

## University Staff Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

**Date:** April 10, 2007  
**Meet Time:** 8:30a.m. – 10:00a.m.  
**Meeting Location:** Rand Function Room, Sarratt

**Attendees:** Becky Atack, Brad Awalt, Diane Banks, Beth Clark, Cathy Crimi, Michael Crowe, Ashley Crownover, Sue Davis, Mary Ann Dean, Michele Dixon, Sandie Frantz, Sharone Hall, Nancy Hanna, Beth Hanson, Sammie Huffmon, Jason Hunt, Tiffany Ingram, Faye Johnson, Rosalind Johnson, Bonnie Kress, Ginger Leger, Ian McCullough, Brenda McKee, Ginny McLean-Swartzell, Shelley Meadows, Regina Newsom-Snell, Martha Reid, Kathy Rhodes, Robert Rich, Andy Richter, Karen Seezen, Lynn Smith, Brian Smokler, Sharon Stanley, Dan Steward, Davis Strange, Gay Tidwell, Malah Tidwell, Carlos Trenary, Jim Webb, Mary Clark Webb, Diana Wohlfahrt

**Regrets:** Jean Alley, John Brassil, Ken Carter, Dan Cline, Mary Clissold, Kevin Colon, Kathleen Corbitt, Tracy Cunningham, Kay Donigian, Faye Dorman, Jeffery Duly, Mary Lou Edgar, Kenon Ewing, Carol Guth, Antoinette Hicks, Shirley Hiltz, Pam Hoffner, Sue King, Heather Lefkowitz, Joe Lowe, Willa Dean Martin, Joyce Matthews, Mary Kay Matthys, Jackie McPeak, Stephanie Newton, JoAnn Patterson, Donald Pickert, Sheri Reynolds, Lori Shepard, Mike Smeltzer, Chase Smith, Carol Soren, Susan Starcher, Corwin Thomas, Kay Tyler, Susan Widmer, Sherry Willis, Cliff Wilson, Melissa Wocher, Jeff Youngblood

**Visitors:** Lauren Brisky, Jane Bruce, Nim Chinniah

### **President Diana Wohlfahrt called meeting to order**

Diana thanked the Communications committee for getting the agenda out to the Council. She then called for the approval of the March minutes. The minutes were approved. Diana introduced the guests at the meeting: Lauren Brisky, Nim Chinniah, Jane Bruce and Frank Gladu. Frank is the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Business Services.

### **Dining Options at the Commons**

**Lida Horne, Director, Vanderbilt Dining Services**

[www.vanderbilt.edu/dining](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/dining)

Lida opened her presentation with a slide showing a bird's eye view of the commons (see presentation). It will include a post office, gym and dining terrace. The Commons is a LEED building. LEED stands for Leadership in Environmental Design (<http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/>). Webcams are set up in the area so you can see the progress being made. Lida showed several picture of the Commons.

Lida told the group about the layout of the Commons dining facility. The Serrery is the main area of service for students. The center isle is a salad bar with breads and soups.

There is a wok station and a chef's table. The chef's table has 12 seats and will sometimes be used for small programs for students to learn about preparation or other educational lessons. There will be a large grill station and a pizza station. In addition to the Servedy, there will be the Common Grounds, the main dining room, an outside dining space and a second floor dining space. The Common Ground is a 24/7 store open for students. It will have some food items, supplies, etc. It will be a boutique style shop and they will accept feedback on items they should carry.

The flavors and services that will be offered include Brick Oven Pizza, the Euro Kitchen, Wok, Grill, Salad bar, Sizzle station, Soup, Deli, Breakfast bar, Bread and Pastries, Cereals, and Desserts.

The center isle is packed with an efficient use of space. Lida showed the group a number of sample menus in the presentation. Students were given an opportunity to taste some of these menu items, and the Moroccan couscous was a very popular item. There will be over 100 possible items at this center isle. The salad bar will contain fresh options. The Sizzle station will have a chef that prepares some additional options for the salads. There will also be hot dressings.

The Grill station will offer breakfast, lunch and dinner. They will also have options available until 10 pm. Lida shared some sample menu offerings from this station. She also noted that students can order items fresh and there will be specialty items. Lida noted that Vanderbilt is in the business of teaching and introducing students to new things, so they will get different options.

The Wok/Euro kitchen/Chef's table station can work independently or together. The Euro kitchen can prepare just about anything, but will often offer "comfort food" items. These items will be served in family style panes. The idea is to get away from the institutional style pan. The Euro kitchen will be on a 21 day rotation. They will be looking forward to offering students opportunities to try new things. If there are favorite items, they may appear more often in the cycle. The Wok station will offer Asian cuisine with the objective to be authentic. The Wok station will be on a 14 day cycle.

The pizza oven can cook more than just pizza. It is a great oven. This area will also be on a 14 day cycle and will include traditional and specialty pizzas. They will also offer baked items such as lasagna and white cheddar macaroni and cheese.

The Common Grounds is more than just a station. It will have coffee beverages and other store items. Lida noted that we know that students eat 24 hours/day. The cafeteria has 600-700 sales between the hours of midnight and 7am. The Common Grounds will offer beverages, frozen items, pastries, bakery items, to go food, coffee and sundries.

There will also be programming in the dining facility. Programs will include things like theme dinners, seminar dinners, distinguished faculty dinners, chef's table presentations, Homecoming, and graduation. The Chef's table will have food presentations in relation to culture. The students are familiar with these types of activities. Lida showed us a few pictures of other activities they have held. The purpose of the programs is to help create relationships. Sometimes they use theme meals or surprise specialty events. They also use

the programs to create opportunities for the faculty and deans to interact with students in a different environment.

After discussing the food options and new dining facility within the Commons, Lida told the Council about the new Faculty/Staff meal plans. Effective May 14 faculty and staff will be able to purchase a bundle of 10 meals for \$50 plus tax. This can be done on the Commodore Card website. To purchase the meal, you simply swipe your id at check out. You can purchase the meal plan online. When doing so, do not be confused by the 2 price options, the program requires two. It will not accept \$0. With the meal plan, you will look for signs to tell you what you can choose. First, you pick where you want to eat, then you look for the meal plan logo and make your choice. When checking out, you must tell the cashier that you are using the meal plan. It is \$5 per meal.

**Question: Do faculty/staff have to worry about crowds during lunch?**

Yes, depending on the semester, time and day. Most lines take less than 5 minutes, but at 12:15 Rand will have long lines. If possibly, it is suggested that you come in during off times.

**Question: Can you do payroll deduction for the meal plan?**

No, you must pay with a credit card.

**Question: Will you take a future part in graduation at the Commons? Like, The Party?**

Nim responded that now when The Party takes place, there is not a space large enough. As it evolves, with the Commons being a larger facility, they sense that it will stay open, or at least part of it will. He also noted that any facility that is open is open to anyone.

**Question: Will there be a post office?**

Yes.

**Question: How many students do you think you will serve?**

1400 expected this year and 1600 by next year.

**Question: How soon can we sign up for the meal plan?**

May 14

**Question: Do you have any sense of how your new space will impact other facilities?**

Dining Services is committed to bringing newness to other facilities. The long range plan is to refurbish the others.

**Question: Can you use the staff/faculty meal plan anywhere?**

You can use it anywhere the student meal plan is accepted.

**Question: Are you going to do anything in the new facility like the Tastes of Nashville?**

Have not made a decision to do anything like that yet, but it is certainly something to consider.

**Question: As part of the opening, it would be nice to provide people with the opportunity to have a little taste.**

Nim stated that that was a great suggestion. They will be doing things throughout the summer to get ready and that is a good suggestion for them to consider.

**Question: If the pizzas take 20 minutes to prepare, are you thinking about giving people the option to call in an order?**

They don't want to make that kind of commitment at this point. If 400 people called in at 11, they would not be able to have everything ready by 1130. It was also noted that it is intended to be an eat in facility. Frank explained that because this is a LEED facility it promotes eat in dining.

**Question: I am sure that USAC would be willing to serve as guinea pigs with the food.**

You are right. That is a good suggestion.

**Question: Will this dining facility expand and bring in any new catering options?**

That remains to be seen, but we do not want this to be an event space. First, and foremost, this space is designed for students and they will take priority.

**Question: What does eat-in mean?**

As a LEED facility, they have things like a pulper and other state of the art equipment to minimize the use of power and waste. This means that the facility is not using paper and plastic. They are using real dishes and the students are encouraged to get their food and eat in the facility.

**Question: Is it large enough to hold the entire class?**

Not the entire freshmen class at one time.

**Question: Will you post nutritional values?**

All menus are posted on the web, but at this time we do not post them on site. Nim noted that we have a registered Dietitian on staff. Many students have food allergies or special diet needs, and we are able to put together a good plan to meet their needs.

**Question: Thinking along the lines of calories and fat, it seems like it might help make students more aware of what they are eating if it was posted on site.**

Dining regularly has a nutritionist come in to teach students. They are trying to create an environment more like home without an institutional look and feel, but they do make an effort to teach. If what a student's needs for their diet is not readily available, they make an effort to make it available.

Lida thanked the Council for their time and encouraged the group to visit any of their dining locations.

**Question: Can you use a credit card, cash or VU card to purchase food in the dining facilities?**

You can use cash, check, credit and the Commodore card. If you want to use the Commodore card, you can either put money on it and use it like cash, or use the meal

plan with 10 meals for \$50. When you go through the register, they will tell you how many you have left.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Mary Ann Dean—Hardship Fund Report**

Mary Ann reported out for the Hardship Fund. She stated that in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 42 \$50 food assistance awards were given. They received 21 applications for \$500 awards, 14 of which were in the Medical Center. Of the 21 applications, 6 were approved. The application process involves lots of documentation and questions. To this point, they had not received any applications from the recent apartment fire. Mary Ann said that you should let them know if you know of any staff members that were affected by the fire.

### **Shelley Meadows—Staff Welfare Committee Report**

Shelley reported that the Staff Welfare committee had provided a long list of staff issues to the Executive committee at their most recent meeting. The Executive committee narrowed that list down. Shelley noted that for some of the potential items, there were clear explanations that could be given, and they plan to post some FAQs somewhere to provide explanations. At this time, the committee will be sending out 5 issues for the Council to review. They are asking that everyone prioritize them 1 through 5. After receiving feedback from the Council, the Staff Welfare committee will take the top couple of issues and do research into them to see what changes can be addressed. Shelley also asked the Council to let Staff Welfare know if there were any other issues that you would like to see explored. They are really interested in the group's input.

### **Ashley Crownover—Communications Committee Report**

Ashley announced that the Communications had met twice. They determined that their function is to help other committees and the Executive committee get information out to the group. They will also assist in getting information about the coming elections out to the VU community. Ginny McLean-Swartzell sent news releases to the VU papers to help raise interest about USAC.

Diana Wohlfahrt noted that if you are not getting the information you need, let the Communications committee know and they can help address that.

### **Jason Hunt—Events Committee Report**

Jason thanked everyone who had volunteered to help with The Party. Jason also asked the group to let his committee know if anyone needed volunteers for any events and they are happy to help. He reported that the Events committee is going to be meeting about hosting a Blood Drive some time in the fall. The Events committee will also help with the changing of the officers.

## **Andy Richter—Membership Committee Report**

Andy reported that the Membership committee was assisting Cliff Wilson with the coming elections. They will also be updating and enhancing the online membership roster. They will also work on reapportionment, meaning that they will go back and review the different departments and groups to ensure there are an appropriate number of representatives in each group. Andy also provided a report to the group concerning the coming elections in Cliff's absence. An email is being sent to all of the odd numbered groups. If you are up for re-election and you are not interested, but think someone else might be good, please suggest them. You will be given until April 20 to submit your name. After that time, if needed elections will be held.

Andy also reported on the Benefits Committee meeting. He noted that they were still concerned with healthcare cost containment. The University is looking at establishing an Investment Committee to serve as an advisory committee to ensure that we are keeping the companies we work with honest. He asked that you contact Jane Bruce or Kevin Myatt if this is something you have a talent in and are interest in being involved.

### **Question: Are the Hardship Fund and Benefits committees USAC committees?**

No, these are all University wide committees.

Diane Banks has agreed to take over the Rules and Administration committee Chair role. Diana Wohlfahrt has asked this committee to look at how we are doing things on the Council.

Carlos Trenary was asked by one of his constituents to ask about the train benefit. They were wondering about why the University did not get the same benefit as the Medical Center. Diana mentioned the email that was sent out, and noted that if anyone else was receiving these concerns and requests, to send them to Shelley Meadows. Nim added that the Medical Center is having huge parking issues. Most employees are on waiting lists for lots. They decided to extend the train benefit to attempt to alleviate some of these problems. This was a targeted, isolated need. Shelley commented that the bigger issue was the communication. Most of the feedback she had received focused on the fact that it went to the MC first. Nim acknowledged that the communication was an issue, and apologized. He noted that going forward they would work to get the communication out to the University as a whole when it had an affect on everyone.

Diana Wohlfahrt adjourned meeting.