

Council Notes

July 20, 2016

Prepared by: Deb Zielinski

Attendees: Meghan Hughes, John Cole, Tony Parziale, Michael Cunningham, Tracy Karasinski, Rosemary Costigan, Ron Cavallaro, Gene Grande, Leslie Florio, Steven Murray, Peter Woodberry, Sara Enright, David Patten, Walter Crocker, Robyn Greene, Robin Smith, Izabel DeAraujo-Rivera, Alphonso Atkins, Bob Cipolla, Bill LeBlanc, Alix Ogden, Deb Zielinski

President's Remarks:

- Meghan welcomed four new members to their first Council meeting. Tracy Karasinski, Tony Parziale, Izabel DeAraujo Rivera, and Alphonso Atkins; each gave a brief personal background introduction.
- Meghan made a request for the Council's help, noting that in her first six months she has made considerable effort to get out and meet the college community. She asked for ideas on how to build relationships with faculty and staff. She has plans to hold two separate gatherings in August and September with Student Services leadership and Department Chairs. Other ideas are welcomed.
- Meghan gave a brief update regarding Performance-Based Funding, confirming that the legislation has passed and we are now obligated to take the implementation plan from the Commissioner. We want a thoughtful implementation.
- There was a short conversation about accessibility of the Council notes on the web site. Deb confirmed that they are posted, but not terribly easy to access. Tony will help get these notes posted in a location that is readily accessible.
- Meghan then briefly discussed the impending launch of a strategic planning process. She is hopeful that there will be more information to share in September at our next meeting. The goal is to launch the planning process in the fall. The Council will be valuable in moving this forward; we want broad and deep engagement across the college. All teams will come to the table to help build the plan.

Proposed Bathroom and Locker Room Usage and Inclusion of Transgender Persons Policies:

- Michael C. discussed the date typo in the letter he brought forward at our May meeting from the U.S. Dept. of Justice and DoE. Subsequent to our May meeting, a task force of students, faculty, and staff was formed to look at this topic. Two policies that came out of that task force were previously distributed prior to today's meeting. Michael reviewed the two policies and asked for approval of the policy relating to Inclusion of Transgender Persons.
- Dave P. made a motion to approve; it was seconded by Tracy K., and unanimously approved.
- With regard to the Bathroom and Locker Room Usage policy, Michael stated that we are challenged by the budget and our facilities with what we can and cannot do. The Athletic Dept. will follow the policy and make accommodations as required.

Steve inquired if we would still have men's and ladies' rooms, and Michael responded affirmatively. Steve then asked if the labeling would change, and Michael also responded affirmatively. Michael added that the Athletic Dept. will undertake to provide additional privacy as needed. There was additional discussion related to this policy. Ron C. asked if this policy parallels what RIDE has suggested for elementary/secondary, and Michael confirmed that it did.

- Dave P. made a motion to approve; it was seconded by Tracy K., and the policy was approved with Steve M. objecting.

Auxiliary Enterprise Financial Policy:

- Dave P. brought forward this policy, which had been previously distributed in advance of today's meeting. He explained that it pertains to the bookstore, which needs flexibility to use its surplus cash to fund its cash flow for the year. It was developed with Dave, Ruth Barrington, and Sharon Picard and came out of a suggestion by the auditors that there be a policy for it. Dave stated that 80% of the year-end budget will accrue to the bookstore capital fund; the amount is not to exceed \$350,000. Discussion followed.
- Dave made a motion that the policy be approved; it was seconded by Alix, and unanimously approved.
- Steve commented that we needed to do a better job with communicating policies to the college community. In his opinion, he added that he thought this policy was open-ended and not limited to the bookstore. He additionally commented that people feel rushed without adequate time to understand. Dave again reiterated that it was a recommendation from the audit to have this policy. Dave felt Steve's request for more detail was appropriate; Deb will add clarification about this policy to the minutes, which is contained in the following bullet.
- The purpose of the Auxiliary Enterprise policy is to document the distribution of the bookstore's annual profit. In the past, the bookstore was required by a bond agreement to remit 100% of the profit to a "reserve fund". This cash restriction had a negative impact on bookstore operations because much of their profit was tied up in non-liquid assets such as inventory and accounts receivable. The bond has since been paid off and the requirement lifted. The new policy would allow the bookstore to retain a percentage of the annual profit in order to pay book publishers and continue extending financial aid credit to students. The remainder of the profit will fund capital projects at the college.

Schedule Drop for Non Payment Policy:

- Dave P. brought forward this policy, which also had been previously distributed in advance of today's meeting. He confirmed that it is a long-standing policy. Dave discussed the routine practice, which included reaching out to students. If they still do not pay, we have to drop them. The difference is that instead of the approval for the drop going to the president, it would now be automatically approved. If there are extenuating circumstances, we can delay the drop. We are trying to shorten the process. The default is that the drop will occur automatically.
- Dave made a motion that the policy be approved; it was seconded by Sara, and unanimously approved.

- Peter then asked about the “end of the business day” language. Dave explained that the drop is generally 4:00 p.m. Dave then amended his motion to say “within 24 hours” instead of “corresponding”. Peter suggested stating something along the lines of “by the close of business it is scheduled to occur.” Rosemary suggested the striking of the last sentence in the first paragraph because it was cumbersome.
- Dave made a motion to amend the language, which was seconded by Alix, and unanimously approved.

Enrollment Trends:

- Sara commented that the goal is to get us on the same page with respect to enrollment. The enrollment report is reviewed every morning, and she compares it to the same date in previous years. This is collective information-sharing and what can we do to solve this going forward.
- Sara presented a slide show that depicted the decline of enrollment over the past 5 years. This presentation can be found on the President’s page under the President’s Council tab.
- The most significant drop is in the full-time student category – 21% over the last 5 years.
- This is a national trend, but how do we buck the trend and what does that look like? What does it look like for us to keep the students here and help them achieve their goals? Sara said that this matters tremendously, regardless of the national trend. Our revenues are doubly dependent on enrollment. It is our opportunity to deliver on our mission.
- Sara reviewed what is being done to address the challenge in the short-, mid-, and long-terms.
- She concluded by asking if there were ways in which we can support enrollment efforts in our respective areas.
- Bob C. added that if we do not buck the trend, we won’t have jobs. He felt that there are so many things we can do, some of which do cost money and resources. Some 4-year schools are accepting students who they normally don’t take when they should be coming here. What doesn’t cost money and what we can change is how students want to be treated. Never underestimate what it takes for a student to drive into the parking lot. It is all they can do to get out of the car to come in and talk to someone. There is anxiety, possibly a poor high school experience. It only takes one negative interaction here for them to say “I knew this was a bad idea.” Student-centeredness and friendliness does not cost us anything. Think about how any of us want to be treated. Students need to know “this person cares.” It goes back to service. Bob said that Mission #1 is free to implement and that is a student-centered approach. We have to make it easier for a student to come here.
- Sara said that this is a call to action to step up and serve our students. She asked for the group to share their thoughts with her.

Campus Security:

- David Patten presented an update regarding campus security. We are always striving for improvement and working together will make our campuses safer.
- David reported that College Police has been trained in handling people suffering with mental illness. Training related to “responsible person”, CSA, run/hide/fight (see website) has also been delivered.
- Summit Consulting conducted a limited review of College Police and campus security. The report made several recommendations. We have implemented most, if not all, of those recommendations.
- There will be an update to the Emergency Management Plan. This is being worked on by a group of people including Joe Arsenault and Bill Ferland.
- Steve said that one concern he has is what is going to happen as it relates to arming College Police. David responded that it is the president’s decision. Steve also added that people were asking about cameras, swipe cards.
- President Hughes said this Council will have those conversations; any decision will be informed by discussions with this group.
- Steve commented that people are concerned about the cost of arming College Police. Have we done that research? What is the budget for the swipe cards? (This is being determined through an iterative process with the design effort.)
- David said that we have a resource regarding the arming police subject, which is URI’s chief, who has the current data.
- The Newport Campus has cameras and has since the campus was built.
- Cameras and blue lights for Lincoln and Providence campuses was \$562,331.
- The cost for the Warwick blue light design was \$78,500.
- We are currently in the phase of evaluating what is to be done in Warwick. We did the smaller campuses first. Warwick is in the planning stage.
- With regard to the swipe cards, ultimately we will be moving to no keys. Lincoln has been completed. This is funded by the general capital budget. David discussed the types of budgets.
- Steve felt that people would be interested in some type of regular updates.
- Rosemary commented that there is an “Emergency Response / Environmental Health & Safety” governance committee that Joe Arsenault chairs. Much of the discussions are happening in that committee, and there is representation.
- David discussed the CCTV policy that was approved in 2014. Cameras will not be located where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.
- There was further discussion about the timetable of arming college police. Meghan suggested that we might ask Chief Baker from URI to come here and address the Council.
- Tony noted that he is very concerned about information security. He is looking to roll out policies and systems. We are sitting on extremely valuable information (SSNs, etc.), which we have to protect.

Approval of Minutes from May 25, 2016:

- Meghan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 25 meeting. A motion was made by Peter, seconded by Ruth, and unanimously approved.

Next meeting:

- September 28, 2016.