



Minutes

USAC Tuesday, May 12, 2009

The Commons, Rm. 237

Attendees:

Armstrong, Terri
Attack, Becky
Bailey, Bill
Banks, Diane
Boglin, Harriett
Cage, Vickie
Cribbs, Chris
Dean, Mary Ann
DiGiovanna, Sheri
Dixon, Michele
Franklin, Keith
Gambill, Jodie
Harrison, Janiece
Hiltz, Shirley

Holcroft, Nancy
Hunt, Jason
Jackson, John
Johnson, Faye
Johnson, Stacy
Kendrick, Stacey
Koval, Kristin
McClure, Cheryl
McGrath, Jason
McKee, Brenda
Moore, Kenny
Owen, Chuck
Owens, Ann Marie
Pickert, Donald

Potter, Kit
Rhodes, Katherine
Richter, Andy
Seezen, Karen
Shelden, Brenda
Smeltzer, Mike
Street, JJ
Taylor, Courtney
Trenary, Carlos
Villager, Nyla
Walker, Bryon
Wall, Andrea
Whatley, Luci
White, Lolita

Widmer, Sue
Wyatt, Michelle
Dubois, Daniel
Garner, Phyllis
Hall, Sharone
Hockett, Stacy
Houseman, Andrea
Irizarry, Vivienne
Patterson, JoAnn
Pepper, Ronnie
Soren, Carol
Watts, Katie

Absent Members:

Amos, Stan
Brassil, John
Craven, Mindy
Daniel, Karen
Dillard, Marcia
Dotson, Felicia
Fagan, Shawn
Fisher, Kristy
Gooding, Immanuel
Jackson, Nancy

Jewell, David
King, Sue
Latham, Vickie
Mahlberg, Carla
Nunnally, Stacy
Pruitt, Don
Reed, Dylan
Soxayachanh, Olivia
Standard, Ray
Steward, Dan

Thompson, Molly
Webb, Jimmy
Webb, Mary Clark
Wilson, Cliff
Bush, Alison
Clement, Matthew
Clissold, Mary
Fisher, Joe
Frierson, Sterling
Guest, Robin

Kahlig, Brandy
Lockhart, Christina
Marshall, Chris
Martin, Julie
Norfleet, Lydia
Robinson, Sandra
Steine, Cindy
Suttles, Todd
Tucker, Phillip

Visitors:

Bruce, Jane
Joyner, Cliff
Sumrell, Sharon
Wocher, Melissa

Guest Speakers:

Susie Lyons, Mgr, Employee Programs and Sandy Tishler, Dir, Outreach & Promotions and
Nora Spencer, Dir., Office of LGBTQI Life

8:30 AM Jason Hunt, President, welcomed the council and guests and called the meeting to order.

The minutes of the April meeting were approved by a unanimous vote.

The Committee Reports were as follows:

USAC Committees

- Communication: Kristin Koval announced that the committee has no news to report.

- Event Coordination: Faye thanked everyone for their participation in the bake sale with special thanks to Andrea Wall for her great organization skills. The sale raised \$600.
- Membership: Andy Richter introduced and welcomed two new members: Andrea Houseman for group 12 (present) and Lydia Norfleet, group 16 (who was unable to be present today). There are still two groups where we lack enough nominees to conduct the elections. There will be a two week window for members to vote. The membership committee will send reminders to members to vote. Jason Hunt reminded us that the elections are for odd numbered groups; even numbered groups still have another year to serve.
- Rules and Administration: nothing to report
- Staff Life: Daniel Dubois reported that there is one day left on the Habitat for Humanity build. So far, it has been a fantastic build - a total of 4 days building. The crew we sent out yesterday went well. If members are still interested in assisting with the build, there are spots available on Sunday, the 17th. This is a unique day because it's a half day shift, 7 am – noon; after the work day (which is a day of final touches and cleaning up (light work)), at 1pm is the dedication ceremony with the family where they will officially get the key and we finalize the project. Even if you cannot work, you are still welcome to join them at 1 pm. Daniel extended thanks to those who worked, contributed water and/or well wishes. It is great to give back to a VU family and a great bonding experience.

Jason Hunt added a thank you to Daniel and Karen Daniel for coordinating all of this.

- Medical Center Staff Advisory Council Report: President, Alison Carol, coordinated water, ice cream and snacks for everyone at the Habitat build, so we thank her. Sharon reported on their Apr 16 mtg with Kevin Churchill which included: 2nd podcast, welcomed new members, asked for volunteers for commencement, announced the needles and pins craft fair, Oct 1-2, passed out fac/staff flyers, and shared with them from our meeting the names of speakers from SPEAR and Stacey Foremen from biodiesel and gave out their website urls for more information.

University Standing Committees

- Benefits: Andy reported that the Benefits Committee met yesterday and considered the following three items:
 1. Identity theft insurance. A third vendor made its presentation. The feedback from the committee was positive. Hopefully, the committee will soon be able to make a recommendation to the University administration.
 2. The Vanderbilt Health Care Cost Containment Committee is searching for creative ways to manage the cost of health care, especially in light of the fact that there will be no raises this year.
 3. The Committee's ABA Therapy recommendation was approved by Vanderbilt administration and is in the process of being implemented. ABA Therapy offers treatment for autism spectrum disorders.
- Traffic and Parking New Business: Cliff Joyner extended thanks to all who helped by parking elsewhere at Commencement. They were able to park all our guests, and the day

went well.

Election of 2009/10 USAC Officers

Diane Banks led the 09-10 elections noting that nominations had been submitted already for the positions of treasurer, secretary and VP (President elect) as follows:

JoAnn Patterson was nominated for Treasurer

Sheri DiGiovanna was nominated for Secretary

Daniel Dubois and Bill Bailey were nominated for the VP position.

The floor was opened by Diane Banks for nominations: no more nominees were suggested.

The two nominees running for VP, President Elect were invited to briefly introduce themselves:

Bill Bailey – Human resources operations (formerly management systems), is married to Dorian 25 years, 2 kids, 14 year old daughter and 11 year old son; he “soccers” it every weekend, hence his tan. Before VU, he worked as a stay at home parent, his passion is this college campus: he loves the electricity of it. He applied at VU and loves being here. He has been an employee at VU for 3 years and worked on both University and Med Center sides and had a lot of contact with folks. He “views peers on campus as part of [his] family and is excited to have opportunity to serve us and push our great work forward.” Bill noted that “Daniel did a great job with the Habitat for Humanity build project and that the present board did a fantastic job, as well. They have set a great tone and [he] would like to help to keep it going.”

Daniel DuBois: Offered big thanks to past presidents Jason and Cliff, to Andy and others. “USAC has matured and grown in great ways. It is important that we continue on that trajectory to make gains on credibility and impact. It is well within our reach to make positive, thoughtful contributions to this community; to make VU more vibrant for us, for staff and students, faculty, patients, and surrounding businesses and residential communities around VU, building on successes of past groups and past presidents.”

Council members were asked to take a vote on paper for one choice for VP. Shirley and Andy collected and counted the votes as the meeting continued.

Featured Guest: Susie Lyons – Employee Celebration Discussion

Susie Lyons addressed the group on Employee Celebration. She introduced Sandy Tishler who works particularly on Employee Celebration month. Susie noted that the USAC is great at giving feedback to them. “Budgets have been cut so we’re sensitive on what we do. What should Employee Celebration look like this year? We have approval to have it and funds budgeted for a month filled with events.” In the “spirit of transparency,” Susie reported that “the major part of the budget for this year, \$140,000, is just for service awards: pins, gifts, chairs we give to honorees. This year we have a 60 year honoree. The Commodore Award and Recognition Ceremony makes up ¾ of the budget. There’s a sense that we spend a lot of money on these events, but we really don’t. We get great discounts for employee celebration.” She posed the questions, “What do you think and what do you want?” Susie added that Employee Celebration has “become a tradition. It is a lot of fun. Our new employees really enjoy it and we all have the opportunity to meet a lot of people. It also helped us reach being one of the Top 100 Places to work.”

One member commented, “I love the music at kick off events; it’s a bonus.” Susie noted, like the

talent show – Vandy idol -- Both are low cost items, the cost is the stage and sound for the tent.

Council member Brenda McKee remarked that last year Susie's office asked for ideas for different give-aways besides t-shirts, and she sent a whole page. She suggested "flashlights which were very popular at a recent event and last forever." Susie noted that T-shirts are huge dilemma: they cost less than \$2/piece (they bought 16,000 last year and so spent \$32,000 on t-shirts) but the perception is that we spend a lot. Sometimes they can be over \$1 for trinkets. It is not so much the money being spent but the perception that we're spending a lot of money. Are we doing the right thing by buying t-shirts? On person might say, "I didn't get a raise, can't you give me a \$2 t-shirt" on one side, and on the other side, another person might say "it appears to be a waste of spending." A question was raised as to how many shirts they have left over. Susie said they do have some left over from last year, but they usually use them all. One council member commented that "T-shirts show a sense of community; when you run into someone wearing it when you run into them at Home Depot – you realize how many people are here and you connect with them." Another commented, "People here a long time, how many shirts do they need?" Another member noted on the good side: "a good portion at the Habitat House wore their shirts during the build – it helped to show the group together as a community." Another noted on the bad side, the last year at the end, people walked off with boxes of shirts and took them to their cars. If someone who cannot pick up a t-shirt or didn't have the opportunity to get a shirt and someone else gets 5-6 – it's disheartening."

Daniel Dubois added "More broadly, can you speak to alternative ideas to the actual Employee Celebration Day....for ex, give everyone \$10 instead....or...not have the day. How do percentages break down? Susie says that "most people enjoy that day. We get great feedback on that day; it's a fun day, one of the few opportunities on the work day to come together. Enjoy seeing office groups come together, get food and sit together; seeing things going on around campus at booths, music, etc. They are considering alternatives and one of the cost saving alternatives is kick-off day and the past 12 years they've had a Friday night lights for night shift – they already proposed not having that but extending kick off hours 7 am - midnight to reduce costs – one event instead of two. And the night owl howl for night shift workers - we might not have that event either. When they announced this possibility, they received positive feedback – "we understand why you have to take our parties away" was what they heard.

Another member stationed at 2525 West End commented that others arrived and there wasn't food left, etc. Most of the members in their department do not get to participate; it's bad time of year for them, etc. Transportation from 2525 is difficult, etc." Susie noted that "there will not be any event where all 25,000 can attend...thank goodness. We couldn't fit everyone!"

A suggestion was made that we have one or two events a month (such as the brown bag lunches) throughout the year to celebrate Employees instead of one month full of events.

Another member asked why the pins, etc. cost \$140,000. "The pins are gold. It depends on the price of gold. There are a ton of people who receive those pins. Double than ever before get chairs this year that cost over \$4000. Everyone gets a chair, not just faculty. You get to select your gift from a catalogue after the 25 years." A question was raised, "How many people wear those pins?" "Now that we know they're made of gold, perhaps a few more of us will" was the comment.

Other positive comments were that "making crafts is funny and fun. The posters you've made from year to year are great."

The question was raised, "Why have this on library lawn? Why not a bigger lawn?" Susie responded that the survey respondents indicated other locations were "too far away from me":

hence the location but smaller lawn. Susie relayed that it is hard to find a central locations and it has been a debate for seven years. If we set up two places, we double the cost. We use what commencement office does for all the tents and to counterbalance what we use for employee celebration in order to get a better rate on the rentals.

Contact Susie Lyons or Sandy Tishler with more feedback if need be asap. "It is actually past time to make decisions. We will try to make the event as fun as it ever has been; but also make it fit where we are right now." The choices the USAC can assist them in considering:

- Distribution of t-shirts
- Kick-off/ what do we need to do there? What does that event need to look like? Same or cut back?
- Other events: do we need more of them?

Susie will send out a quick survey within which she will help us make suggestions by indicating which events are low cost or no cost. Sept 8th is the tentative date for Employee Celebration kick-off.

Thanks were extended to Susie by Jason Hunt.

Election Results

Diane Banks announced the winners of the vote: Jo Ann Patterson is our new treasurer, Sheri DiGiovanna our secretary, and Daniel Dubois our VP, President Elect.

Featured speaker: Nora Spencer – Director, Office of LGBTQI Life, KC Potter Center.

Nora gave us a brief overview of some of the issues dealt with at the Center and how she can be of service to us. The center's website is <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/>

The Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Life at Vanderbilt University is a resource for information and support about gender and sexuality.

Vanderbilt recognizes a range of sexual orientations and through the KC Potter Center serves all members of the Vanderbilt community, students, faculty, staff, and alumni, by creating educational, cultural, and social opportunities. The office also supports and advises LGBTQI-related campus groups and activities.

Nora gave the council some important definitions of sexual orientations and noted that the risk of violence and discrimination is 100 times greater for anyone who transgresses gender norms. She emphasized that the Center's goal is to make the campus a safe space for all, moving toward tolerance, acceptance and support and seeking to promote admiration, appreciation and nurturance of all lifestyles.

For questions or information related to HR issues, you may call with the Center at 322-3330 or email lgbtqilife@vanderbilt.edu Nora invited council members to "Come in take a look at the Center and meet students on campus, stop any time."

Jason thanked both our guests, Nora and Susie.
The meeting was adjourned

The next and final 2008/09 USAC meeting will be on June 9th, 2009 in the Rand Function Room of Sarratt

Reminder: All meeting times and locations are posted on the Staff Council website <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/usac/next.html>

Minutes were submitted by Sheri DiGiovanna, in the absence of elected secretary, Kristy Fisher.