



Cornell University Employee Assembly

Cornell Employee Assembly
Minutes of the February 6, 2019 Meeting
12:15-1:30 PM
401 Physical Sciences Building

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. C. Wiggers called the order to meeting at 12:21pm.
Members Present: M. Pollack, M. Opperman, P. Andersen K. Barth, M. Benda, A. Brooks, T. Chams, H. Depew, T. Grove, A. Haenlin-Mott, A. Hourigan, L. Johnson-Kelly, K. Mahoney, E. Miller, B. Roebal, C. Sanzone, A. Sieverding, K. Supron, P. Thompson, C. Wiggers, D. Hiner, C. Dawson, H. Sheldon, N. Doolittle
- b. *Members Absent:* K. Fitch, A. Howell, K. LoParco

II. Announcements

- a. C. Wiggers welcomed President Martha Pollack and VPHR Mary Opperman to the meeting and stated that the meeting would include updates on current work going on across campus followed by time for questions and answers.
- b. C. Wiggers stated the Assembly would remain focused on two major things this semester-
 - i. Reconnecting the staff across campus
 - ii. Shift from resolution track to colleague collaboration track

III. Committee Reports (30 minutes)

a. Communications and Awards Committee (5 Minutes)

- i. C. Sanzone introduced herself as the chair of Communications and Awards Committee
- ii. Ms. Sansone stated a couple of highlights from the last semester as follows:
 - One of the things that they did was help organize the Annual President's Address which we went really well.
 - The event was live-streamed on CornellCast, and had an active group online which resulted in dozens of comments and questions.
 - The other event which the committee put on in the Fall was celebration for the George Peter Award recipient.
 - C. Sanzone discussed their plans for this semester:
 - Review their Awards program for timing, frequency, level of efforts, visibility and also marketing and promotion; taking into account all the awards and recognition programs on campus.
 - The ultimate goal for the committee is make recommendations before the end of this term so that they can do a total reboot for the 2019-2020 academic year.
 - The committee is going to collaborate with the Office of the Assemblies on a new initiative doing outreach to new employees. The Office of the Assemblies will help them with the data through HR. The hope is that this would not only bring visibility of EA but also allow better support to the new staff.
 - They are going to do a communication support for the roll out of the staff conversations summary report.
- iii. President Pollack thanked the committee for their efforts and commented that they were doing a really important. The president stated her concern regarding the diversity in gathering

nominations which was taken in account by C. Sanzone.

b. Education Committee (5 Minutes)

- i. A. Hourigan introduced herself as the chair of Education Development Committee which currently has 9 members; 3 of them are non-EA members.
- ii. The committee meets as needed and 5 members were active this academic year.
- iii. Currently, the committee is gathering information from the Health Education and Volunteer Benefits office regarding Employee degree program enrollee's completion and termination data as well as tuition aid benefits.
- iv. The committee is gathering information from Cornell's peer institutions regarding reimbursement of cost of tuition to employee to take courses off campus and what are those provisions and making reports about the same.
- v. The committee is currently working on an event which would help staff learn more about Cornell. This event would include sponsoring historical tours which the staff could sign for and this way the staff would learn about unique and interesting things about campus.
- vi. President Pollack appreciated the work of the committee and said that it would be a great idea to include sessions where in a faculty member would come and talk on their research as a way for staff to feel more connected with campus.

c. Welfare Committee (5 Minutes)

- i. A. Haenlin-Mott introduced herself as the chair of the Employee Welfare Committee and explained that this committee looks into health, wellness, work life, family support diversity, sustainability, transportation compensation etc.
- ii. The committee includes 9 members; of which 3 are non-EA
- iii. The committee has both in-person and Zoom meetings depending on the agenda of the meeting.
- iv. The committee has been supporting the Staff Conversations, which on started on December 19th, and they drafted a summary report of 11 sessions and 52 pages on January 9th
- v. This report has allowed them to generate qualitative data and some understanding of the needs of the staff.
- vi. Additionally, the committee has reviewed issues related to Title IX office as Title IX is closely related to the students and issues.
- vii. President Pollack appreciated the work of the committee and thanked them for their time and efforts.

d. Transportation Committee (5 Minutes)

- i. K. Mahoney introduced herself as the chair.
- ii. The committee has 6 members and did not meet much in the fall as they were waiting for the early recommendations and findings by the transportation consultant.
- iii. The committee has met with Bridgette Brady and Reed Huegerich, of the Transportation Services Office, to discuss the parking optimization survey results and commuter survey.
- iv. The chair reported that the Transportation Safety Council is set up and their initiative for this term is to think more broadly about transportation challenges.

e. Benefits and Policy Committee (5 Minutes)

- i. T. Chams introduced himself as the chair, representing the Benefits and Policy Committee which is the result of a merging of the Benefits and Policy committees.
- ii. The committee's goal is to work with HR and Benefit Services offices to review and recommend policy, benefits and other things that relate to the work environment.
- iii. They collaborate via monthly in person meetings and via Zoom.
- iv. The committee has 13 members, half of whom are on the assembly and the other half are representative of the Cornell Community.
- v. The committee has identified some discrepancies with regard to access and application of

- policies across various units due to differences in interpretations.
- vi. A goal of the committee is to work with HR to provide more equity and bridge the gap between employees so that no one gets left behind.
 - vii. The committee will be reviewing other institutions (peer and regional) and comparing policies to make sure that Cornell's workforce is competitive.
 - viii. President Pollack advised the committee to look at the peer review holistically since in many cases may be like comparing apples to oranges vis a vis Cornell's unique private-public status; in addition to its rural setting.
 - ix. The chair reported challenges in collaborating with other departments which are the subject matter experts, in sharing information with the committee so it can make decisions based on solid evidence.
 - x. The chair discussed the need for better communication to ensure that knowledge is disseminated efficiently and described the need for a system be in place to ensure that all units interpret and apply policies in the same manner.

f. Executive Committee (5 Minutes)

- i. Executive Vice Chair of the Assembly, H. Depew, gave the report, and explained that a goal of the assembly is to try to reach out to different units for areas of potential collaboration.
- ii. The committee meets on a weekly basis to discuss and approve the agenda.
- iii. H. Depew reported that the EA Chair met with Love Odih Kumuyi, from the Dean of Students office's Peer-to-Peer Counseling program to discuss potential collaboration and future training with the possibility of a spring semester training.
- iv. H. Depew has been asked to participate in the governance leadership and administration working group of the Accreditation Task Force and will have their first meeting this Thursday.
- v. Pilar Thompson has been working with Charlie van Loan, the Dean of the Faculty, on policy 6.4 which is a proposed revision on faculty related procedures.
- vi. EA had been asked to provide feedback on a draft financial and internal control policy review which they have received from the EA Executive team.
- vii. President Pollack expressed appreciation to the committee and thanked them for the work they are getting done.
- viii. VPHR M.Opperman invited the group working on the "Outreach to New Employees" initiative, and group thinking about the historical walking tour to work with HR so as to complement each other's work.
 - a. Gordon Barger would be the lead on the welcoming of new employees.
 - b. Linda Croll Howell could also provide info on what is already being done to support new employees.
- ix. President Pollack thanked the committee for their work and reminded the assembly of the employee recognition celebration next weekend which would include hockey, kids' sports, meals and free parking.

IV. Business of the Day

• Questions for President Pollack

1. What have been the downstream impacts of the govt shut down on the university?

- Cornell helped about a 100 IUSPA and NUSG Employees and another 100 in Georgetown who were not getting their paychecks and also arranged temporary jobs for some of them. Short term loans were given to students whose parents were affected by the government shut down.
- When the govt shuts down, the university doesn't get the research money which accounted to almost 11 million dollars in that period which will be returned as arrears but if the govt shuts down again, it would be a problem.
- It would be a bigger problem if a grant is due for renewal as the renewal timeline would be

extended due to delays and pileups. If the govt. was to shut down again, Cornell would try to continue doing the same things for the community as stated above.

2. Will President Pollack be taking a walk around the campus like last summer?

- President Pollack stated that the best part of the rounds from last summer was surprising people and added that when in Ithaca. President always preferred to go out and meet everyone on campus. President Pollack would love to do it again next summer.

3. Statement of unanimous support and appreciation for and on the presidential taskforce was made with a Proposal to lean on the employees to help in implementing and with any help in the work that the presidential taskforce.

- The offer was appreciated by President Pollack who went ahead to state that the program included both the staff and students and the diversity plans in colleague network group would be great.

4. In the October 2016 staff survey results that were announced in April 2017, 6 key areas were identified in the staff's personal and professional life, What actions have been taken after it was published?

- The Management had come up with many things like the staff appreciation portal, expansion for training of supervisors, expansion of college networks, putting mentors in place, consistency in application of policies and procedures in which they welcome the support from the benefits and policies committee.
 - Staff movement numbers had risen to about 40%, and they more work was being done to increase the numbers.
 - The Management was also looking at communications including consideration of use of social- media in the same.
 - Since copies of the minutes of the previous meeting were unavailable, the approval of the minutes was postponed to the next meeting in which both the previous and current meetings' minutes would be approved.
- *President M. Pollack and Vice President M. Opperman left the meeting after the above discussion.*
 - *Mr. Wiggers appreciated the efforts of all the committee chairs and thanked everyone for bringing up the insights of the committees.*

V. Approval of Minutes

- The copies of the minutes were not available and hence the approval would be in the next meeting.

VI. New Business

- Election season is coming up in March
- Resolution 3: Policy 6.4 Discussion- "Transfer of Representation of CU Academic Titleholders"
 - "Resolution 3 on Policy 6.4 discussion" was not the correct title, and was corrected to "Academic Titleholders"
 - The title of the discussion on resolution 3 of policy 6.4 was corrected as transfer

- of representation for CU Academic Titleholders
- The Resolution was put to vote and was passed unanimously.
- The details of the seats to be filled in the spring elections were discussed by Ms. G. Giambattista

VII. Adjournment

- Mr. Wiggers adjourned the meeting at 1:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bhagyashri Modi
Clerk of the Assembly