

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

December 10, 2009  
Skeen Hall, Room 200

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mike Abernethy, Kurt Anderson, Roseanne Bensley, Ellen Bosman, Kelly Brooks, Alicia Carabajal, Tim Chappell, Katrina Doolittle, Lydia Duran, Allan Kaplan, Karen Medina, Anthony Parra, Nancy Qualkenbush, Nellie Quezada-Aragon

**EX-OFFICIO:** Cherri Lambeth, D’Anne Stuart, Angela Velasco, Rene Yoder

**ALTERNATES PRESENT:** Linda Beavers for Karla Thompson, Soum Sanogo

**CALL TO ORDER AND MINUTES:** Kelly Brooks called the regular monthly meeting of the NMSU Employee Council to order at 3:07 p.m.

The meeting minutes for November 12, 2009 were presented. The following changes were requested:

Page 2, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, “approved” was changed to “reviewed”

Page 3, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, “ACAP” was changed to “NMSU Employee Council”

Page 3, last paragraph, the word “alternate” added after “one active employee and one retiree.”

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

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Election Committee Update** – The election process closed on Friday. All those on the ballot have been notified whether or not they were elected. Those elected will serve from 2010-2013. Roseanne Bensley read the names of those elected: Ida Quinones, Steven Loring, Robert Nosbisch, Jay Lillywhite, Monica Brown, Ellen Bosman, and Tom Dean. They have been invited to come to the January meeting of this committee and will begin their term in February, 2010. Kelly Brooks thanked those members who are leaving the committee for their service.

**Policy Manual Update Section 3.75** – Ellen Bosman reported that the committee has not met but has been communicating via e-mail. The new wording is ready. They are waiting to bring it through the formal approval process.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cherri Lambeth submitted a report from the Fringe Benefits Committee.

- Motion to accept this report and act on each item separately was made by Ellen Bosman
- Seconded by Kurt Anderson
- Motion was passed unanimously

- 1) Child Care – Fringe Benefits will revisit this issue in the future when the fiscal situation warrants a more favorable opportunity for such a program/benefit. *No action requested or taken from Employee Council.*
- 2) Fringe Benefits reviewed the NMSU tuition remission policy to include the tuition waiver, fees for web-based courses, and the ASNMSU fee and makes the following recommendations:
  - a. No change should be made to the policy regarding the web-based fee. *A motion was made by Ellen Bosman to accept this recommendation,*
    - *Seconded by Anthony Parra*
    - *Motion passed unanimously*

*In addition, there was a motion made by Ellen Bosman to request further information from the President regarding what peer institutions are charging as well as what the web-based fee covers and where the money goes. Employee Council may wish to take action on this issue at a later date.*

- *Seconded by Anthony Parra*
- *Motion passed unanimously*

- b. The policy should be changed to waive the ASNMSU fee for employees taking courses on a part-time basis under the tuition waiver policy, and continue not to waive the ASNMSU fee for spouses utilizing the benefit. *Motion was made to forward this recommendation to President Couture by Anthony Parra*
  - *Seconded by Kurt Anderson*
  - *Motion passed with one “no” vote.*
  - *D’anne Stuart will present this recommendation to Admin Council.*

- 3) Fringe Benefits reviewed the employee request received through Employee Council to expand the Compassionate Leave Policy.
  - a. The Fringe benefits committee recommends that the definition of Immediate Family could be more closely aligned with the “family” definition in *section 3.20.20 Relationships* by changing the policy to read: “the legal spouse, domestic partner, parent (including in-law, adoptive, step, or **surrogate**), child (including step and in-law), brother (including half, step, and **in-law**), sister (including half, step, and **in-law**), grandparent, grandchild, and legal guardian are considered immediate family for this purpose.” *Motion was made by Tim Chappell to remove the term “surrogate” and forward the Fringe Benefits Committee’s recommendation to President Couture regarding expanding the Compassionate Leave Policy*
    - *Seconded by Ellen Bosman*
    - *Motion passed unanimously*

Katrina Doolittle reported that the Campus Planning Committee met on December 2 and reviewed three projects: Phase 1 of the Arts Complex will be completed in 2012; resident hall suites; the architect has been selected for the bookstore building. The building should be open by August 2011. There is a concern about the amount of parking spaces that will be lost because of the new building. Plans are that the increased amount of mass transit in that area will make up for these parking spaces.

Kelly reported that the Bookstore Advisory Committee met on December 3, 2009. Barnes & Noble have made their annual donation of \$25,000 to the University. The committee reviewed information and voted to designate half of the donation to an endowment for scholarships and the other half to be utilized for current use scholarships.

Nancy Qualkenbush reported that the Parking Committee met and has been researching the parking policies of our peer institutions. The University of Arizona doubles parking fines after they remain unpaid for 2 weeks. If they remain unpaid another 2 weeks, the fine doubles again. Their staff pay \$300 for parking stickers. They are considering installing parking meters on campus.

The Athletic Committee met. Karen submitted the minutes to Kelly and she will forward them to Employee Council members.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Fringe/Insurance Committee Election:**

The committee reviewed the application emails of interested employees and retirees. The committee voted Cathy Thomas to continue to serve on the Fringe Benefits committee as an active employee. No applicants were received from retirees. Another solicitation will be sent in January to retirees to fill the retiree alternate position still available on the Fringe Benefits Committee. The committee voted for Gerald Burke and Quentin Ford to continue on the Insurance committee as retiree members. In addition, Kelly noted that per Denise Welsh, Jacalyn Ryberg is retiring on Dec. 1, 2009. This will leave an opening for an active employee. A solicitation to fill this opening will be processed in January as well.

### **Moratorium on Personnel Actions:**

A copy of a memo from President Pacheco was shared with the committee announcing a Moratorium on Personnel Actions effective 12/1/09 through 3/15/10. D'Anne explained that this only applies to Las Cruces Campus Instruction & General (I&G) funded staff positions and does not affect faculty positions, student, or grad students. Exceptions will be reviewed by HR and the NMSU Budget Committee. Temporary I&G funded positions will be reviewed individually on a case by case basis. Faculty positions are being reviewed under a separate already existing review process.

### **Corbett Center Student Union Board (CCSU) Rep:**

The Corbett Center Student Union Board has contacted Kelly for representation of this committee on their board. Anthony Parra agreed to serve in this capacity. The next meeting is

January 19, 2010 at 4:00 pm. Their most urgent business is what to place in the space vacated by Barnes & Noble once the new bookstore building is complete.

**Messages from staff on NMSU Employee Council email:**

An employee expressed concern about the ASNMSU fee. This issue has already been addressed by this committee.

Another employee questioned the possibility of allowing employees with use or lose leave be permitted to place this leave into a leave bank to share with other employees. Cherri indicated that this request has come before the Fringe Benefits committee previously. As annual leave is a financial liability that must be covered by NMSU even when sitting in a “bank”, this has financial considerations for the University. In addition, the committee has expressed concern that this type of suggestion could give the appearance that NMSU employees are granted too much leave.

**New Items from Council Members:**

A faculty member approached Tim Chappell and Kelly regarding whether or not this committee is really taking the time to investigate issues and take the issues back to the relevant constituency when reviewing and voting on recommendations brought forward at the same meeting. The Faculty Senate presents an issue and then votes on it at the following meeting. After much discussion, it was agreed that as a result of the fact that 1) members are voted as to represent the voice of employees, 2) our bylaws do not stipulate voting restrictions, 3) our council only makes recommendations, and 4) whenever possible and relevant, we defer voting to obtain additional input, there is no need to make changes to our bylaws at this time.

D’Anne asked if the Employee Council would like to be represented at upcoming negotiations with AFCSME. Kelly requested members to contact her if they would be interested in serving on this committee.

D’Anne also announced that a new performance evaluation tool for exempt employees was presented to the Executive Council. This will be a useful tool in measuring performance for merit raises. D’Anne will forward the presentation to Kelly who in turn will send it to the committee members. Members were asked to bring their comments to the January meeting or forward them directly to D’Anne.

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

**Board of Regents Meeting:**

The Board will meet on December 11, 2009.

**Administrative Council:**

The Administrative Council will meet on January 12, 2010.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 14, 2010 at 3:00 pm. All future meetings will be held in the Conference Room of Zuhl Library.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.