



Cornell University Employee Assembly

Cornell Employee Assembly
Minutes of the September 16, 2020 Meeting
12:15-12:45 PM
Zoom

I. Call to Order

- a. Chair H. Depew called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.

II. Roll Call

- a. *Members Present:* J. Cannella, M. Cherry, J. Creque, H. Depew, J. Duong, B. Fisher, B. Fortenberry, G. Giambattista, B. Goodell, A. Haenlin-Mott, D. Howell, R. Lochner, K. Loparco, K. Mahoney, A. Miller, E. Miller, M. Newhart, M. Podolec, K. Supron, K. Tannenbaum, J. Townley, W. Treat, J. Withers, V. Villalba, L. Zacharias
- b. *Joined after meeting started:* L. Taylor
- c. *Members Absent:* S. Barry, E. Ivory, V. McAuley, J. Michael, N. Siadat, K. Wilcox

III. Approval of Minutes

- a. Motion to approve minutes from September 2, 2020 meeting – **approved unanimously**.

IV. Business of the Day

- a. Introductions and Meeting Schedule
 - i. Introductions were made of all assembly members, both returning and recently elected.
 - ii. The meeting schedule for 2020-20201 was presented to the assembly – **approved unanimously**
 1. A. Haenlin-Mott mentioned that the date for May 19th needs to change to 2021 as it currently is incorrect on the meeting schedule.
 2. E. Miller asked for confirmation that the meetings are always held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month.
 3. The Office of the Assemblies did confirm when the meetings are held.
- b. Roberts Rules
 - i. A presentation of Roberts Rules was provided by G. Giambattista, Director of the Office of the Assemblies.
- c. Introduction of EA R1: Approval of the 2020-2021 Operating Budget
 - i. Abstract: This is the operating budget for the EA 2020-2021 legislative session.
 - ii. J. Duong explained that the budget is used to cover food at EA meetings as well as other EA-sponsored meetings. Given that meetings are virtual at this time, the funds have been shifted to other budget categories.
 - iii. E. Miller asked a question regarding the remaining balance from last year and if there is any rollover.
 - iv. J. Duong stated that unspent funds stay in the University Relations account and it is a new amount each year.
 - v. B. Goodell indicated that this resolution could not be named EA R1 and should be named EA R2.

- vi. K. Loparco stated that given that there were resolutions introduced and approved during the summer than have a different term associated with them, this should be named EA R1 for AY 2020-2021.
- vii. K. Tannenbaum asked about what expenses could go against each budget category.
- viii. J. Duong stated that the funding received from University Relations can be spent on anything that furthers the operation of the Employee Assembly. An example that was provided is the donation that was previously donated to the CARE Fund; University Relations has decided that is not an appropriate use of funds so that budget items has been eliminated for the 2020-2021 EA Budget. J. Duong provided further clarification that the funding could be used for communication with staff, especially with so many staff members currently working remotely. Expenses related to the education budget line could pertain to training or education for EA members. With the addition of staff forums, there are additional expenses that have been incurred (transcription services, etc.)
- ix. B. Fortenberry acknowledged that the administrative budget category has been reduced but not eliminated and asked if that was in the hopes that meeting could resume in person in the spring.
- x. J. Duong stated that the administrative expense category covers more than just food and he felt it would be beneficial to keep some available funds in that category.
- xi. J. Cannella indicated that EA R3 was approved during the summer session.
- xii. H. Depew made the motion to amend the 2020-2021 meeting schedule to delineate meetings held during the summer from those that will be held in the fall semester – **motion approved**
- xiii. A. Haenlin-Mott asked for clarification if there are funds in the budget for food for 2020-2021 and if so, will that be used for administrative fees for upcoming or pending events.
- xiv. J. Duong responded that the funds would be used where they are needed for the purposes of running the EA. He added that there is not a need to specify how the administrative funds will be spent.
- xv. E. Miller offered some more clarification with the budget regarding the expense categories are guidelines and that the EA can move funds within the expense categories as long as it is still within the overall budget amount.
- xvi. K. Tannenbaum asked what were the total expenses for this past elections cycle.
- xvii. J. Withers indicated that there were no expenses and this budget category would have been utilized if there had been any election reimbursement requested submitted.
- xviii. K. Tannenbaum expressed that it would be beneficial to reduce the elections expense category by half and move that funding into EA Staff Forums Support and Communications.
- xix. J. Duong motioned to table the budget for discussion for further adjustment –
- xx. K. Loparco stated that reallocating funds is a little premature given the uncertain circumstances with the spring semester. She also indicated that it is a fluid budget and that the expense categories are guidelines.
- xxi. G. Giambattista confirmed that the expense categories are a guideline and that funds can be shifted as needed. She also stated that the elections line expenses are incurred when candidates do printing; however, this most likely won't be an issue in the spring as it is anticipated to be another virtual election.

- xxii. Motion to amend budget to decrease Elections expense category to \$550 and increase EA Staff Forums Support expense category to \$1,775 and Communications expense category to \$2,275 – motion failed 2-13
- xxiii. Motion to table to next meeting for discussion – motion approved 15-2
- xxiv. H. Depew informed assembly members to contact J. Duong if they are interested in working with him for the adjustments.
- d. Committee By-Laws
 - i. K. Loparco provided information regarding Standing Committees, committee setup and meeting requirements. She asked assembly members to please review bylaws, specifically Article 3, §3.1, line 162.
- e. Committee Assignments
 - i. Assignments were not addressed during the meeting

V. Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee – met on September 9 to discuss retreat and orientation. She stated in a normal year, the retreat and orientation would have covered Roberts Rules, etc.
 - i. One of the options for a retreat is a virtual ½ day retreat with involvement from Mary Opperman.
 - ii. President’s Address to Staff timeline – H. Depew will be reaching out to the President’s Office to find a date that works, potentially mid-October. She further stated that the hope is to just have the President address the staff without any other senior leadership input or involvement.
 - iii. H. Depew informed the assembly members to reach out to K. Loparco if they have any suggestions or input for the President’s Address to the Staff.

VI. New Business

- a. EA R2: Recognition and Appreciation of Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program Participants – approved 19-0-1
 - i. Abstract: On the occasion of the retirement of 213 faculty and staff participants in the Voluntary Retirement Incentive (VRI) program effective September 16, 2020, the Employee Assembly thanks and celebrates their careers and contributions to the Cornell Community.
 - ii. E. Miller further indicated that the VRI will offer savings for the financial challenges that the University is facing due to the COVID pandemic. She also stated that the resolution would be presented to the President, the Vice President of Human Resources, the Vice President of University Relations, and the VRI participants who have not been listed as anonymous. She further stated that there is an addendum to the resolution listing all 213 VRI participants.
 - iii. H. Depew stated that there was a VRI celebration that was held on September 14 and thanked A. Miller, B. Fortenberry and K. Loparco were involved with the event.
 - iv. A. Miller thanked W. Treat, E. Miller and B. Goodell for their support behind the scenes and B. Fortenberry and K. Loparco for their support with the event.
 - v. H. Depew mentioned to extend the meeting by 10 minutes – approved unanimously
- b. Open Discussion
 - i. E. Miller concurred with K. Mahoney’s comment via chat that assembly members are required to be on 3 committees and that might be overwhelming. She stated that might be something the assembly should address in the future, given that the assembly is a larger body than in previous years.
 - ii. J. Withers stated that there have been inquires from staff members with regard to the COVID dashboard.

- iii. H. Depew also stated that the Cornell COVID dashboard doesn't always align with the NYS threshold. She stated that a constituent suggested that there be improvement with the Cornell COVID dashboard to meet NYS metrics and the rubric.
- iv. J. Kruser verified the inquiry re: COVID cases for Cornell campus vs. NYS cases. He stated the numbers in the smaller number are only those enrolled in classes and on campus.
- v. H. Depew informed the assembly that she will bring this up with senior leadership or for future staff forums.
- vi. J. Cannella asked for clarification between the cases reported.
- vii. J. Kruser stated that the larger number is Cornell students who are enrolled but not on campus, while the smaller number reflected students who have in-person classes and are living on campus.

VII. Adjournment

- a. Chair Depew adjourned the meeting at 1:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wendy Treat

Senior Coordinator, Office of the Assemblies