

COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY SYSTEM STAFF

November 27, 2001

Revised Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 am. Carol Prier, UMCP representative, introduced Dr. Daniel Mote, President. Dr. Mote welcomed the group and reinforced the importance of Staff at College Park and USM. Detailing the new advertising campaign for USM, Dr. Mote spoke with enthusiasm about the marketing program. He suggested that each institution gather suggestions from staff, faculty and students for advertising ideas. He expressed his deep appreciation to Staff in the aftermath of the Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>

The legislative package for the USM contains five pieces of legislation. Two major influences this year: an election year and the first year after the Census. The Census triggers a re-districting process which will determine boundaries according to the population. The Maryland population has grown 5-5 ½%. The Governor will submit a redistricting plan and the Legislature has 45 days to alter it or it goes into action on the 46<sup>th</sup> day.

The minutes from the October meeting were reviewed and accepted with revisions.

### **Human Resources Report**

1. Don Tynes discussed the USM Report on Contingent Employment that was completed on October 24, 2001. On December 13, 1996, the USM Board of Regents (BOR) approved the VII-1.40 USM Policy on Contingent Status Employment for Nonexempt and Exempt Staff Employees. The policy was amended on February 9, 2001, to provide for the conversion of Contingent Category II employees to authorized lines. This process has been designed to be a three-year phased-in cycle, beginning in FY 2001. The conversions are targeted to lines and employees that have been active for two years or more, excluding grant-funded employees and other exclusions permitted by the policy. The status report compares the numbers of Contingent II (State/self-support only) employees in June 30, 2000 v.s. June 30, 2001.

The numbers reflected a target population decrease of 16.9% (a total reduction of 217 employees). The total budgetary impact of the conversions is \$1,351,172 for the USM. Don was asked if the current Executive Order hiring freeze would affect conversions. As of today, the conversions have not been affected because many have already taken place.

2. The Governor's Executive Order hiring freeze was extended to the USM on November 12. The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) will meet on December 15<sup>th</sup> to determine budget restrictions affecting the State and USM. USM currently has a request before the DBM to allow flexibility in deciding which categories cutbacks will come from. USM must give back \$10 million to the State.
3. All USM Capital Spending programs are cut in half. There is no news about the COLA. The final decision will be made at the December 15<sup>th</sup> DBM meeting. Rosario was asked if there was any news about early retirement programs. She reported that as of today, there is no news.
4. The elections results for Frostburg reported that 222 nonexempt employees voted and AFSCME will represent the Nonexempt. Out of the eligible Nonexempt employees, only 18 did not vote. The breakdown of the votes is 122-AFSCME; 55-No representation; 37-MCEA. SPO had 18 out of 19 eligible employees voting.
5. USM Policy on Military Leave (call to military duty) should mirror language of the State but as of today, the State does not have a policy. Rosario clarified that currently the USM is continuing benefits for personnel who are called. Employee will probably go on "Leave without Pay" after the military leave and accumulated annual leave days are used. It is critical that a policy be established. Currently all benefits are discontinued when they go on "Leave without Pay" status. USM wants to change policy to continue tuition remission benefits because it is important that spouses and dependents can continue to take classes, and for employees also it is important classes are accessible while on active duty. As long as the military person is on leave without

pay and intends to return, all benefits will stay in place. If he/she dies, the spouse and dependents will keep benefits. Additionally, the letters for call-up need to be clarified. If the call-up is from the President, benefits are not continued after all paid leave is

4. **Communications**—Fran is waiting for final reports for Newsletter. Beverly Morris is new Chair.

PRIORITIES OF COMMITTEES:

**Community Development**

Staff Picnic

Staff BOR Awards

**Compensation**

Staff Ratio/representation

BEST practices

Evaluation and follow-up on Merit Pay Task Force

Standardization of 21/2% merit for Exempt employees

**Communications**

Organization Charts

Establish 3 models of Shared Governance for Staff Councils

**Benefits**

Employee Assistance Policy

Sick Leave Donations

Sick Leave Retirement Issues

**Legislative Affairs**

2002 Legislation

Rosario was asked about the Employee Assistance Program available to USM employees. Each institution has different levels of assistance available to employees. Rosario and Don will gather institutional information. Andrianna will bring brochures on College Park program and ask someone to meet with the Council for information purposes. Each institution was asked to determine what was available and advise Roy as soon as possible.

Andrianna suggested that the December meeting format be changed. The committees do not have enough time to discuss issues and report to the Council because of time restraints. She suggested that reports be given earlier during the meeting.

Sally Hearn suggested that committee chairs set priorities. We should now review CUSS By-laws.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:10pm.

**The next meeting is 10 AM, Tuesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at USM Office.**