



Cornell University Employee Assembly

Cornell Employee Assembly
Minutes of the August 21, 2019 Meeting
12:15-1:30 PM
Willard Straight Hall, Art Gallery

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

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

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. K. Barth made a motion to approve the minutes of the EA meetings of June 19, 2019 and July 29, 2019 – **approved** with no dissent

III. Business of the Day

- a. Communications Plan/Examples of Engagement
 - i. C. Sanzone reviewed the Communications Organizer worksheet she has been working on. The organizer presents an opportunity for EA members to consider what they know and do not know about their constituent groups.
 1. Who Do You Represent
 - a. Demographics: The worksheet asks for general facts about the constituency makeup, including gender, minority representation, location, average years of service and generation breakdowns. C. Sanzone suggested searching for the information online. For example, the Institutional Research & Planning (IRP) factbook on its website features statistics broken down by college and administrative units. There are also blank spaces in the chart for other important metrics EA members may want to add. Under the “More to Know” category, members can list questions they have about their constituencies, which can channel into informational requests.
 - b. Type of Work: Members can list the nature of work constituents perform, including initiatives, programs, and special issues. This can be informed by a job family breakdown.
 - c. Leadership and Key Contacts: C. Sanzone stressed the importance of getting to know the leadership in the units EA members represent. While she knows the VP of University Relations, she also knows key people in his office including the Scheduling and Logistics Coordinator and the Executive Assistant.
 2. Outreach Opportunities
 - a. Communication Channels: C. Sanzone suggested taking a look at staff listservs, unit websites, social media accounts, and internal staff newsletters. While some channels may not be ones EA members can use, it may be helpful to stay on top of what is going on. However, if there are opportunities, C. Sanzone suggested submitting a blurb or getting permission to share information.
 - b. Recurring Events: C. Sanzone suggested quarterly staff meetings, annual events, and informal get-togethers. EA members can make effort to attend or try to get on the agenda.

- c. Physical Spaces: C. Sanzone advocated looking for opportunities in places where the EA may be able to catch the eye of a staff member. She suggested putting up signage in kitchens, breakrooms, supply closets, and time clocks. If there are events coming up, the EA can post a one-pager.
 - 3. Kickstart Your Term
 - a. C. Sanzone gave a list of recommendations for EA members.
 - (i) Contact the Communications Committee to help with emails, signage, information requests, and outreach ideas.
 - (ii) Introduce yourself to leadership and consider asking for a brief meeting.
 - (iii) Request permission to use internal communication channels. C. Sanzone suggested getting a section in the units' staff newsletter, five minutes on a meeting agenda, or permission to use the staff mailing list directly.
 - (iv) Consider submitting an information request for more information about constituencies.
 - (v) Follow or bookmark relevant social media accounts or websites. This can be channeled into recognition opportunities.
 - (vi) Be prepared with an elevator pitch for constituents and have a few copies of the brochure on hand.
 - (vii) Prepare an elevator pitch about constituents. When going to networking events, EA members should always be ready to talk about what they are doing.
 - (viii) Plan to attend internal staff events whenever possible.
 - ii. C. Sanzone encouraged EA members to fill out the worksheet. The Communications Committee can go over it and assist in figuring out next steps. The committee can also help with developing email templates, such as ones for welcoming and congratulating constituents. The worksheet is on Box and she will send out the link.
 - iii. K. Barth asked the EA to commit to using the template that C. Sanzone created and upload them to Box.
 - b. Nomination for 2019 EA Appreciation Award
 - i. C. Sanzone listed the nominations:
 - 1. K. LoParco nominated the Law School Building Care and Facilities
 - 2. K. Barth nominated the CIT – IT Service Desk
 - 3. K. Barth nominated the Central IT Service Group (CITSG)
 - 4. B. Fortenberry nominated the New Student Move-in and Orientation Team
 - 5. K. Barth nominated the CIT Video Engineering and Event Services Team
 - 6. K. Barth nominated the Canvas Implementation Team
 - 7. R. Lochner nominated the Fire Protection and Emergency Services
 - ii. K. LoParco wanted to isolate a group she works closely with. Her colleagues from Building Care and Facilities and the custodian staff at the Law School do work that not many people think about. She highlighted their positive attitudes and has gotten to know some of them very well.
 - iii. R. Lochner nominated Fire Protection and Emergency Services. The team responds to all fire alarms and conducts fire alarm tests across campus. They also respond to lab spills and ensure compliance with carbon monoxide monitoring laws. The team recently assisted with the North Campus Residential Expansion Project by developing move-in and move-out procedures for students.
 - iv. K. Barth introduced his first nomination, the CIT IT Service Group that supports the 35 units on campus that are too small to have their own IT divisions. He lauded the group for always supporting the mission of the university. His second nomination, the CIT – IT Service Desk is the frontline ambassador across campus. The team works with faculty, staff, alumni, and affiliated organizations. K. Barth's third nomination, the CITSG, supports over 20 units on campus. He noted that the CIT Video Engineering and Event Services Team will help the EA

put on the President's Address by managing the video tape. The team has a record of consistently producing high quality commencement video services, highlighting that its coverage of Bill Nye made it to national news networks. K. Barth's fourth nomination is the Canvas Implementation Team. Over the last year, Cornell transitioned from Blackboard to Canvas, which required moving 22,000 courses worth of information, modernizing, and meeting a new level of web accessibility standards.

IV. **Executive Session**

- a. The EA entered an executive session at 12:48pm to discuss the nominations.
- b. Chair Howell moved the EA back into regular session.

V. **Committee Reports**

- a. Communications and Awards Committee
 - i. C. Sanzone reported they are starting next week and will meet generally every other Wednesday from 12-1pm. The committee is gearing up for the President's Address to Staff event and launching the George Peter Award.
- b. Education Committee
 - i. M. Benda anticipated meeting at least once a month.
- c. Benefits and Policy Committee
 - i. A. Sieverding stated that as soon as they get members, the committee will set up a meeting. She plans on continuing the work on H. Depew's forum and requesting a new representative on the EA for those who have been at Cornell longer than eight years. A survey last year reported that long-term employees feel they are not adequately heard. While the EA has a representative for employees who have been at Cornell for less than five years, there is no representative for longer-term employees.
 - ii. Chair Howell recommended starting a process to propose it in a resolution.
- d. Executive Committee
 - i. H. Depew announced plans to prepare for the President's Address to Staff. President Martha Pollack is coming to the EA next week. At the end of the meeting, will be a question session. She asked all EA members to think about questions to ask.
 - ii. G. Giambattista added that at last year's president's visit, the EA asked the committee chairs to speak on what they were working on.
 - iii. Chair Howell noted it was still early in the term. While committee chairs may not have a list of action items, they can talk about bigger ideas.
- e. Elections Committee
 - i. J. Withers reported she set up an individual meeting in September. There are people who have expressed interest in the EA and the unfilled seats. The committee is collecting statements from them.
- f. Welfare Committee
 - i. K. Mahoney said they have not met yet.

VI. **New Business**

- i. Open Discussion
 1. L. Taylor raised questions about constituency and members who serve those who are international.
 2. A. Sieverding asked a question about proceeding with unfilled spots.
 3. K. Mahoney brought up a lack of opportunity for discussion and engagement on the Employee Survey every year. She asked if the EA could get ahead on that and not be in the same position later on.
 - a. C. Sanzone explained that IRP works on the survey. She pushed for a more proactive effort for a seat at the table. The EA got caught off guard last time because it believed

it was more of a stakeholder than it was viewed as. The presentation of results was very basic. Although the EA made a request for more detailed information, it did not ever materialize.

- b. G. Giambattista gave a background of the survey. The first one was an initiative of the EA. The second one had some missteps in the preparation part and there were conversations about the EA not potentially having a role in putting out a survey. The EA became a partner in the results and the conversation at the time was that it was a missed opportunity. G. Giambattista suggested pushing for a seat at the table and more access to the results.
 - c. Chair Howell said if anyone is interested in taking a proactive role he is happy to support them.
 - d. A. Sieverding and L. Taylor volunteered.
4. A. McCabe introduced a developmental class that trains students. However, it has had to turn away students due to lack of funding. He wants the EA to provide vocal support to the program and possibly collaborate with them and give recommendations. He questioned which committee could work on the issue.
 - a. H. Depew recommended referring to the EA Issue Resolution Decision Tree.

VII. Adjournment

- a. Chair Howell adjourned the meeting at 1:31pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Catherine Tran

Clerk of the Assembly