University of Nevada Reno

Staff Employees Council (SEC)

Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2014

Rita Laden Senate Chambers, 3rd Floor, JCU

Representatives Present: Ashley Andrews (Public Relations Coordinator), Albert Bonk (Chair), Betsy Brownfield (Vice-Chair), Michelle Bruce, Jodi Fraser, Carla Geib (Treasurer), Margo Grubic, Yul Echo (Proxy for Robert Hernandez), Nancy Horowitz, Natsumi Housely, Kathy Johnson (Secretary), Lindsay Klaes, Linda Kuchenbecker (Ex-Officio Chair), Harley LaRoche, David Lockyer, Cheyenne Magpantay, Mary Miller, Alicia Seefeldt, Pamela Terango, Mona Watts, Donna Snyder, Blanca Galeano (Proxy for Adria White), Jodi Yocum.

Representatives Absent: Debra Glogovac, Steven Hollingsworth, Lisa Kornze, Jennifer Laslo, Cynthia Olivo (hired at TMCC).

Guest Speakers: President Marc Johnson, Graham Kent (Professor-Seismological Laboratory), Jamie Roice-Gomes (Coordinator-Radon Education Program at Cooperative Extension).

I. Announcements/Action Items
   a. There was no agenda today; Albert appreciated our flexibility.
   b. Motion to approve last month’s minutes by Linda Kuchenbecker, Nancy Horowitz seconded. Motion passed.
   c. Former Secretary Cynthia Olivo has left UNR for a position at TMCC. Kathy Johnson was nominated for Secretary and Jodi Fraser offered her help. Albert moved, Jodi seconded.
   The box of Secretary supplies passed from Albert to Kathy. Kathy will also ask help of former Secretary Katherine Dirk if needed.
   d. SEC Committee Chairs: The Executive Board has developed charges for what we want the members to do over the course of the 2014-15 SEC year. Albert will email the
charges out to the chairs this week; if they are not received by Friday, please contact Albert.

e. Edit to the agenda packet: the Arboretum Board did meet last month; Kathy Johnson attended.

f. All committee members: please be in contact with your constituents to let them know you are there for them.

g. Newsletter update: Nancy Horowitz will send Save the Date information on the Open House and Recognition Reception. A PDF of the newsletter will be emailed out to SEC members for them to forward to their constituents; thanks to Natsumi Housely for the great suggestion. A paper copy is also sent out to all classified staff on campus through Nevada Ink and the UNR mail room. The double-sided, black and white distribution will allow for all employees to receive the newsletter, even if some do not have email accounts with the University. Alicia Seefeldt believes that the paper newsletter distribution should be discontinued since most newsletters end up in the recycle bin and the printing expense isn’t necessary.

h. Lindsay Klaes informed the committee of UNR Early Head Start program’s 2nd Annual Holiday Giving Tree. If a member’s department is looking for a family to help for the holiday season, they can make the season a little brighter for an at-risk family by selecting a child on the UNR Early Head Start’s Giving Tree.

II. President Johnson

a. The University is growing and there is the capacity to make some updates to accommodate this growth. Administration and non-credit class production staff in Extended Studies, with the exception of the 365 online learning group, will move to the Redfield Campus in January. This will help fill up some of the underutilized space at Redfield, and will help open up space for other faculty and staff on the UNR campus. Lincoln and Manzanita Halls will be renovated from dormitory space to office space beginning the summer of 2015, with the offices opening in August of 2016. Air conditioning will be installed in Lincoln. It wasn’t installed before because students didn’t live there during the summer months. Some unused University property in Stead will be sold to offset the cost of installing the air conditioning and renovating. Faculty and staff will move from Thompson Hall into the new Student Services Building in January of 2016.
b. Lincoln and Manzanita students will move into a new residence hall, which is on schedule to open the summer of 2015. Another residence hall will open in 2017 where White Pine and adjacent parking is now.

c. There are designs for a second Arts building which will be built between Church Fine Arts and the Journalism building. This will allow for acoustically separated space for concerts and teaching.

d. The University engaged an architect to look at planning a new engineering building east of Davidson Math and Science.

e. There are plans to convert physics and chemistry labs into research labs.

f. Tobacco Free policy update: August 1st, 2015 is the target date for UNR to go tobacco free. Enid Jennings is offering a free, online smoking cessation course which filled the 100 spots immediately. Another course for 100 people will be opened. The Student Health Office can offer more information for this University funded program.

g. The University is in discussions with Washoe County to see if it would be interested in trading the Nelson Building for the school district property that borders Valley Road. The programs in the Nelson Building will be allocated to other locations. This is mentioned in the Master Plan as a possibility.

h. The campus needs to find 400-500 new offices within the next 10 years for the new faculty and staff positions that will be added.

i. Heidi Gansert (Office of the President, External Affairs) has contacts with the legislature and the Governor’s office and can let them know that we support the entire package the Board of Regents has proposed.

III. Graham Kent

a. Showed slides of the earthquake swarms in the Sheldon National Antelope Refuge in northwest Nevada. The earthquakes have been increasing in intensity over the past several days. There is a small increase of the chance that this precipitates a larger event. There is no way to forecast a larger event. But he mentioned the swarm of small earthquakes in the Mogul area that lead to a Magnitude 5 event and that this could possibly mean a large event occurring in northwest Nevada. He would like to see an earthquake warning system, saying that even couple of seconds warning before an earthquake is better that no warning at all.
b. He talked about the four fire towers around the Lake Tahoe area that are used to spot fires early. Enough cameras can help reduce the chances of a large fire occurring. Because of these cameras, the Spooner Fire was caught early. They are also used to monitor controlled burns and to show how fires start and what to look for.

c. There is a new program soon to be launched called AlertTahoe that will allow the public to watch through the Tahoe cameras on their computers or phones. It is crowdsourcing and using social media to help catch fires early. He said that this program is an insurance policy for the people of this area to protect the Tahoe region. It will not only protect the forest, but keep the area beautiful so that people will continue to visit, thus helping our economy.

IV. Jamie Roice-Gomes

a. Jamie spoke to the committee about radon gas. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas which is colorless, tasteless, and odorless and is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. About 21,000 people per year die in the U.S. due to radon caused lung cancer. It is found all over the world and the EPA estimates that 1 in 5 homes in the U.S. have elevated radon levels. The average indoor rate of radon is 1.3pCi/l. If a home has a level of 4, that is considered the same as smoking a half pack of cigarettes a day. If a home is at a 2.7 level, it is recommended that the house is fixed to get rid of it.

b. About 1 in 4 Nevada homes that have been tested have elevated radon levels. She encourages everyone to get a radon test, especially since in Nevada the highest level of 155.6 was found in Washoe County.

c. When testing, ensure the outside doors and windows are closed 12 hours before the test and during. Don’t test during a storm and if you have to have the heating or a/c on, be sure to put it to recirculate. Test in an area that won’t be disturbed by children or pets.

d. Albert will speak to President Johnson about testing in the dormitories. Departments wanting to test should contact Environmental Health and Safety. As radon program employees are state employees, they cannot lobby, so please contact your legislators about testing in schools, dorms, daycare, etc. Jamie said it is good to test if you are buying or selling a home, so Realtors should be contacted as well. The Nevada State Contractor’s Board can be contacted if you are remodeling.
e. Jamie will be back at the SEC Open House with two tables with information.

V. New Business

a. Nancy Horowitz is looking for members to be on the Employee Recognition committee. This committee works with Employee of the Month and the Distinguished classified employee of the year awards.

b. Albert reminded us to visit the SEC website to read the bylaws and look for committee openings. If you are interested in joining a committee, please email Albert. Also, he asked to please fill SEC committees before University committees.

c. Albert also reminded us that it is very important to be on time, especially since we do not want to keep the President or Provost or any other guests waiting while we fill our quorum.

d. Suggested speakers are VPRI Jim Gotham to talk on ways to hire staff (postdoc or technician level) for various departments. Other suggestions are Tesla, experts on Drones, anyone with new business, Environmental Health and Safety.

e. Any ideas on improving life on campus for staff and/or students? Alicia Seefeldt suggested we look for ways to lower our carbon footprint and conserve our fiscal resources; perhaps installing solar panels on buildings.

Meeting adjourned at 3:47