



Cornell University
Employee Assembly

MINUTES
Employee Assembly
October 1, 2014
12:15-1:30pm
401 Physical Science Building

I. Call to Order

G. Mezey called the meeting to order at 12:19 p.m.

Present: N. Bell, B. Cristelli, L. Croll Howell, M. de Roos, C. Ferguson, T. Grove, E. Lee, G. Mezey, B. Schaffner, BJ Siasoco, M. Stefanski Seymour, P. Thompson

Absent: J. Ballerstein, D. Brooks, B. Esty, H. Hall, S. Jenks, L. Morris, J. Rogan

Also Present: P. Bursic, N. Doolittle, G. Giambattista, C. Lender, L. Majani, A. Mittman, A. O'Donnell

II. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda

G. Mezey proposed three amendments to the agenda. First, he requested to move the Mission and Vision Resolution to "Business of the Day" so that it could be voted on during the meeting. G. Mezey also requested to add a short presentation from T. Grove on Employee Parental Leave Policy to immediately after approval of the minutes. T. Grove moved to include both additions to the agenda. P. Thompson seconded and the EA unanimously approved the two changes to the meeting agenda.

III. Approval of the Minutes

A. Approval of Minutes from September 17, 2014

B. Schaffner moved to approve the minutes without any revisions or amendments. T. Grove seconded and the minutes from September 17, 2014 were unanimously approved.

IV. New Business

A. Parental Leave Policy—T. Grove

T. Grove explained she met with an employee to discuss the Parental Leave policy. The employee expressed concerns with the current policy which only gives five days of full pay and then half pay for days after this, which means people have to save sick time and/or vacation time to use after the five day period. T. Grove asked to bring the issue to the Policy Committee for further exploration and research to compare the Cornell plan with other institutions. The floor was then opened for discussion. M. de Roos asked if there are any financial supplements to help with the half paid days? T. Grove answered that currently employees have to supplement with sick days if they want to receive full pay. L. Croll Howell explained parental leave in more detail and explained that Cornell's plan is a relatively competitive plan; however, she would be happy

to research it more and welcomed any EA member to help. P. Thompson asked when the parental leave policy was last evaluated? L. Croll Howell said the plan is looked at about every two years. T. Grove added that the employee who brought this concern forward would be willing to help with the research for this issue. G. Mezey moved to send the issue to the Policy Committee for further action. The motion was seconded and the parental leave issue was handed to the Policy Committee. They will bring forward a new proposal by the end of the Fall 2014 semester.

C. Ferguson asked if there would be a separate meeting with M. Opperman this semester. BJ Siasoco explained while there are typically separate meetings this year is different because of the 150th celebration. This year there will only be one combined meeting featuring M. Opperman, Glenn Altschuler, and D. Skorton.

P. Thompson introduced Linda Majani, who is the GPSA liaison for the EA. She will be attending GPSA meetings regularly and reporting back to the EA with updates.

V. Business of the Day

A. Paul Bursic

G. Mezey introduced P. Bursic to the Employee Assembly. P. Bursic is the Director of Benefits for the university. P. Bursic began by giving a brief history regarding Enron and the reason the Pension Protection Act was passed in 2006. The act is for 401Ks and states that companies cannot just give out a plan that provides company stocks as the only investment option. Although Cornell does not have stocks, this act still had a dramatic affect on the plans the university offers. As a result, Cornell set up a Retirement Planning and Oversight Committee, which is a permanent committee.

The Committee decided the best plan of action was to hire a consulting firm to assist. They decided on Capp Trust, to create reliable portfolio recommendations. The analyses for these recommendations are sound and the company is continuously putting out recommendations for investments. P. Bursic explained on campus there are two different advising resources for staffs, TIAA CREF and Fidelity. P. Bursic then opened the floor for questions.

G. Mezey informed the EA the chair of the EA holds a voting position on the Retirement Planning and Oversight Committee. C. Ferguson asked about the ten percent that Cornell contributes into an employees retirement fund and if this is now put into a different fund investment? P. Bursic said it will continue to go into the funds that employees currently have it in until the employee chooses to move the funds into Cornell's "Best in Show" investments. T. Grove clarified your funds will stay where they currently are but that Cornell is not responsible for funds they do not consider their best in class.

The EA then discussed how to change the culture surrounding this topic and how to bring people's attention back to the importance of it. P. Bursic explained the website has a lot of information and is a great source to direct people to. He also offered to speak with any group who is interested in learning more. B. Schaffner asked if non-exempt staff would have to take personal time to have a meeting with TIAA CREF or Fidelity? P. Bursic said currently they

would but this fit under the employee's wellness time. P. Bursic also said there is a Financial Fitness Challenge coming up which would also be beneficial for every employee to participate in. It is an online educational program that requires employees to sign in with their netid to participate. They can do with others, such as spouses, once they have logged in. At the end of the challenge they will be entered to win prizes. C Ferguson suggested having more information on financial options and investment presented to employees at the President's Address to the staff. G. Mezey added this might be a good thing to have instead of the survey before the address.

P. Bursic finished by discussing the open enrollment for this year. The plan will not be changing for the endowed colleges; however, they are looking at a six percent increase in order to balance the cost of the plan that has been incurred over the last couple of years. Cornell is aiming for a 80:20 percent split where Cornell is at 80%. For the past couple of years, Cornell has been above eight percent and this increase will help to balance this ratio. P. Bursic encouraged the members of the EA to reach out to others and encourage them to make an appointment for help and/or to have someone for the benefits office come and present to their group about options.

VI. New Business

A. Resolution 1: Mission and Vision of the EA- BJ Siasoco

BJ Siasoco presented the resolution to the members of the EA. This resolution is for adopting a mission and vision statement for the EA. L. Croll Howell proposed an amendment with the wording of the resolution so it would read "empower staff and improve staff experience." P. Thompson moved to approve the amended resolution. C. Ferguson seconded and the EA unanimously approved the amended resolution one.

G. Mezey asked for a motion to extend the meeting for three minutes. The motion was approved.

BJ Siasoco then presented Resolution 2: Welcoming the New President, Elizabeth Garrett. This resolution is an invitation to the new president to the shared government and ensures this system remains an important portion of the president's responsibilities. C. Ferguson proposed the addition of Elizabeth Garrett's qualifications to the resolution. There was some discussion as to why the EA is the only one presenting this resolution. G. Mezey explained the EA is attempting to promote this resolution first and then present it to the other assemblies so they will create similar resolutions. G. Mezey proposed an amendment to the sponsors of the resolution.

Resolution two was tabled because quorum was lost so voting could not proceed.

VII. Adjournment

The EA meeting of October 1, 2014 was adjourned at 1:38 p.m. by time.