

Cornell University Employee Assembly

Cornell Employee Assembly

Minutes of the February 1st, 2023 Meeting

12:15pm-1:30pm

Physical Sciences Building Room 401 | Zoom

I. Call to Order

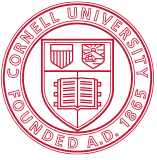
- a. A. Haenlin-Mott called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm.
 - i. *Members Present:* M. Brooks, S. Coil, C. Cornell, J. Creque, B. Dixon, A. Haenlin-Mott, J. Kruser, M. LoParco, K. Mahoney, A. Mittman, A. O'Connor, K. Phipps, S. Resue, A. Schafft, W. Treat, L. Zacharias
 - ii. *Members Absent:* D. Borders, J. Chandler, H. Depew, A. Durant, B. Fisher, D. Howell, E. Krumm
 - iii. *Also Present:* M. Pollack, E. Kalweit, R. Lombardi, C. Lovely, E. Sember-Chase, J. Withers

II. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogohono (Cayuga Nation)

- a. A. Haenlin-Mott stated the UA's acknowledgment of the Cayuga Nation.

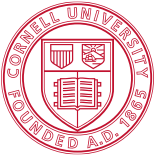
III. Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee
 - i. M. Benda stated that the Committee has been arranging visits and the schedule for the next few months. She also stated that they are in the process of planning Christine Lovely's Forum with the staff.
- b. Communications and Awards Committee
 - i. J. Creque stated that the Committee has been working on the *EA Voice*, Awards, and Priorities Poll. She stated that the *EA Voice* has been focusing its content on Employee Assembly meeting and committee materials. She also stated that the EA Appreciation Award will be announced at the President's Address to Staff on Monday and that there are two winners with one honorary mention. She also stated that Kristen Ciferri will be managing the Award for Staff Integrity and Inclusion, which will be accepting nominations until February 15th, and that the George Peter Award will be moved to the Fall. She also stated that the Priorities Poll includes areas for employees to leave comments on each and that over 600 people ranked the priorities listed on the poll. She also acknowledged D. Borders and H. Depew for their work on the Priorities Poll.



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- ii. J. Creque stated that she has been attempting to be more transparent and inclusive in her communication from the Committee to the Assembly to encourage more engagement.
- c. Education Committee
 - i. K. Supron stated that the Committee has been talking about employee degree options and making sure that staff is informed about these options.
- d. Welfare Committee
 - i. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that the Committee has been focused on its continued partnership with HR WorkLife, DEI, talent management, workforce planning, and looking at issues of exploration of staff holiday in DEI consideration. She also stated that the Committee has worked on staffing shortages, engagement challenges, and quiet quitting. She also stated that the Committee has been working with CU Transportation Services on transit consideration concerns and TCAT cutbacks. She also stated that the Committee conducted a visioning session with Cornell Health and the Okanagan Charter. She also stated that the Committee is anticipating the results of both the Priorities Poll and the Belonging at Cornell survey for the next steps the Committee can take to ensure welfare. She also stated that latest engagement presentation for the Committee was from Brandon Fortenberry in Dining and Daniel Alamaker from CU Health on the expanded use of English translation devices for non-English speaking staff. She also stated that the Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX will be visiting the Committee in the next few months.
 - ii. M. Benda stated that the team working on the Emergency Care Fund has been making presentation to increase awareness and participation of funds. She stated that their focus is to partner with the onboarding process to further increase awareness.
- e. Benefits and Policy Committee
 - i. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that the Committee has been talking about analyzing relevant Priorities Poll data and found the issues surrounding inflation and employee desire to understand and use of benefits. She also stated that 23% of the comments in the Poll relevant to the Committee reflected satisfaction with benefits and that other comments referenced better education on employee benefits, such as through micro-forums on specific university benefits. She also stated that the Committee has discussed plans for future meetings to discuss the Employee Care Fund and the Cornell Adoption policy in its application to LGBTQIA+ families.
- f. Elections Committee



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- i. A. Schafft stated that she circulated a draft calendar to the Committee for their review and shared the list open terms for the upcoming election to the Assembly. She stated that the next item for the Committee is to determine the communications plan and that she will set up a Teams group to draft this plan before a final report at the Assembly's February 15th meeting including the rules, calendar, and communication plan.

IV. Business of the Day

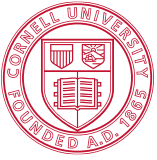
- a. A. Haenlin-Mott acknowledged that Christine Lovely, Chief Human Resources Officer, was present at the meeting on Zoom.
- b. President Pollack visited the Assembly and provided a brief set of updates on staff positions and academic affairs.
 - i. M. Pollack stated that the university's new Athletics Director is Nicki Webber Moore, who joined the staff last month after serving as Vice President and Director of Athletics at Colgate University. She also stated that Curtis Cole has stepped into the Chief Global Information Officer role after serving as Chief Information Officer at Weill Cornell Medicine. She stated that his role in his current position will be to develop better IT strategies. She also stated that the university is currently searching for a new Dean of Weill Cornell Medicine and for a new Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. She also stated that Mary Loeffelholz, the former Dean of the College of Professional Studies and Professor of English at Northeastern University, will be stepping in as Dean of the School of Continuing Education starting in March, in which position she will be advancing the university's online part-time Bachelor's degree programs.
 - ii. M. Pollack stated that the university has a new grant of more than \$1,000,000 from the Mellon Foundation to support Freedom on the Move, a collective digital history project to build a free and open archive of all the existing advertisements for "runaway slaves" published in North American newspapers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She stated that the university will be leading a new \$34,000,000 research center to accelerate the creation of energy-efficient semiconductor materials and technologies called Supreme, the Superior Energy Efficient Materials and Devices Center. She also stated that the university is attempting to ensure that it is an active part of the future of AI development for a sustainable and equitable future.
- c. President Pollack answered pre-submitted questions from the Employee Assembly.
 - i. M. Pollack stated that one question she received asked her about her goals for 2023. She stated that she did not necessarily have goals for the calendar



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year and instead is focused on broader goals for the future. She stated that she aims to work on student affordability and access, faculty hiring to keep up with the growth in the student body, the university's part-time and online degree programs, rolling out the Racial Justice and Equitable Futures program, well-run IT across campus, sustainability, and finding ways to cultivate respect and appreciation for free speech.

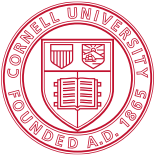
1. A. Haenlin-Mott asked the Assembly whether they had any questions about the policies M. Pollack stated.
 - a. J. Kruser stated that he is looking forward to the arrival of Curtis Cole as the Chief Global Information Officer.
- ii. M. Pollack stated that one question she received asked her about the next steps of the university on COVID-19 and the role of staff moving forward. She stated that her colleagues, Christine Lovely and Ryan Lombardi, sent a message to the Cornell community before the semester began outlining current measures. She stated that individuals should test if they are feeling sick, report positive tests to the Daily Check website, and stay home if they are feeling sick. She also stated that individuals should mask regardless of the specific sickness one has and that everyone should respect an individual's choice to mask.
 1. J. Kruser stated that he was concerned for those who are immunocompromised or directly give aid to someone who is immunocompromised that has been restricted from Cornell events due to health concerns. He asked M. Pollack about the ways that the university can develop its culture to provide access to everyone on its staff.
 - a. M. Pollack stated that the university will continue to think about ways to be more flexible, such as having hybrid meetings and outdoor events when the weather improves.
 - b. C. Lovely stated that the Office of Human Resources can consider this kind of flexibility in scheduling programming.
 - c. B. Dixon stated that the individuals working at organizational development are great at navigating the hybrid format of workshops and that it would be helpful to establish an equivalent to their approach throughout the university.
- iii. M. Pollack stated that one question she received asked her about the state of DEI and how DEI will be incorporated into training at the university. She stated that there already is highly incorporated into the campus climate



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through the Presidential Advisory of Diversity and Equity group and the Belonging at Cornell initiative. She stated that initiatives include an enhanced inter-group dialogue project program for new students and a six-course DEI online certificate program for staff. She stated that the [diversity website](#) includes more information on the university's actions for DEI. She also stated that the Belonging at Cornell initiatives will be reviewing the results from the 2022 university-wide employee survey to determine new areas of focus for the university's schools and colleges.

1. C. Lovely stated that most colleges have added DEI professionals to their staff and that the Office of Human Resources is considering the intersection of workplace culture and belonging. She stated that there was a proposal to create a Center of Expertise on Culture and that conversations around this addressed how the university could make workplace culture better. She also stated that the diversity website included more information on Cornell's action.
- d. M. Pollack stated that one question she received asked whether staff can expect a sip in the coming fiscal year that will aim to address the rising cost of living. She stated that inflation has been a top priority in budgeting and that while she will not be able to fully match the rising cost of living, there will be sip increases that will be higher than university revenues. She stated that because the increases will not come until the summer, the university will also be paying a mid-year bonus to faculty and staff of lower income. She stated that if an employee earns \$50,000 or less, they will receive a lump sum of \$1,000 subject to taxes on February 15th or 16th and that employees who earn between \$50,000 and \$199,000 will receive less on a sliding scale with a minimum bonus of \$500.
 1. A. Haenlin-Mott asked the Assembly whether they had any questions about the policies M. Pollack stated.
 - a. W. Treat asked whether staff and faculty who are eligible to receive the mid-year bonus have been notified.
 - i. C. Lovely stated that the notification for the bonus would be sent out in the next few days to ensure that information is as accurate as possible.
- e. M. Pollack stated that one question she received asked about her thoughts on efforts in states like Florida to curtail academic freedom and restrict vital teaching of subjects that are a concern to our society. She stated that these efforts are incredibly dangerous to academia and democracy.
- f. M. Pollack stated that one question she received asked whether Cornell has been working on ways to lessen the financial strain of child care in Ithaca.



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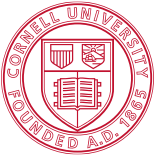
- i. C. Lovely stated that there is currently a talent shortage that impacts Cornell Child Care Center. She stated that the Cornell Child Care grant program is available to employees and that nearly 500 applications were approved for the 2023 calendar year. She stated that the Office of Human Resources made efforts to improve the ease of the application process and the flexibility of application timing. She also stated that the New York State Department of Social Services has expanded the eligibility for their support and that the university offers free subscriptions to care.com to eligible employees.
- g. B. Dixon stated that it would be incredible for the university to have a more widely spread presence of organizational development in institutions like the library to ensure that structures and leadership have as much help as they can.

V. Approval of the Minutes from November 16th, 2022

- a. K. Supron put forward a motion to approve the minutes from the November 16th meeting. W. Treat seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

VI. Business of the Day (continued)

- a. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that the President's Address to Staff will be held on February 6th both in-person and online.
 - i. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that there are no pre-submitted questions for the Address but that if individuals submitted questions that the President did not answer at this meeting, they are welcome to bring those up at the Address. She stated that she would like to get an estimate of how many individuals would be attending in-person to provide support in set-up and act as ushers.
 - 1. K. Supron asked whether A. Haenlin-Mott was asking for people to attend in-person.
 - a. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that she was asking for people to attend in-person
 - 2. C. Cornell asked whether support for set-up was needed if individuals could attend 15-20 minutes early.
 - a. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that she would appreciate support in set-up.
 - 3. M. Benda stated that individuals from the Assembly attending in-person would also likely help with fielding questions with microphones and stated that individuals are welcome to wear their red shirts.



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- a. C. Cornell asked whether individuals who are new could be provided red shirts.
 - i. E. Kalweit stated that the Office of the Assemblies has a box of mixed polos.
 - ii. W. Treat stated that she does not have a red shirt either and will be at the Address from 11:30 to 1:30 and can help as needed.

VII. Liaison Reports

- a. Faculty Senate
 - i. J. Creque stated that the Senate has not met yet.
- b. Campus Planning Committee
 - i. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that the Committee has discussed sustainability and that she can provide a more thorough report at the Assembly's next meeting.

VIII. Open Discussion

- a. B. Dixon asked about what the Assembly will be responsible for at the President's Address to Staff.
 - i. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that the Assembly would help with set-up, ushering, and organization. She stated that M. Benda will be responsible for fielding questions on her computer and that they will need someone to pass around a mic for questions.
 - ii. B. Dixon asked whether the Assembly will oversee technology setup.
 1. E. Kalweit stated that CIT will oversee technology setup.
 - iii. M. Benda stated that the Assembly's presence at the Address would be beneficial to spread awareness, especially before elections and for the EA Appreciation Award. She stated that the first fifteen minutes of the Address will be A. Haenlin-Mott's welcome and the presentation of awards to staff. She also stated that the rest of the Address will be President Pollack's presentation and answers to questions.
- b. W. Treat asked who determined the recipient of the EA Appreciation Award.
 - i. J. Creque stated that she sent out voting materials to the EA mailing list and that it is possible W. Treat may not have been on the mailing list at that time. She stated that she believed she sent out the email updates to the OA-EAMember list-serv.
 1. C. Cornell stated that J. Creque sent various update emails to that list-serv.



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2. W. Treat stated that she would go back through her emails to make sure she is on that list-serv.
3. C. Cornell stated that many employees find that their emails sometimes go to their spam folder.
 - a. W. Treat stated that she had checked her spam folder and had not received anything for voting.
 - b. A. Schafft asked whether W. Treat had received her list of open positions on the Assembly.
 - i. W. Treat stated that she had not received the list of open positions and that she would follow up with the Office of the Assemblies to make sure she is on the list-serv moving forward.
- c. A. Haenlin-Mott thanked the Assembly for their participation in the meeting.
- d. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that meetings moving forward will be in a Zoom format and that more information will become available soon.
 - i. J. Creque stated that she had a guest speaker interested in meeting in-person on March 1st and asked whether there was discussion of an exception for guest presenters.
 1. K. Supron stated that aside from the Executive Committee members, only two Assembly members came to President Pollack's visit of the meeting. She stated that a Zoom format is a better idea if people are not coming to the meeting.

IX. Adjournment

- a. W. Treat put forward a motion to adjourn the meeting. C. Cornell seconded the motion.

This meeting was adjourned at 1:18 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
P.J. Brown
Clerk of the Assembly