are being issued.
- The Academic Senate is reviewing big issues on wellness activities. USC wants to encourage healthy behaviors on campus.
- The federal legislature is taking a hard look at the tax exemption of undergraduate Tuition Assistance and, despite lobbying efforts, is likely to rescind this portion of the tax law.

Personnel Council Report - Awilda Bregand

Awilda was unable to attend.

Committee Reports

Communications Report – Amy Yung

Amy reported that the committee met on June 11.

- Emails are going out to all committee chairs requesting their reports for the *Assembled Voice*. The deadline is August 10th.
- There are currently no open forums scheduled.
- The committee is working on a year-end project, which will be fun.

Next meeting will be on July 16.

Compensation and Benefits – Veronica Pete

Veronica reported that the committee met on June 8.

- The investigation of sick time accruals is at the preliminary stage once again. It was found that some USC employees are able to buy back their sick time so further investigation is in progress to see why some employees are accorded preferential treatment.
- Prior to this summer there had been one only Employee Benefit Advisory meeting this year. The second took place on June 20, 2007. There was initial discussion on minimal increases in outpatient surgery and emergency room co-payments. A new UPC Health Center is planned to open in 2010 and will include a staff/faculty clinic which will be available for all benefits eligible employees, not just USC Network participants. The Assembly's proposal for health care benefits for early retirees, referred to as "bridge coverage" was discussed and received enthusiastic support from the faculty members of the committee, including the chair of the Academic Senate's Environment Committee (which corresponds to our Compensation & Benefits Committee). The administration is looking at actuarial figures to determine what the costs might be.

Next meeting will be on July 13 hosted by Lisa Escobar.

Environment – Jane Bartlett

Jane reported that the committee met on June 7, 2007

- An E-Waste collection for next fall at HSC is being considered. It could be in conjunction with a Safety fair.
- The recycling company reimbursed the Staff Assembly the amount of \$629.60.
- We would like to increase the recycling efforts by staff, faculty and facilities. Facilities does separate and place in bags. Jane will talk to individuals in a couple buildings at a time about putting forth more effort.
- A Sustainability resolution is being drafted.

Next meeting will be on July 12th following the general Staff Assembly meeting.

Rights and Responsibilities – Ingrid DeCook

Ingrid reported that the committee met on June 12.

- A resolution is being handed out on the Severance Pay. There was comparison made with other institutions. The comparison with 30 institutions shows that we are behind. USC caps out with 4 weeks of pay.
- A resolution regarding the layoff and reorganization policy's severance pay was presented to the Assembly and was approved unanimously. (see file copy)
- Janis McEldowney stated that she supports the resolution. She indicated that Senior Vice President for Administration Todd Dickey has wanted the policy reviewed for quite some time.

Next meeting will be on July 17.

Rules and Elections – Linda Lewis

Linda reported that the committee met June 20.

- The committee selected the August Staff Monthly Recognition Award recipient. Her name is Wanda Johnson with Political Science department.
- Sonya Savoulian was introduced and welcomed as a new member.
- Linda announced that there are many worthy employees that should be nominated for the Monthly Recognition Award.

The next meeting is on Wednesday, July 19.

Transportation – Marty Ruggles

Marty reported that the committee met on June 14.

- A new member, Annie Willis, was introduced.
- The committee discussed some of the same issues.
- The Assembly was not represented on the Citation Review Board at their last meeting.
- Transportation is working on enhancing efficiency at structure entrances.
- As mandated by the state, all bicycles must be registered. If they are not, they could be confiscated by DPS.
- Commencement mayhem from the new Exposition parking structure to the freeways is being reviewed.
- A refreshed organizational chart is in the works.

Next meeting is for July 19, 2007.

Guest Speaker: Ian Sephton, Director for Trojan Transportation Services. He has been the director since 2006. He previously worked with DHL Express Marketing dept. with 300 couriers. He was also a former vehicle commander for the US Marines.

- One of his main goals is to improve parking. The Transportation Organization Structure is to be reviewed overall.
- They have added more staff.
- Here are the different issues being worked on:
 - Guest Relations
 - Transit
 - Operations dept.
 - Special Events and Field Maintenance
 - Transportation Key initiatives for 2006 -2007
 - 2006-2007 Fiscal Challenges

Next meeting: Thursday, August 2, 2007, 9:00 A.M., SSL 150, UPC.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Jackie Mardirossian and was seconded by Mary Trujillo. The meeting adjourned at 10:40 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Trujillo

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