

Staff Council
University of St. Thomas
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2003 -- 1:30 - 3:00 PM

Members present: Chris Cognetta, Laurie Dimond, Barb Dunker, Rod Kirkwold, Andy Leet, Joanne Rhoades, Nate Rolloff, Kathy Sauro, Erin Thigpen, Diane Tibodeau

Members absent: Meg Krekeler

Guests: Drs. Angie Barretta-Herman and John Kemper
Ms. Rachel Wobschall
Drs. Mark Dienhart, Tom Rochon and Gene Scapanski

An opening reflection was read from the University of St. Thomas Millennium *Book of Prayers*. Kathy Sauro agreed to provide the reflection at next month's meeting.

Laurie Dimond welcomed Angie Barretta-Herman and John Kemper to the meeting. Drs. Barretta-Herman and Kemper asked to speak to the Staff Council about its role in the upcoming NCA site visit (October 19-22). The team's schedule, while here, is yet to be negotiated. Recommendations are made to the team as to who we would like them to meet with, they (the team) then decide who they want to meet with.

In preparation of the visit, Drs. Barretta-Herman and Kemper wanted to make the Staff Council aware of the possibility of being interviewed. They handed out recommendations from the Self-Study that specifically identify Staff Council as key personnel involved in the discussion and implementation of the recommendation. They also gave the Council a list of typical questions that the evaluators may ask. The team will be going between the Minneapolis and St. Paul campuses via the UST shuttle and while on both campuses will likely ask questions of people they encounter.

Drs. Barretta-Herman and Kemper reiterated that the recommendations made through the Self-Study have areas of responsibility attached so that action can be taken as necessary. Drs. Barretta-Herman and Kemper also said that the site visit team would not necessarily look at each recommendation of the Self-Study, but the committees (60 people involved on the Self-Study team) that produced this study and also Father Dease have read over and looked at all of the recommendations. This is not a document that sits on a shelf and gathers dust. It is an on-going, active document and all recommendations will be considered for action.

The membership of the site visit team has not been completely identified. As soon as word is received on the makeup of the team, their bios and photos will be in the *Bulletin*.

The next item discussed was the date for the open constituents meeting and also who the Staff Council would like to invite to this meeting. It was agreed that having the three new vice presidents would be very timely and appropriate. Discussion was also had about the format of the meeting. It was decided to give staff the opportunity to forward their questions before the event but also to give people in attendance the chance to ask any follow-up or any other questions they'd like to raise. Chris Cognetta is checking into the food options (having something different than pizza) for the meeting. Rod Kirkwold can put up meeting announcement flyers near the time clocks for those staff who don't have access to a computer.

Rachel Wobschall, executive director of constituent relations, then joined the meeting to ask for input on Father Dease's annual Christmas event. The dinner that has been held in years past is a very nice event and seems to draw about the same number and the same group of people each year. In an effort to broaden the group of attendees, Ms. Wobschall's staff has come up with a proposal to make some changes and asked for input from Staff Council about the proposed changes. She handed out a proposal outlining the rationale for suggesting a change and also the format of a different event. The basic change to the event would be the date/time. The proposal is to go to a Friday, late afternoon format instead of the Saturday evening timing. The thought behind this change is the hope that more faculty and staff would be inclined to stay on campus and attend rather than come back to campus on a Saturday evening. The event would remain a first-class event in terms of the food and beverages and, in addition, Father Dease will continue to have a large role in the event.

Some of the concerns voiced by the Council are that for many staff, the Saturday evening dinner provided a wonderful opportunity to get dressed up and bring their spouse or guest to a special evening. In addition, having the late afternoon timing may prevent some spouses/guests from being able to attend. The dinner served was very good, and there is a concern about having a drop-off in the quality of the event.

On the flip side, some Council members expressed the opinion that they may be more inclined to attend because they can go along with others from their work areas and the event would be less "formal" and possibly less intimidating.

Ms. Wobschall asked that we give this proposal some thought, and she will follow-up in a few days with Laurie for reaction from the Council.

Laurie then welcomed to the meeting Mark Dienhart, Tom Rochon and Gene Scapanski. Father Dease announced a reorganization in early September, and Drs. Dienhart, Rochon and Scapanski now all report directly to the president. Dr. Dienhart has been named Executive Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer, Dr. Rochon has been named Executive Vice President, Chief Academic Officer and Dr. Scapanski was named, prior to the reorganization, Vice President for Mission. Laurie

explained the Staff Council's role on campus and then asked each of the guests to talk a little bit about their goals, etc.

All three expressed a deep appreciation of what staff does and how they contribute to the workings of the university and the campus. They mentioned that it is an exciting time for the University of St. Thomas, but there will also be some changes ahead.

There is a definite advantage to having Dr. Rochon reporting directly to the president. Drs. Dienhart and Rochon both said they don't want to create two stove pipes ... one academic and one administrative. They plan to work collaboratively and, in fact, feel they already are. Dr. Scapanski talked about the challenges ahead, particularly in the work being done with the mission statement. He discussed the formation of a writing committee involved with the statement, and also expressed his interest in meeting and engaging staff in discussion.

Laurie invited the three vice presidents to be at our open constituents meeting, and all three readily agreed to participate.

Given the length of the meeting, Laurie asked that we continue discussion from the August 20 meeting regarding the amendment to the By-Laws via e-mail.

Rod Kirkwold has agreed to serve on the Healthy "U" Program Committee, and also, Loren Heeringa confirmed that the Staff Council representation to the Fringe Benefits Committee is actually supposed to be two persons. Joanne Rhodes is already serving on that committee, and Laurie asked for another volunteer. Both Andy Leet and Chris Cognetta expressed interest, and Laurie will connect with both of them to name another representative.

Committee reports --

Affirmative Action --
Budget Advisory --
Charitable Giving --
Child Development Center --
Diversity --
Employee Recognition --
Fringe Benefits --
University Committee on Women --

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Next Meeting: October 15, 2003
Minneapolis Campus -- TMH 301

Council Members

Chris Coggnetta	Food Service	2-4140	TMH235	
Laurie Dimond	Academic	2-5300	JRC153	
Barbara Dunker	Administrative		2-6920	AQU121
Rod Kirkwold	Physical Plant/Sec	2-6542	PHP111	
Meg Krekeler	Minneapolis	2-4272	TMH331	
Andrew Leet	Academic	2-5600	JRC333	
Joanne Rhoades	Administrative		2-4342	TMH105
Nathan Rolloff	Administrative	2-6506	AQU217	
Kathryn Sauro	Minneapolis	2-4380	TMH337	
Erin Thigpen	Administrative	2-6508	AQU221	
Diane Tibodeau	Academic	2-6321	5016	