

**Staff Council  
University of St. Thomas  
Meeting Minutes  
May 15, 2003 -- 1:30 - 3:00 PM**

Members present: Laurie Dimond, Rod Kirkwold, Michael Andregg, Denise Richie, Mary Kleinberg, Ruth Danielson, Barb Dunker, Kathy Sauro, Diane Tibodeau, Karin Zeller

New members present: Erin Thigpen, Chris Cognetta

Absent: Nate Rolloff

Laurie Dimond, Council Chair, began the meeting by identifying the newly-elected members to the Council (Chris Cognetta, Joanne Rhoades, Christene Sirois and Erin Thigpen). Two of the new members were able to attend the May meeting, and Laurie asked that everyone in attendance introduce themselves and then also thanked those members whose terms expire (Michael Andregg, Mary Kleinberg, Denise Richie and Karin Zeller) for their many contributions and service to the committee. They will be missed.

At the next meeting on June 19 (1:30 - 3:00 pm), Council elections will be held, and members are invited and encouraged to make nominations for the four elected positions (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer).

A suggestion was made to look into investing in a tape recorder that the secretary can use to aid in the process of taking meeting minutes. Diane Tibodeau will look into purchasing a recorder.

Laurie will invite Loren Heeringa to join us for the June meeting (and also the luncheon planned prior to the 1:30 meeting).

A motion to approve the Minutes of the April 17 meeting was made and seconded. Minutes were approved.

Kathy Sauro reported on the Council membership election process recently held. The process went OK, but there were some issues that arose, and the Council agreed to designate one of its upcoming meetings to spending time going over Articles III and IV of its Bylaws (Membership and Representation and Elections). The issues that arose had to do with, for example, is it possible to have at-large representation since there can be difficulties finding a representative from certain areas within the university and from the various campuses; what to do with late votes that are submitted; etc.? Laurie will make copies of the Bylaws available to members, if needed (the Bylaws are available on-line at [www.stthomas.edu/staffcouncil/bylaws](http://www.stthomas.edu/staffcouncil/bylaws)).

There was a brief discussion about how best to communicate with all Staff Council members. Erin Thigpen is going to look into the possibility of having a distribution

list of all non-exempt staff, that is automatically updated if someone leaves UST or a new hire is made, available on the Outlook e-mail system along with the other "Distribution Groups" available. Karin Zeller offered to look into the best way to communicate with and get materials to non-exempt staff who don't have access to e-mail.

The implementation of the Banner system was briefly discussed. Training sessions for budget managers and others are on-going and staff can register for those sessions through the H.R. web page. Submitting time cards on-line is on hold for now as the Banner system is implemented throughout various areas of the university..

A question was raised about how the recent Vice President for Mission position was filled without going through the university-mandated search process. Members were also interested in what assistance the university is providing to the staff members whose positions were lost with the elimination of the Department of Continuing Studies. Are they being recruited for positions currently open within the university, etc.? The committee will ask Loren Heeringa about these issues at its next meeting.

A recap of the staff appreciation breakfast took place. Many comments were given to committee members about how nice and colorful the room looked, the lapel pins seemed to be a hit, the variety and number of good prizes was appreciated, and Father Dease's attendance at the breakfast was greatly appreciated. A suggestion was made to try and get next year's breakfast date on Father Dease's calendar as early as possible. Also if the same invitation template is used next year, make a change to where the address label is applied.

Kathy Sauro and Laurie Dimond mentioned receiving a few comments regarding the election ballot that was mailed out. There was some concern that the ballot could not be confidential since the label attached identified the staff member voting. They both stressed that the ballots were kept completely confidential and, in the future, the label would not be used on the ballot itself. There was a problem with the first ballot prepared and, in order to save money and time, the second ballot was sent out in this manner.

The Council budget is in the black, however, there are a few bills yet to be paid which may eat up most of the remaining monies.

### **Committee reports** --

**Affirmative Action** -- nothing to report.

**Charitable Giving** -- Barb Dunker reported that donations of \$80 for Catholic Relief Services and several bags of non-perishable foods for an area food shelf were collected at the May staff appreciation breakfast. Barb will check to see if a future staff Vision trip is being planned.

**Diversity** -- Gene Scapanski has been appointed the vice president of mission, and some new directives will probably be forthcoming. The Steering Committee was charged with writing up a plan and presenting it at an EVP Council meeting. No real end point to the committee's work has been identified, however.

**EVP Council Meetings** -- Laurie encouraged staff council members to attend, if possible. Good information is shared at these meetings, and it is also good for staff council members to have a presence at these meetings.

**Employee Recognition** -- a recommendation has been made to move this event to Heritage Week (some time in February), but a final decision has not been made.

**Fringe Benefit** -- Michael Andregg reported that the committee is reaching various decision stage points. Tuition remission is moving forward. Nothing added for this coming year, however the group remains committed to expanding the remission program. Health care benefits are going to be more expensive. There will be a technical change to the prescription co-pay, trying very hard to preserve a high quality health care plan. Employees will be receiving a notice about their long-term disability benefit. Everyone will have a one-time decision to make regarding when the government takes taxes on this benefit. This election will be made by individual decision, not decided by the majority.

**Wellness** -- there was a brief discussion surrounding the lack of facilities on the Minneapolis campus (not even a place for runners to shower after going for a run). Ruth Danielson said that a study has been funded to look in detail at the Wellness issue and a report should be available by our next meeting in June.