

**THE NMSU EMPLOYEE COUNCIL
FINAL APPROVED
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

November 12, 2009
Gerald Thomas, Room 297

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kurt Anderson, Roseanne Bensley, Ellen Bosman, Kelly Brooks, Alicia Carabajal, Tim Chappell, Katrina Doolittle, Lydia Duran, Allan Kaplan, Norma Ledesma, Lori McKee, Karen Medina, Anthony Parra, Nellie Quezada-Aragon, Karla Thompson

EX-OFFICIO: Cherri Lambeth, Tim Nesbitt, Angela Velasco

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Bea Garrett

GUESTS: Denise Welsh

CALL TO ORDER AND MINUTES: Kelly Brooks called the regular monthly meeting of the NMSU Employee Council to order at 3:00 p.m. and thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting minutes for October 8, 2009 were presented.

- Motion to accept the minutes was made by Kurt Anderson
- Seconded by Tim Chappell
- Motion was passed unanimously

OLD BUSINESS

Policy Manual Update Section 3.75

Ellen Bosman reported that this committee has met a couple of times and has looked at how our peer institutions have addressed this issue. They are re-writing the policy so that it is clear that it is referring to accessing things on the internet that do not apply to the employee's work assignment.

Presidential Search Update:

Tim Nesbitt stated that the search committee process was completed. He indicated that he was appreciative of the professional guidance provided by the search firm, Greenwood Asher. The process was extremely fair and inclusive. One hundred percent attendance was required at every meeting. Roseanne Bensley asked if another candidate will be interviewed to replace the candidate who has removed himself from the search. Tim reported that the committee ranked alternates, however, the decision whether or not to utilize the alternate pool is up to the Board of Regents. The finalist is expected to be announced on November 19. It was discussed that Faculty Senate was having a special meeting to review the candidates. Kelly asked if the group was interested in scheduling a special meeting as well. After some discussion, it was agreed that this was not necessary.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The minutes from the Alcohol Policy Review Committee Meeting of October 6, 2009 was shared with the committee.

Denise Welsh reported that the insurance committee met on October 28, 2009 to review RFPs from insurance providers for NMSU retirees. Blue Cross Blue Shield was the only one that submitted a complete packet; therefore, they were chosen to continue providing retiree insurance for NMSU. The insurance committee recommended that premiums for retirees under 65 would increase slightly. The premiums for the over 65 group would remain the same although they would experience an increase in co-pays and out of pocket expenses. A notice will be sent out to all retirees. The minutes will be shared with this committee at a later date.

Cherri Lambeth stated that the Fringe Benefits Committee did not meet but is scheduled to meet next week.

Katrina Doolittle reported that the Campus Planning Committee met and reviewed new signage. A model is located on the International Mall between Milton Hall and Zuhl Library. Also, the City of Las Cruces has donated two benches and shelters to be located where the Aggie Shuttle and Roadrunner busses will meet. Kelly will send the minutes out to Employee Council members soon.

NEW BUSINESS

Election Committee Update:

Kelly announced that the 2010 election ballots are currently available although there hasn't been very much activity thus far. She asked the committee members to vote and to encourage their constituents to vote also.

There was some confusion from employees being nominated and then their name not appearing on the ballot. Kelly explained that this situation would arise if the Employee Council already included a voting member in the same summary organization as the nominee. If a nominee was nominated from a summary organization that was already represented with a primary voting member, then the nominee was notified by email that as our bylaws precludes more than one voting member from each summary org, their name was being removed from the ballot. Additionally, the nominee was provided the name of the current voting member and their term expiration date. These employees were also encouraged to attend meetings as all Employee Council meetings are open to all employees and input is welcomed.

Kelly also indicated that a list of the summary organizations is on our website on the election information page under election questions. Kelly was commended on her work improving this process.

Another issue raised by the election committee was the difficulty in identifying the non-branch employees in Banner. This resulted in a less than perfect method to identify individuals as qualifying as a non-branch employee. The HR office has been working on a

way to list working addresses for employees in Banner that may address the non-branch NMSU employees issue once it is completed.

An issue was also raised regarding confusion about whether the limitation on summary org applied to the alternate positions. Norma Ledesma recommended that the Election and By-Laws Committees meet to discuss these issues.

Employee Council Funding Update:

Tim Nesbitt presented a memo to Jennifer Taylor regarding whether or not this committee has the authority to spend the monies in our budget. The issue arose when Interim President Pacheco denied our request to hire a graduate assistant to work on our website. It has been agreed that the budget will be moved under the current Chair's organization to be used by them for copying, etc. Tim recommended that a position of Treasurer be investigated and brought forward at a later meeting.

Records Management & Retention Training:

Kelly shared information regarding this training. More information can be obtained at www.rmr.nmsu.edu.

Messages from staff on Employee Council email:

Karen Schaefer sent a memo to Kelly in which she stated that she plans to work with the Dean of Students and the University attorney, Bruce Kite, regarding the policy allowing therapy animals in the Counseling Center and Student Health Center.

A concern was received regarding providing AggieFit benefits to off-campus employees. Kelly indicated that this is an issue that Employee Council has responded to previously and she would follow up with the employee as this response is still applicable.

A copy of an e-mail Kelly sent to Dr. Pacheco regarding the Provost search was shared with the group.

New Items from Council Members:

Lori McKee shared a plan to combine the Student and Employee Health Centers. This would provide a significant savings to the University which would allow the savings to be utilized to improve the level of services available to all patients, students and employees both. The plan would allow for the use of student fee dollars to be leveraged to fund Students an expansion to the Student Health Center to create a combined employee/student health center. This model would maximize use of facilities to provide for improved level of services. Students were surveyed regarding this idea and 84% were supportive.

-Motion was made and seconded to endorse this plan based on the overall improvements of services to all.-Motion was passed unanimously

Cheri Lambeth reported that two members are leaving the Fringe Benefits committee creating openings for one active employee and one retiree alternate. Kelly also reported that there are two openings on the insurance committee; one for a retiree and one for a retiree alternate. Kelly will send out a hotline notice of the openings and work with Rene Yoder regarding to

determine if there are other methods available to contact retirees regarding these vacancies. Employee Council will vote to select new members at the December meeting.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Board of Regents Meeting:

Kelly stated that there is nothing to report.

Administrative Council:

Kelly expressed her concern at the last Administrative Council meeting that items are being presented to the Council for a vote prior to being provided to groups such as Employee Council for input or without allowing an appropriate amount of time so these groups can report back and obtain constituent input. President Pacheco reminded everyone that policies and recommendations should be routed through the appropriate groups (i.e. Employee Council, Faculty Senate, etc.) prior to coming forward to Administrative Council for a vote. Kelly also shared with Admin Council that many of the issues that Employee Council has dealt with over the course of the last year relate to employee benefits. Employees have expressed concerns about the erosion of employee benefits.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 10, 2009 at 3:00 pm in the Skeen Hall, Room 200.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm.