



Cornell University

Employee Assembly

Cornell Employee Assembly
Minutes of the March 23, 2020 Meeting
12:15-1:30 PM
Zoom

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. Chair Howell called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.
- b. *Members Present:* S. Barry, K. Barth, M. Benda, A. Brooks, J. Creque, H. Depew, J. Duong, B. Fortenberry, G. Giambattista, B. Goodell, A. Haenlin-Mott, D. Hiner, A. Howell, R. Lochner, K. LoParco, K. Mahoney, A. McCabe, J. Michael, R. Miegl, E. Miller, A. Miller, M. Newhart, C. Sanzone, K. Supron, L. Taylor, J. Townley, W. Treat, C. Wiggers, J. Withers
- c. *Members Absent:* J. Cooley, T. Chams, E. Ivory, H. Sheldon

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. Motion to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2020 – **approved** with no dissent

III. Business of the Day

- a. 3/18 COVID-19 Staff Forum
 - i. Chair Howell gave an overview of the COVID-19 Staff Forum and apologized for the platform capping out at 300 participants. He explained the situation evolved very quickly in the span over several days. In a mistake of quick planning, they did not consider the fact that Zoom had an attendance limitation. He stated that he received a lot of positive feedback from those who were able to join and understanding from those who were unable to. On Wednesday March 25, 2020 from 12:00-1:00pm, there will be another forum. He is not involved in the setup and the event is still being put together. It will be facilitated by IT and be set up to handle many more attendees. He asked EA members to send H. Depew any questions they may have.
 - ii. B. Goodell stated he shared some questions and responses with his staff. He received positive feedback.
 - iii. H. Depew asked EA members to email her feedback to improve the next forum.
 - iv. C. Sanzone suggested posting the forum as a Facebook event that people can share.
- b. Elections Postponement resolution
 - i. A. Miller spoke on behalf of J. Withers to let EA members know that they are working on an elections postponement resolution in collaboration with G. Giambattista. The seats that were expiring will be extended until the elections.
 - ii. K. Barth stated that the UA intends on keeping the current chairs in place through August as of the last meeting on March 17, 2020. The UA will primarily focus on the Code of Conduct revision for the rest of the term.
 - iii. Chair Howell stated that the SA has postponed all elections until the fall. He does not know if the Faculty Senate or GPSA have put out public communications, but he is aware that they are both considering the same. The Campus-Elected Trustee debate and election have also been postponed.
- c. K. Supron – Campus-Community Liaison and Cornell 2020 Census Liaison
 - i. K. Supron gave an overview of the 2020 Census that can be accessed at 2020census.gov. Her revised communications and outreach plan has been sent for approval. They have begun outreach to off-campus students. For on-campus students, Cornell is trying to sort out how it can respond on their behalf collectively while not violating the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Off-campus students have to respond directly. While students have gone home, the Census is asking students to respond with their school-based address. There are a little over 100,000 people in Tompkins County and 24,000 of them are Cornell students. Along with Ithaca

College and TC3 students, students make up over a third of the population. K. Supron stressed the importance of students being counted as it determines population count and therefore funding for critical state and federal programs for the next 10 years.

IV. Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee
 - i. H. Depew stated that the committee is preparing for upcoming COVID-19 forum. She is collecting questions and input. The upcoming meeting will be with CLASP and the April 15, 2020 meeting will be with the accreditation committee. She is still waiting to hear back from North Campus expansion.
- b. Communications and Awards Committee
 - i. C. Sanzone stated that committee initiatives were paused with the COVID-19 communications. She has begun retooling the newsletter and looking at separate staff messaging and follow-up. Before the COVID-19 situation, she had been spending time on inclement weather which will still be a topic of discussion at some point.
- c. Education Committee
 - i. M. Benda reiterated that CLASP will be joining the EA meeting on April 1, 2020 to discuss the program. The committee hopes to promote some online learning opportunities for people who may need things to do while working from home.
- d. Welfare Committee
- e. Benefits and Policy Committee
 - i. B. Goodell noted a focus on the bereavement policy.
 - ii. L. Taylor stated she would like to see a clear list of the essential activities that still need to happen in the event of a shutdown.
 - iii. B. Goodell replied he recalled the question coming to VP Opperman once. She responded that they do not have essential people but essential functions. He took a look at the Governor's essential employees list and the list was very long. He agreed that the topic should be looked at. It was also a conversation that came up when they were discussing inclement weather.
- f. Elections Committee
 - i. Chair Howell noted that President Pollack officially accepted the resolution to add a Cornell Tech representative to the EA. He thanked everyone for working to extend shared governance.
 - ii. A. Haenlin-Mott pointed out that with pushing elections to a later date, the EA may have time to discuss its at-large seats.
 - iii. Chair Howell noted there are other things with the setup of the EA seats that they also have time to discuss. Terms are not staggered correctly and there have been conversations about the seats not necessarily representing as they should. He asked A. Haenlin-Mott to bring her concern to J. Withers and the Elections Committee.

V. New Business

- a. Open Discussion
 - i. Chair Howell noted that there are projections extending the COVID-19 crisis beyond a few weeks. He pushed for displays of general support and suggested a resolution or a piece in The Cornell Daily Sun.
 - ii. A. McCabe stated that custodial staff are staffing at a minimum. Staff have been advised to only come to work when contacted and scheduled. Today, he has nine staff out of 30 in. They will rotate on a two-day basis. On days they are not scheduled, they will receive full pay without having to use any of their personal time. There are over 1,300 students on campus university-wide, and they expect the number to reduce as the week goes on. After figuring out where students are and what basic support is needed, they will staff accordingly.
 1. Chair Howell said representatives from the GPSA reached out to him about a letter or resolution through the GPSA commending and showing support for especially custodial staff. He hopes A. McCabe will work with them on that.

- iii. K. Mahoney said she was impressed by how VP Opperman was available and supportive of staff. She acknowledged the advocacy that VP Opperman has provided to staff and resources being pulled together in a short amount of time.
 - 1. Chair Howell suggested a commendation resolution to H.R.
- iv. B. Goodell said he heard of a need for medical supplies. Cornell has an abundance of masks and dropped them off at the hospital. He noted that positive things should be mentioned.
 - 1. M. Benda added that the Vet School has made some donations.
 - 2. K. Supron said the Cornell Chronicle is working on a piece regarding donations of medical supplies.
 - 3. R. Lochner said Environmental Health and Safety and Risk Management is working to get supplies together for donation.
 - 4. C. Wiggers noted the Vice Provost for Research Emmanuel Giannelis is working with labs across campus to identify what resources may be available for local hospitals. There is a potential for a coordinated response so units will not have to do this on their own.
 - 5. J. Townley added the Geneva campus gathered resources to the local hospital. They have also been working with local distilleries producing hand sanitizers. In addition, the Cornell Elves have reached out to local schools with funding for lunches.
- v. J. Duong stated as many are out of their normal working regimes and some perhaps do not have a full schedule, it seems a good time for Cornell to support professional development resources.
 - 1. C. Sanzone said members have sent her information she has posted on social media. She asked EA members to send her any stories or information for social media. She also asked EA members to pass positive stories to the Cornell Chronicle as well.
- vi. R. Miegler asked for updates on the divestment discussion.
 - 1. Chair Howell noted that all five constituent assemblies have passed the divestment resolution. Due to the emergent nature of COVID-19, the Board of Trustees' operations have been dramatically reduced. Divestment did not make the agenda but will not fall off the table.
- vii. K. Supron noted there is a call from Vice Provost for International Affairs Wendy Wolford for experiences and stories of connection on the Cornell Chronicle homepage.

VI. Adjournment

- a. Chair Howell adjourned the meeting at 1:25pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Catherine Tran
Clerk of the Assembly