



**Cornell University**  
**Employee Assembly**

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

**I. Call to Order & Roll Call**

- a. Chair A. Howell called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.
- b. *Members Present:* S. Barry, K. Barth, A. Brooks, M. Benda, J. Cooley, 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, 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:* T. Chams, E. Ivory, A. McCabe, V. McAuley, M. Newhart

**II. Approval of Minutes**

- a. Minutes from June 17 meeting not available for approval.

**III. Business of the Day**

- a. Meeting Security
  - i. A. Howell indicated that there are a lot of individuals who are not members who are trying to get in and join this meeting, which was created as a result of a Zoom-bombing incident. Due to the nature of the meetings being open to the public, he made a call for suggestions on how to keep accessibility open without listing the Zoom information publicly. He made a suggestion that the Zoom information only go out via the information list or by request to the Office of the Assemblies.
  - ii. B. Goodell thanked the Office of the Assemblies for their quick thinking in ending the initial meeting quickly and creating a new Zoom meeting. He offered the suggestion of setting up the meetings as webinars instead so that individuals can't openly talk or type in the chat function.
  - iii. G. Giambattista stated that the Office of the Assemblies will explore possible options and solutions with CIT in order to keep the meetings secure, yet open to the public.
  - iv. A. Howell asked that the Office of the Assemblies put a statement on the Employee Assembly page stating that there was an incident and that every effort is being made to make sure that the public can join future meetings.
- b. Update: EA R1 – Protect Staff Jobs and Compensation
  - i. A. Howell thanked the individuals in the Benefits and Policy Committee who worked on this resolution for their hard work and effort.
  - ii. C. Sanzone inquired as to whether a decision had been finalized on the financial shortfall suggestions from senior leadership relating to retirement contribution reduction for Endowed staff and salary reduction for Contract College staff.
  - iii. A. Howell stated that he hadn't heard about a final decision.

- iv. M. Benda indicated that she had heard that the salary reduction was approximately 1.5% for staff and a higher percentage for faculty.
  - v. A. Howell mentioned that he would reach out to Mary Opperman to get more information regarding the decision.
  - vi. M. Benda inquired if this was something that could be addressed in the next forum.
  - vii. A. Howell stated that the next forum is a topical forum focusing on reopening; however, he would see if he could find out any other information as it relates to cost measures.
  - viii. B. Goodell acknowledged the hard work and effort of the Benefits and Policy Committee, especially J. Duong and R. Miegl, for their work on putting the resolution together in short notice.
- c. Upcoming Forum Schedule
- i. A. Howell stated that over 300 attendees participated in the first staff feedback forum and appreciated the patience and flexibility, given the quick turnaround and change in schedule.
  - ii. A. Howell stated that over 60 questions were pre-submitted prior to the forum and asked for confirmation from the Office of the Assemblies. W. Treat indicated that there were a total of 70 questions and comments submitted.
  - iii. A. Howell mentioned that the schedule has been released and asked members to share the information and promote them as much as possible to increase staff engagement.
  - iv. C. Sanzone inquired about the deadline for feedback submission for promotion purposes.
  - v. A. Howell stated that he wasn't sure of the exact time and asked the Office of the Assemblies for confirmation.
  - vi. W. Treat informed the members that the deadline is typically closed a day and a half before each forum.
  - vii. C. Sanzone asked if the feedback was open for the July 9 forum yet.
  - viii. W. Treat stated that the survey will be opened this afternoon in conjunction with the email being sent to staff.
  - ix. G. Giambattista added that there won't be questions in the survey but rather an open ended field for staff to provide feedback or comments.
  - x. C. Sanzone posed the question about collecting feedback or questions in advance the same way.
  - xi. G. Giambattista stated that the open comment functionality on the website allows for a staff member to post an anonymous comment and it has worked well previously.
  - xii. G. McAuley mentioned that she was unable to get into the first forum but that may be a technical issue on her end. Additionally, she mentioned that she is building a database of retirees and former employees and asked members to send her names of people that have retired over the past few years. This would allow for her to include them and possibly get more feedback in that area.
  - xiii. C. Sanzone asked what G. McAuley meant by not being able to join the forum.
  - xiv. G. McAuley indicated that the link didn't work for her and it didn't follow the normal path.
  - xv. A. Howell asked to please let the Office of the Assemblies know if this occurs again so we can troubleshoot in order to ensure no one is left out.
  - xvi. G. Giambattista said that the forums are set up as webinars so it is a different interface; however the link is the same.
  - xvii. A. Howell informed the members that the recording from the first forum is already posted. While the topical forums are only 30 minutes in length, there isn't a whole lot of

time to get everything in and answered so they are taking collection of the questions and get responses as possible.

- xviii. E. Miller asked for confirmation that of the webinars are 30 minutes with the exception of the open ones.
- xix. A. Howell confirmed that and stated that things could always change if the opportunity presents itself and more interest is displayed from staff.

#### IV. Committee Reports

##### a. Executive Committee

- i. H. Depew informed members about the feedback that has been received in advance of the forum on July 2 and that mainly individuals are concerned with the increase of people coming from regions that are currently high risk. Additionally, she mentioned that by way of having these staff forums, the format allows for different staff members to be able to present their concerns and feedback to senior leadership and it is a good opportunity to have that level of engagement and channel of communication.
- ii. G. McAuley expressed that she has received feedback regarding staff concerns about returning to campus and the suggestion for staff to go to their supervisor first, then department manager, college HR and EHS for any issues related to the campus reactivation. She also indicated that she has had feedback related to parking and the issues of staff still having to pay for permits that they are not using.
- iii. A. Howell responded that the EA is not allowed to act in place of HR but to follow the process of who to take these concerns to. He also suggested the Ombudsman's Office as an alternative solution.
- iv. K. Barth indicated that representatives from Transportation want to find a time to present to the EA with updates related to parking and transportation. He indicated that it is his understanding that the University does not have aggregate numbers on who will continue to work remotely and who will be approved to come back on campus.
- v. C. Sanzone stated that there is data on who is approved to come back to work via the Daily Check in so that may be a good starting point for Transportation to see who is returning versus who isn't.
- vi. M. Benda informed members that she has been working on campus since May 18 and there the Vet College is piloting a program with an email that is sent to staff every day Monday through Friday and has three questions that need to be answered before you can come on campus.

##### b. Communications and Awards Committee

- i. No updates at this time.

##### c. Education Committee

- i. No updates at this time.

##### d. Welfare Committee

- i. No updates at this time.

##### e. Benefits and Policy Committee

- i. B. Goodell informed the members that the Benefits and Policy Committee had a meeting on June 16, 2020 and welcomed Amy Parmley and Seth Brahler from HR to discuss the Gig Marketplace in Workday. Additionally, he mentioned the bereavement policy resolution and a conversation about policy for Red Cross blood donations.

##### f. Elections Committee

- i. J. Withers informed the members that there is a meeting next week to discuss the upcoming elections. Additionally, she mentioned that the Membership Task Force is wrapping things up and she will present their findings at the next EA meeting.

## **V. New Business**

### **a. Open Discussion**

- i. K. Tannenbaum inquired about the updates on EA R1 or the Trustee's meeting.
- ii. A. Howell indicated that EA R1 was submitted to President Pollack with a copy sent to VP Opperman. Additionally, he is going to follow up with VP Opperman with regard to any decision on cost-savings implementation.
- iii. B. Goodell responded to M. Benda that the daily check in procedures is campus wide. If, after you answer the questions, you are red flagged, the staff member will receive a call from Cayuga Health. He also informed that members that the daily check in only works on particular browsers so they are working on that bug.
- iv. M. Benda responded to G. McCauley's comment about feeling safe at work.
- v. C. Sanzone wondered if there could be conversation about a couple of the recent resolutions, specifically the bereavement policy resolution.
- vi. B. Goodell stated that VP Opperman and President Pollack responded and they are going to include the surrogate part of the resolution to the policy; however, they weren't inclined to include the increase in time off or distance based on peer institutions.
- vii. C. Sanzone stated that she wasn't sure what the takeaway was for the response provided for the inclement weather resolution. She stated that President Pollack indicated that there was careful review of the storm yet nothing has been presented. She suggested reaching out to senior leadership and extend the dialogue and invite to a meeting to present.
- viii. A. Howell agreed that is a good idea and to revisit it after reopening and once we get more into that weather or season.
- ix. B. Goodell stated that the response to EA R1 may result in creation of another resolution based on the response or decision of the trustees.
- x. A. Howell thanked the members for working so hard over the summer on top of everything else that is going on and urged members to promote the staff forums.
- xi. H. Depew asked members to promote the July 2 forum focusing on reopening.

## **VI. Adjournment**

- a. Chair Howell adjourned the meeting at 1:39pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Wendy Treat*

Senior Coordinator, Office of the Assemblies