

10/30/03

There still has been no word as to where the Board of Regents Staff Awards will be presented. They are usually presented in October and CUSS would prefer they not be presented at a regular BOR meeting, but at a special place and time.

The CUSS Constitution has been revised to reflect correct terminology and current language. The package has been sent to the Chancellor and was approved. It will be submitted to the full BOR for final approval.

The CUSS membership can vote on issues in the by-laws if an amendment is needed. A quorum is needed for approval. An Ad Hoc committee will review the By-Laws, prepare and follow the amendment process.

Report from the Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS

The BOR Finance Committee has been rescheduled from 9/25 to 10/9/03. Coalition Meetings have been taking place in which seven USM Institutions are participating with no information released at this time.

There was a discussion on the status of the BEST program. CUSS needs to get involved in moving this program forward because it will provide access to training for the Staff.. It was an initiative of CUSS and accepted by the BOR as one of their initiatives in July 2000, but it wasn't acted upon. We need to move this program forward and get the final policy approved.

Open Enrollment for health benefits will be in October/November. No reported rates or exact dates at this time, but the level of service/coverage will remain the same. Mr. Chip DiPaula, DBM, asked to review the best practices and rates nationally and other states' government agencies. CUSS wants to take part in reviewing the Request For Proposal (RFP) when sent out for bid for the year 2005. FLEX Accounts can be set up with tax deferred dollars to pay for over-the-counter medication, medical/dental co-pays, prescription co-pays, dental bills, glasses, etc. This fund is a use or lose fund. DBM is looking into the use of a debit card for the FLEX account and is awaiting experience results from across the nation and its feasibility for use in the State of Maryland.

The 457(b) Plan parallels the 403 (b) Plan for interested employees who want to participate in another tax deferred retirement plan. The plan will be implemented in the month of October. Vendors can be contacted for counseling, marketing packages, and the appropriate enrollment forms. Institution Benefits Coordinators can assist employees with forms and basic information.

Committee Reports:

All CUSS members were asked to sign up for a Committee. The Committees are Community Development, Legislative Affairs, Benefits and Compensation, and Communications.

On the Community Development Committee are Patrick McLane, Marie Meehan, LuAnn Marshall (will assist), and Art Hanlin. On the Legislative Affairs Committee are Roy A. Ross, Star Levin, Steve Agnes, and Ray Frederick. On the Benefits and Compensation Committee are Dale O'Neal, Andrianna Stuart, Mary Pat Armstrong, Colette Becker, Bill Crockett, Jay Hegeman, Judy Lowe, Linda Morin, and Melissa Moore. The Communication Committee consists of Hermetta Hudson, Chair, Gloria Guguski and Mary Reed. Have all reports from committees sent to Hermetta for the CUSS Newsletter as soon as possible.

Old Business:

10/30/03

A review of the calendar for CUSS Meetings for 2004-2005 had a question mark for the 1/27/2004. Gloria Gaguski confirmed that the meeting will be at Towson University on 1/27/04.

New Business:

A request was made by the College Park representative if they could have three votes during the 2003-04 term. Discussion took place as to the pros and cons of such a request. Under the current CUSS By-Laws, College Park only qualifies for two votes and this request would require our By-laws to be amended. The CUSS membership can vote on issues in the By-laws if an amendment is needed. A quorum is needed for approval. It was suggested that an Ad Hoc Committee review the By-Laws, prepare a recommendation, and follow the amendment process. This Ad Hoc Committee will consist of Ray Frederick, Roy Ross, Andrianna Stuart, and Gloria Gaguski.

A united front of Staff members should lobby the legislature to voice our concerns for future budget cuts.