



Cornell University Employee Assembly

Cornell Employee Assembly

Minutes of the November 29, 2017 Meeting

12:15-1:30 PM

401 Physical Sciences Bldg.

- I. Call to Order – U. Smith called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.
 - a. *Members Present:* C. Dawson, M. Mosereiff, K. Mahoney, A. Haenlin-Mott, D. Harris, T. Grove, I. Allen, J. Kruser, S. Willcox, B. Ayanfodun, K. Fitch, P. Thompson, H. Depew, L. Johnson-Kelly, B. Nicholson, C. Sanzone, T. Shapiro, P. Andersen, U. Smith
 - b. *Members Absent:* A. Howell, M. Carcella, K. Shiels, A. Hourigan, S. Vaccaro, B. Roebal, H. Sheldon
- II. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda
 - a. No late additions.
- III. Approval of minutes from the EA meeting of November 15 – approved
- IV. Business of the Day
 - a. U. Smith suspended Committee Reports to go into discussion with President Martha Pollack and VP Mary Opperman.
 - b. M. Pollack said the administration is just about ready to announce the Presidential Task Force on Campus Climate. She initially thought the process would go quicker, but so many groups wanted input that it was eventually turned over to the Scheinman Institute on Conflict Resolution at the ILR School. There held open forums and nominations.
 - c. K. Mahoney has been at Cornell for 15 years and inquired about M. Pollack views on Cornell's culture in the future.
 - i. M. Pollack said the culture at Cornell is less willing to take risks at all levels than she would think is healthy for such a big organization in the 20th century. What she can do is to make use of the bully pulpit. She encouraged EA members to take smart, sensible risks.
 - ii. M. Opperman recommended getting people to speak up when their good ideas are getting clogged in the organization, and creating a safety group of people to call those issues out. The administration is trying to create pathways for people with good ideas and are working to provide leadership training programs.
 - d. M. Pollack said she is thinking about creating small reward programs that show the administration supports innovation, promoting rewards for taking the risk and learning, as opposed to the outcome.
 - i. M. Pollack said the entire Cornell Tech enterprise was a big risk, but one incredibly important to the future of this university. She is also working with the provost to push teaching innovation, something that began before she got here. She wants to push for "evidence based learning," which is gathering information about what works and what doesn't. The Arts & Sciences College is already doing this with their Active Learning Initiative, and they have remarkable results.
 - e. U. Smith inquired about how Cornell staff can get more involved in the mission of the institution, citing opportunities given to other groups but not so much for staff. At the

spring board of trustees meeting, they discussed two proposals, one being getting another employee-elected trustee and another getting a board committee focused on personnel.

- i. M. Pollack apologized and said this fell through the cracks in August, but M. Opperman and her will bring it up at the next board meeting. She has not seen committees on staff at a board level at other institutions, but it is a good idea.
 - f. M. Pollack asked EA members to donate to the Cornell United Way campaign. It sends a big message when such a big employer in this region contributes to something that largely helps the local community.
 - g. U. Smith two topics were discussed at the last UA meeting: a consensual relations policy and free speech. He inquired about the boundaries of academic freedom within the workplace.
 - i. M. Pollack said academic freedom does not allow faculty to say anything and all, and the university has academic freedom rights as well. Every time they review a faculty member for promotion or tenure, they look at the content of their speech.
 - h. J. Kruser said inquired about how the university can change a culture if people are afraid to have a conversation, referring to the free speech issue.
 - i. M. Pollack said she views this as a culture issue, not a free speech issue.
 - i. M. Pollack said there are things they do here out of tradition, but they should be stepping back and seeing if they really need to have these processes.
 - i. M. Opperman said trust is critical. There is not a hard answer to what free speech is for employees, but they are employees at the university, and that is their primary role here.
 - j. U. Smith said the political views of employees often seem to differ quite a bit from the students. He does not want anyone to feel that they cannot be a part of the discourse, but also does not want to create a hostile working environment for anyone.
 - k. P. Thompson inquired how a regular employee could be affected by the Campus Code.
 - i. M. Pollack said the Campus Code is one of those places where they should be looking at carefully, which the UA is doing. She was surprised that Cornell has one code for both faculty and staff.
 - ii. M. Opperman said the code is for actions other than in employment, which is a bit odd.
 - l. M. Pollack said Cornell does not have an official consensual relations policy, only an unofficial one. Cornell does need to have such a policy to protect the reputation of the university, the faculty and staff, and the students. If this cannot be compiled by the end of the year, then she will go to the board of trustees.
- V. Committee Reports
- a. Communications Committee
 - i. C. Sanzone said the mailing went out last week to all staff with a 22% open rate of 19,000 people, which is something they can work on. They did not meet last week due to the holiday but the next meeting is on December 6. They have a new member, A. Howell. Her and C. Dawson met with Sarah Brylinsky from the Campus Sustainability Office about a sustainability recognition program they are thinking of taking on. They are targeting the week before holiday break for their next mailing. She also met with the Transportation Task Force yesterday regarding the follow up poll, which is still in the works.
 - b. Employee Education & Development Committee

- i. M. Mosereiff said they did not meet last week because of the holidays, but will have a meeting next week.
- c. Employee Welfare Committee
 - i. L. Johnson-Kelly said their next meeting is Dec. 14 from 12-1pm in 232 Savage Hall. There are two resolutions on the floor.
- d. Elections Committee
 - i. P. Thompson said G. Giambattista are meeting this week to go over elections in the spring.
- e. Personnel Policy Committee
 - i. S. Willcox said she has two recommendations regarding leave accrual and the New York State Paid Family Leave plan and will present those next meeting.
- f. Staff Recognition, Awards & Events
 - i. T. Grove said they have one award recipient for the Opperman Award for Staff Advocacy and two recipients for the George Peter Award.
- g. Transportation Task Force
 - i. K. Mahoney said other than the resolution to discuss today, the parking optimization study is working through contracts. They expect a consultant to be on board in January engaging with communities in the spring term.
- h. Employee-Elected Trustee
 - i. C. Coates not present.
- i. Cornell Retiree Association Liaison
 - i. P. Andersen said H. Sheldon is in contact to see what arrangements can be made for retirees.
- j. Executive Committee
 - i. J. Kruser said they worked through some operations and logistics this afternoon. They will be hearing from Charles F. Van Loan next meeting about consensual relationships.
 - ii. U. Smith asked EA members to let K. Fitch know as soon as possible if they are not currently staffed on at least one EA community or UA community so that all lists are updated and everyone is able to meet.
 - iii. K. Fitch said they are looking for one EA member to sit on the CIC, the Campus Infrastructure Committee, to review and approve proposed motions related to environmental impact, sustainability, information technologies, transportation, commuter policies, and any other relevant policies. This is by the UA executive board.
 - iv. K. Mahoney asked for an update on last year's UA Welfare Committee advancing a smoke-free environment.
 - 1. U. Smith said that committee met a couple weeks ago and presented their time table for the referendum. It was on their agenda, so they didn't drop it.
 - 2. J. Kruser said he would reach out to the chair, but it is in the process.
 - 3. G. Giambattista said it is tabled until the spring due to other community-wide issues they wanted to attend to this semester. They did say they will comply with the request to have a response and a time table by the end of this semester, so if that has not been made public yet, it will be soon.

VI. Business of the Day (Continued)

- a. EA R7: Advancing a Comprehensive Transportation Study (K. Mahoney, L. Johnson-Kelly)
 - i. L. Johnson-Kelly said the Transportation Task Force got started last spring under K. Fitch, and K. Mahoney over this summer. They have been meeting regularly and support a holistic parking and transportation study that includes commuting and parking issues on campus. They have plans to have a consultant on board by the beginning of the year. Bridget Brady, director of Transportation Services, has asked the EA to consider passing an endorsement of this to enforce this need.
 1. L. Johnson Kelly makes 3 motions for amendments.
 - a. Motion to add after line 11, “Whereas the last known intra/inter campus travel survey was conducted in 2005, and”.
 - b. Motion to add after line 21, “Whereas, during the November 17 meeting, the Campus Planning Committee restated their vision for and support of integrated transportation planning for the campus, and”.
 - c. Motion to add a final resolve clause on line 36, “Be it further resolved, the EA request a moratorium be placed on the removal of any existing parking until the study is completed and a campus circulator is in operation”.
 - ii. EA moved into discussion on the amendment.
 1. L. Johnson-Kelly said the campus circulator is a campus designated transit that would run more frequently than the TCAT 81 or 82.
 2. C. Sanzone recommended “shuttle” for better clarity.
 3. J. Kruser said they do not want to reduce the total number of available spaces.
 4. Amendment **amended** on line 36, “Be it finally resolved, the EA requests a moratorium on the reduction of the total number of parking spaces until the study is completed and a campus circulator shuttle is in operation”
 5. Motion to adopt the amendments through unanimous consent.
 6. T. Shapiro said that in the Fall of 2018 when the parking optimization study is completed, it is highly likely that they will go from 27 parking tiers to less. They will not reduce the total number, but they will reduce the labels. Her concern was that keeping the same number of spots does not mean they cannot start charging for these spots. Some of the employees who park at the A Lot are vulnerable.
 7. J. Kruser said he recommends another resolution and more discussion to work on protecting free parking spaces.
 8. U. Smith made a motion to amend the amendment to add “and the removal of free spaces” on line 39 after “number of parking spaces”.
 9. U. Smith made a motion to replace “the” with “a” on line 39 right before “campus circulator”.
 10. D. Harris made a motion to replace “and” with “including” on line 39, so it would read “including the number of free spaces”
 11. U. Smith made a motion to adopt the amendment to the amendments through unanimous consent.
 12. J. Kruser made a **call to the question** on the amendment.
 - a. Vote on the amendment – **passed** by 21-0-0.
 13. Back into discussion on the amendments on line 12 and 22-23.
 - a. J. Kruser made a **call to the question** on the amendments.

- (i) Vote on the two amendments – passed by 21-0-0.
- 14. Back into discussion on resolution as amended.
 - a. Call to the question on resolution 7
 - b. Resolution passes by a vote of 21-0-0.
- b. EA R8: Furthering the Institutional Commitment to LGBTQ+ Inclusion (U. Smith, M. Carcella)
 - i. U. Smith said this resolution is a collaborative effort done by the colleague network group that aims to put in place protections and assert some additional resources, specifically at the LGBTQ community, but also to benefit all communities overall. The executive order put in place during the Obama administration that prohibited federal contractors, which Cornell is one, from discriminating based on gender identity and sexual orientation was rescinded by the current administration. There was a directive given to the LGBTQ resource center to no longer serve faculty and staff, and the center is currently short-staffed. He wants that directive to be rescinded because there is nowhere for LGBTQ employees to go. He is also looking for additional staff.
 - ii. C. Sanzone recommended a whereas point as a reference before the “be it therefore resolved clause” to establish more clarity and progression.
 - iii. U. Smith made a motion to amend line 34 to insert “Whereas in 2017, a directive was issued by the Dean of Students for the LGBTRC to no longer serve the staff and faculty due to being understaffed.”
 - 1. J. Kruser made a call to the question.
 - 2. U. Smith made a motion to accept the amendment through unanimous consent – passed
 - iv. EA discussion moved back into resolution as a whole.
 - v. D. Harris asked what peer institutions were doing and if they also have resource centers like this for staff and faculty. She also asked if the three additional full-time staff members have to physically be employed on campus if hired.
 - 1. U. Smith said they have compared Cornell’s model to others, particularly Michigan. They are asking for a total of four full time staff, and most institutions actually have more than that. They are not making a decision on whether or not they have to be seated on campus, as long as they are accessible.
 - vi. K. Fitch made a call to the question on Resolution 8.
 - 1. Resolution 8 passed by a vote of 21-0-0.
- VII. Old Business
 - a. EA R6: Condemning Violence and Hate (J. Kruser)
 - i. Assembly ran out of time.
- VII. U. Smith adjourned the meeting at 1:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Catherine Tran
Clerk of the Assembly