

**Staff Association Area Reps Meeting
Minutes of January 14, 2016**

Present:

Victoria Bambrick
Catherine Bolger
Jennifer Calbery
Jenny Conroy
Lawrence Folland
Christine Gillis Bilton
Tom Graham

Michael Herz
Terry Labach
Robyn Landers
Luanne McGinley
Carlos Mendes
Susan Oestreich
Jackie Serviss

Jeremy Steffler
Tammy Vucicevich
Murray Zink
Murielle Landry
Kathleen St. Laurent

1. Approval of Minutes of December 10, 2015 Area Reps Meeting

Approved.

2. Business arising from the minutes

None.

3. President's remarks

3.1 UWSA positions

The nomination period for UWSA president-elect is open now until January 27.

Michael Herz has done eight roadshows. About 100 staff have attended. Heard indication that this yielded some signups with UWSA. Also finding many people are still unaware of UWSA.

Christine Gillis Bilton is vice-chair of the new subcommittee on area reps. Could use a few more committee members. First meeting is January 20. The mandate is to update the area rep list, look for areas without coverage, find members to cover them, and review guidelines.

A Special General Meeting is scheduled for February 25. Will cover changes on Memorandum of Agreement regarding UWSA membership to address the problem of declining membership, as well as to secure the right to third party arbitration. Will revisit communication methods to try to become more effective.

Looking into adding a stipend to role of UWSA president, paid for by revenues from dues. The role has been assessed at around USG 14. The stipend idea is similar to faculty taking on administrative roles, e.g. for department chair. UW will pay up to the level of a USG 6 salary to cover the president's full-time leave; UWSA adds as needed to maintain person's normal salary. The stipend would be a recognition of the added responsibilities.

This stipend is deliberately intended to be a token, non-trivial in amount, but also more a recognition, not an incentive to entice candidates just for the extra money.

Discussion

It was suggested that it might be good to allow a president to decline the stipend in case it would put them into the next tax bracket and result in a net loss of after tax income. But then there could be subtle pressure to be the person who magnanimously declines it, or to follow what the previous person did.

It was also suggested that this money could instead be used to cover training costs for an incoming president.

Quorum is needed at the SGM so please encourage your colleagues to attend and participate in the discussion and vote.

3.2 Provincial Ombudsman

As of January 1, the Ontario ombudsman has purvue over Ontario universities. This gives staff another alternative for handling workplace problems. Not sure yet how best to advise people to act now that this alternative is available. Some of the UWSA executive will meet with the ombudsman soon. Will ask how to use ombud's office if something is not resolved through our existing procedures; also whether they can unlock longstanding issues that are not being resolved.

3.3 EAP

The EAP committee has been revamped with expanded mandate and funding to implement the EFAP program. Will be tendered to insurance companies soon. Until that's in place, counsellors will soon be available at Health Services to serve staff (not just students).

3.4 PACSC

PACSC met today. Staff compensation review is underway.

4. Other business

4.1 Membership level

Q: Is enrollment still dropping? What steps are underway?

A: Negotiating mandatory dues seems the best way to go, as will be brought up at the SGM.

4.2 Staff Excellence Fund

This has changed a few times over the years. Last year two new categories were created: \$85K for healthy work place initiatives, \$65K for leadership development etc. Will invite proposals starting in February.

4.3 Communications

UWSA discontinued the printed newsletter a while ago, and tried Facebook and Twitter. Felt that the newsletter wasn't being widely read, and took a lot of effort to produce. Something delivered, whether paper or email, may have a better chance of being read compared to expecting people to go look at a web site. There is a committee for communications.

Discussion followed about preferences for communication methods. Very few of us check the UWSA Facebook and Twitter feeds. Need something coming to people. Something terse with a link to details. Good to have flexibility to let people choose to get each message as soon as it is written, or get accumulated messages periodically (digest mode). Needs to be well-written and designed so people don't get turned off. Could we get a permanent feed into the Daily Bulletin?

Chair: Michael Herz

Minutes: RBL