

NMSU Employee Council
FINAL APPROVED
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
October 8, 2009
Dona Ana Community College, Room 114M

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

EX-OFFICIO: Diana Quintana, Rene Yoder

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Linda Beavers, Jaime Marujo, Soum Sanogo, Olga Viramontes

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

The meeting minutes for September 10, 2009 were presented.

- Motion to accept the minutes was made by Kurt Anderson
- Seconded by Anthony Parra
- Motion was passed unanimously

OLD BUSINESS

Web Site:

Kelly Brooks reported that the website is working. In addition, if someone goes to the old ACAP website they will automatically be routed to the new Employee Council website. She added that under the membership link, each committee member's name is a link to their e-mail address.

In addition, a new email was created for Employee Council empcouncil@nmsu.edu. In setting up the new website it was discovered that e-mails sent to the old acap@nmsu.edu address were stuck and had not been delivered. It was discovered that there were several emails over the past couple of years requesting council review that had never been addressed. An email was sent to those submitting the emails letting them know of the problem and that their issues would be addressed at the next Employee Council meeting.

Kelly expressed a special thanks to Gloria Jacquez for the tremendous job she had done in maintaining ACAP's website for so long with no compensation.

Policy Manual 3.75:

Ellen Bosman reported that this new committee met and has done research into how other universities have addressed this issue. So far, Iowa State University is the favorite. None of NMSU's peers refer to the issue as "porn" but as "anything illegal."

Professional Leave:

Kelly looked for the mention of this issue in previous ACAP minutes and also reviewed NMSU’s current policy. Cheri Lambeth provided a background on the issue. It began with an employee sending a request to Dr. Flores who then asked ACAP to look into the matter. The Fringe Benefits committee reviewed and submitted a recommendation that was submitted on behalf of ACAP to then President Martin. As this recommendation was never addressed by President Martin or Interim President Cruzado it was determined we would bring it forward to the Council to re-evaluate prior to submitting again. As the current policy had not changed since the original recommendation was made, if Council members agreed, this could be resubmitted. Kelly asked the group whether the council wished to forward as is, and if so, should this review go to the Interim President or wait until a permanent president is hired. There was discussion that policy should be re-evaluated. Rene Yoder recommended that the policy be returned to the Fringe Benefits committee and anyone who had input into possible changes should send their suggestions to this committee for their review.

-Motion to follow Rene’s recommendation was passed unanimously

Salary Study:

Per Rene, there are no updates since our last meeting.

H1N1:

Lori McKee reported that there have been 92 cases of influenza-like symptoms and 39 cases of the flu on campus. She added that the H1N1 has a relatively low mortality rate. There is not an exact timeline when NMSU will get H1N1 vaccines. In addition, NMSU is out of the seasonal flu vaccine as well. The recovery period for the flu is 3-5 days and people should not return to their normal activities until they have been free of fever for at least 24 hours.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A report of the Athletic Council was shared with the committee.

Nancy Qualkenbush attended the Alcohol committee on Lori McKee’s behalf. Nancy reported that Interim President Pacheco is very supportive of drinking responsibly. This committee will meet again in the spring.

The Insurance committee will meet on October 28.

Nancy attended the Parking Task Force which is a temporary committee. They are considering increasing the number of tickets that can be forgiven from one life-time waiver to a waiver every three years. Lori added that if someone receives a ticket while visiting the Health Center, they should report this to the Health Center to have the ticket taken care of.

The Bookstore Advisory Committee held their initial meeting. Kelly will serve on this committee for a term of two years. The committee meets four times per year. Several committee members shared difficulties that they have experienced with Barnes & Noble. Kelly stressed that the Bookstore is working to remedy such issues.

NEW BUSINESS

Messages from staff on ACAP email:

Kelly received a concern from a staff member regarding the extra fee being charged to employees taking distance education courses. This fee is not covered by the tuition waiver.

- Motion to forward this for review to the Fringe Benefits committee was made by Ellen Bosman
- Seconded by Lori McKee
- Motion was passed

Karen Schaefer of the NMSU Counseling Center asked for Employee Council to address the lack of a policy permitting the use of therapy animals in counseling sessions. After some discussion, it was suggested that these animals would be included under the policy regarding service animals. Karen said she would review this policy and speak with the NMSU Counsel's office to insure this would be appropriate.

A question was raised related to compassionate leave regarding extending the definition of immediate family to include additional family members. In addition, the extension of these members should also be applied to FMLA. Rene Yoder recommended that this issue be referred to the Fringe Benefits committee.

An employee submitted information that President Obama signed an Executive Order "Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving" on Oct 01, 2009. It was suggested that while this order currently applies to DOD contractors, NMSU should consider implementing a similar directive while driving university vehicles. Lori McKee will present this concern to the Risk Management committee.

New Items from Council Members:

Lori reported that a Family Fun Fair will be held at the Activity Center on October 18 from 2-5 pm and is being sponsored by Aggie Fit for the entire university.

Ellen stated that the library has begun digitizing documents housed in the library including the minutes of Board of Regents' meetings.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Board of Regents Meeting:

Kelly reported that the NMSU Employee Council is now represented at the Regents' table at Board of Regents' meetings. This change was recommended and supported by Interim President Pacheco and the Board. Regent Gonzales wanted clarification on the Council's representation of union members. Kelly responded that under the terms of the Union contract employees are unable to be represented by any other groups, which NMSU Counsel has indicated includes Employee Council. Therefore, Employee Council does not represent or speak for employees covered under the Collective Bargaining Agreement. However, as it is not the desire or intention of Employee Council to exclude input from union employees, they are encouraged to attend meetings and provide input whenever possible. Employee Council meetings are open to any and all NMSU employees.

Administrative Council:

The Administrative Council for October was canceled.

The next Employee Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2009 at 3:00 pm in Room 297 of Gerald Thomas Hall.

- Motion to adjourn was made by Kurt Anderson
- Seconded by Nancy Qualkenbush
- Motion was passed unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 pm.