

LSU AgCenter Faculty Council Meeting Minutes for February 24, 2006

Attendees: Joan M. King, Jerry Whatley, Dale Pollet, Denyse Cummins, Markaye Russell, Cynthia Stephens, Roberto Barbosa, Wayne M. Gauthier, Allen Hogan, Donnie Miller, Debbie Melvin, Paul Wilson, Clayton Hollier, Miles Brashier, Brian LeBlanc, Linda Hooper-Bui, Ken McMillin, Troy Menard, and Bill Branch (guest)

Absent: Rich Vlosky, Todd Shupe

1. Call to order at 9:30 AM by Clayton Hollier
2. Comments by Chancellor Richardson

LSU System President Search

A press release had just been given to Dr. Richardson, that he shared with us, regarding the search for the new LSU System President, indicating that the procedures would be changed and the process slowed down so that a transparent search could be done. A firm was being hired to do a search for candidates.

Budget

The Louisiana State Executive Budget was not out yet and was going to be out on March 6th. At the last faculty council meeting, we were told there would be up to a 16.5% to 17% budget reduction for the LSU AgCenter, which included a 5% to 6% cut from the last year plus an 8% reduction for the new year. There were also going to be 2% to 3% cuts in unfunded mandates, but these cuts did not include the tobacco tax. These funds are collected at the inventory level. For the first year of the tobacco funds we received half of the money we anticipated. We anticipate that we will be down budgeted again by maybe \$300,000.

On February 10, 2006 the Board of Regents directed a 6% budget cut, which the LSU AgCenter addressed by taking some supply monies, not filling vacancies, cutting expenses and by using some one time general funds. The LSU AgCenter does not expect to get money back from the money found by the revenue office. It is expected that some of the money that was found will go to the federal government to pay Louisiana's FEMA bills. On February 15, 2006, the Louisiana Division of Administration, the executive arm of the state government, eliminated the 8% reduction in the budget, so that the LSU AgCenter could build our 2006-2007 budget at 100% instead of the 92% reported at the last meeting. The LSU AgCenter would not know about the remainder of the reductions until March. The LSU AgCenter was still looking at a 6% to 10% budget cut.

Louisiana universities were dealing with the cuts and hurricane issues in various ways, such as ULL eliminating one college, and UNO eliminating some of its sports programs and decreasing another \$15 million from its earlier budget. In 1999-2000 campuses that had students were able to increase tuition revenues by 68% which covered most of these universities budget cuts. The LSU AgCenter can not balance its budget with student fee and tuition increases as it has no

students. A new tuition model is being proposed, but it's hard to get a legislator to sponsor the bill.

The exigency implementation procedures plan was moving ahead. Dr. Richardson was trying to get the issue on the Board of Supervisors March 9 and 10, 2006 agenda. The BOS was reviewing the document. A copy of the draft plan was given to members of the faculty council. It was a one year plan. We would not hear about BOS approval until March 9. The governor made no comments about the LSU AgCenter request for exigency this time like unlike the 2005 request.

State sales taxes have been up, but there is a concern that this increase represents a spike from one-time large item purchases bought as replacement items and thus will not be sustained. There is no model to predict how sales taxes will fluctuate. The income tax filing date was moved to August, so income tax collections will not be known until the fall with a resulting budget uncertainty for the State. The budget process will go all the way to the end of the legislative session, so we will not know until the middle to end of June 2006 what has been provided for the LSU AgCenter in the state budget.

Another outcome of the special session is that the legislature is very polarized. There are divisions between black and white, democrat and republican, north and south, and conservative vs. liberal. Many legislators are term limited so they are being very vocal. Supporters of the LSU AgCenter are running against each other.

Ken McMillin asked if we have a group in the LSU AgCenter determining which programs to cut depending on the level of budget cuts we get. He also asked if we have a group to go to in the legislature. He also asked if we have a grid set up for budgetary issues vs. programs and how detailed the plan for cuts was right now.

Dr. Richardson said in reply that the LSU AgCenter is looking at priority reports, for example changes were made to Dairy Science and the Hill Farm station based on the priority reports. The different changes depending on levels of budget cuts are being looked at carefully. Types of cuts were not being ruled out until the definite budget issue was known. Legislators and commodity groups call Dr. Richardson about issues relative to retention of positions and programs. If no one reacts to a proposed reduction by the LSU AgCenter then the legislature tells us we can handle the cut. Dr. Richardson tells legislators about planned or potential cuts in their regional areas ahead of time because of the political implications.

Wayne Gauthier asked what programs are at the center of the bullseye, i.e. what are the key priority programs the LSU AgCenter wants to focus on, and what disciplines are needed to provide for that focus. He also stated that Dr. Paul Brown, an animal science professor in 1963, taught him that agriculture's core consisted of plants and animals and that the other disciplines evolved in the process of serving that core. Gauthier asked what might be the core to the LSU AgCenter today if it is to remain legitimate to its agricultural mission at a land grant institution and serve the people. He stated that disciplines must be preserved to have an AgCenter.

Dr. Richardson stated in reply that the AgCenter can not prioritize one program in the bullseye. He also stated that 4-H was a key program for the AgCenter.

Troy Menard asked if we are at 100% in this years budget.

Dr. Richardson said we are building in 6% in this year's budget. We are looking at a 6% budget cut without unfunded mandates.

Linda Hooper-Bui asked if a 6% to 10% problem still required exigency.

Dr. Richardson said yes it does. The details were not in the exigency plan for different cut levels, but such details were kept at the AgCenter. Critical mass issues were being taken into account.

Clayton Holler asked if the planned meetings with departments were about the exigency plan and budget issues. Dr. Richardson said they were.

Jerry Whatley asked if the BOS approves exigency March 9th, what will happen next.

Dr. Richardson said that we would hear announcements from the LSU AgCenter around April 1st. The first issues would be about administrative support. Major restructuring issues will take more time. Some announcements with notice will be given around April 1st.

Information Session with Ann Coulon Concerning Exigency Plan Implementation Procedures

Ann Coulon stated that no furloughs were planned, but that it is in the plan for potential individuals that we do not want to loose. The LSU AgCenter was looking at the Medical School plans as an example to start with. In our exigency plan there is an advisory committee with members of the faculty council included and with at least 50% of its membership at least being faculty. The names of members of the advisory committee were not planned to be made public. The group would look at specific programs identified for elimination and would give input on the plans. The committee's role in personal actions would be to review the plans and act as an appeal committee for affected individuals. The affected individuals would have the option to present written or oral arguments and decide with whom they might like to speak. A time frame for the appeal is given and there is also an option for distance video to be used for meetings. The chancellor will develop a list of programs for cuts and notices will be sent to affected individuals, who can then appeal to the AgCenter and then after that the issue goes on to the President of the LSU System.

Retirements were covered by Ann Coulon. Those persons with federal appointments and those drawing supplemental benefits under the Louisiana Teachers Retirement System would be affected by current return to work policies. Retirees under the Federal system do not have to draw their state retirement benefit until age 62. Workers under the Teachers Retirement System get 2% options after 20 years of service. The AgCenter is trying to get legislation through to change the

return to work policy, but the retirement system is against it. Under present rules, retirees can not return to work within 12 months of their effective date of retirement and still maintain retirement benefits.

Linda Hooper-Bui asked about people in the DROP program. Ann Coulon said they would have to be looked at individually.

Ken McMillin stated that there was a typo on page 2 of the exigency plan and asked when transfer of tenure between campuses are recorded for certain faculty. Ann Coulon said that most people do not change where tenure resides, that is they remain employed by the same campus for their entire work life.

Paul Wilson asked about secrecy of the review group members and whether identifications of its members should be public knowledge. Ann Coulon stated that the Chancellor will select committee members from the faculty council and that at least one will be an executive committee member. Ann Coulon asked the faculty council for input on the public notification of the membership identification issue.

Jerry Whatley stated that there may be issues with negative feedback from affected people to group members if the members are known publicly.

Denyse Cummins stated that people serving on the priority reports review committee were verbally attacked.

Debbie Melvin asked if performance reviews were being taken into account.

Ann Coulon said that they would only if they have to decide between two people from a certain area. It is possible that lower performing people could stay if they are in a priority program.

Jerry Whatley said that we can not keep people we value over program elimination. Various issues must be taken into account such as is the program necessary, is their financial support, can we pay for it and is there a critical mass. A program recommended for elimination may have a renown person.

Ann Coulon said that the LSU AgCenter looks at a program as an individual research area; i.e. as an area of work. They can not just go in to eliminate the bottom 10% of workers. The cuts must be program based.

Debbie Melvin asked if seniority counted.

Ann Coulon answered that seniority didn't count, just performance counted. The advisory group can give input on individuals. A modification on eliminating an area of work does not have to be approved by the BOS.

Troy Menard asked if money brought into a department would be taken into account.

Ann answered yes money is taken into account, i.e. can a department support itself. Communications is the only unit that has contract people. Tenured faculty and other departments can be affected now.

Wayne Gauthier suggested that the membership of the advisory committee for the program cuts be made known.

Jerry suggested that the advisory group decide whether they wanted to be known or not.

Debbie Melvin asked if the meetings would be closed and Ann Coulon answered yes.

Ann Coulon said there would be no public notice of who was getting notices of being cut.

Joan King asked how the members of the advisory group would be chosen.

Ann Coulon answered that the group would be a diverse representation of several areas. The intent was to have a balanced committee with two elected representatives from the faculty council.

Joan King asked if staff will be on the committee and Ann Coulon answered that the issue would have to be discussed.

Troy Menard asked how the Medical School's force majeure plan will affect our plan.

Ann Coulon answered that the AgCenter already had parts in our plan that addressed issues the medical school had, like having a faculty committee and longer time frames. There was a tenure over adjuncts issue and an AAUP issue regarding more protection for tenured people. The issue may go to court. The AgCenter believes they have all the issues covered.

Donnie Miller asked how someone who works off campus and is not affiliated with a department will be affected. Ann Coulon said they would not be affected because it is research based.

Jerry Whatley made a motion to allow the advisory committee to make a decision about whether they want their names to be made public or not. The council voted 12 yes and 5 no, so the motion was passed. Ann Coulon took the recommendation back to the chancellor.

Joan asked if we want to recommend who from faculty council gets on advisory committee.

Ann Coulon said the group will work as an advisory committee only and as an appeals committee ultimately. The group is expected to be small, maybe seven people total.

Jerry Whatley stated that the challenge will be to provide for true representation of all programs. That it was important for the group to have good information regarding figures relative to facts and cut levels vs. effects.

Paul Wilson made a motion that we propose people by asking for volunteers. Debbie Melvin asked how we would decide on volunteers. Motion was voted on and failed, there were only 2 positive votes.

Ann Coulon said anyone on faculty council could be a potential representative on the committee.

Discussion with Kappie Mumphrey on AgCenter IT Resources, Policies and Guidelines

A handout on LSU AgCenter Policies for use of IT was given to the faculty council members. It was reiterated that computers were not for personal use and they can not be used to violate other policies such as violence in the work place. It was also stated that passwords should not be shared.

Debbie Melvin asked if we can just leave SPAM emails in the system and let the system delete them. Kappie said yes we can and after 14 days the system will delete those emails.

Denyse Cummins asked if we still send SPAM that gets through the system to SPAM alert.

Kappie said that yes they will handle those emails. These emails can also be placed into the blacklist in the system by cutting and pasting the email address into the blacklist box. Emails that are white listed will always come through once we identify them as such on the system.

Kappie said that emails that are deleted by us are still in our deleted folder until we deleted everything in the deleted mail folder. After that all emails whether deleted or not from that folder and others on the system are held for 30 days. Kappie reminded us that emails are considered business and could be subpoenaed.

Jerry Whatley asked what happened if we are audited for emails. Ann Coulon said if we are audited the auditors are looking for emails used for profit or breaking laws. The statement in the draft policy relating to prohibiting use of AgCenter resources for non-business reasons will be revised.

Clayton Hollier asked the council members to look at the IT policy with a fine tooth comb and to come back with recommendations.

Joan King asked what software we can use on our home computers for work purposes.

Kappie said that AgCenter antivirus software can be used at home and all Tigerware software can be used at home. Any software not on Tigerware will have to have the license checked.

Ken McMillin asked if some faculty were behind on software updates. He suggested that faculty be notified about updates through a mass email. Sometimes when IT people come to update computers in a department some faculty are not there and so those computers do not get updated because the faculty is unaware that they missed the update.

Kappie said IT would send an email to all AgCenter people to ask if we have all the updated versions of software.

Miles Brashier said that field faculty needed have information about CMS training conveyed to them and also asked for Adobe Writer updates for CMS document preparation..

Jerry Whatley stated that some documents may not be able to be opened by field faculty because the computers may not be updated with software.

3. January 11, 2006 minutes were approved with correction that other state agencies were asked to cut budgets by 20%.

4. LSU Faculty Senate Update by Paul Wilson

Most cuts to LSU A&M were rescinded. A cut of 0.5% to 1% was taken. Other cuts were absorbed by the chancellor's and provost's offices. Sixty percent of the costs from the hurricane were recovered and then another 20% was recovered. There is still a \$10 million to \$11 million remaining budget issue due to the hurricane. This was used as a cut by the BOS.

The nationwide campaign to promote LSU was funded by the LSU Foundation.

In force majeure discussions, if there is no money coming in then a faculty members contract can be voided. This relates to the LSU Medical Center. Other universities are not affected by trying to use force majeure in lieu of exigency. LSU A&M has an exigency plan like the one the LSU AgCenter has if needed in future. Force majeure doesn't require a plan and there is no legal recourse. The LSU Faculty Senate has been working on this issue for 3 months. The 1996 exigency plan from LSU A&M never got to the BOS, it was stopped at the Provost's office. It is being reviewed and there are plans to make it an official policy statement. The LSU Faculty Senate passed a resolution for a nationwide search for President Jenkins.

5. Board of Supervisors Meeting Update by Jerry Whatley

Most of the day was spent on the Medical School issues.

The governor replaced 4 BOS members with people who are not strong LSU supporters. One of the new people made new polices to allow the executive committee make all the decisions regarding the agenda for the full BOS. It seems that they are working towards making ULL equal to or greater than LSU.

Question raised on whether the LSU AgCenter Faculty Council wanted to pass a resolution on the LSU president search.

Jerry Whatley made a motion that we go on record that we supporting a nationwide search for President of the LSU system without any hint of impropriety and that the board oppose any actions that would diminish or not maintain the integrity of the Land Grant System and LSU's status as the flagship university. Motion was approved. Joan King prepared a formal document for final approval of Faculty Council members by email. The final document was given to Clayton Hollier and Jerry Whatley to give to the BOS.

The only opposition regarding the LSU AgCenter exigency plan was raised by Carolyn Hargrave of the LSU systems office due to the tenure issue.

Linda Hooper-Bui asked Jerry Whatley to give the faculty's point of view to the BOS on the financial exigency plan.

Joan King asked if we should distribute the exigency implementation plan to non faculty council persons in the AgCenter. Jerry Whatley stated that there would be an issue with dispensing the plan and us not knowing answers to questions people may have. It was generally decided not to distribute the plan.

6. Faculty Council Chair Report by Clayton Hollier

All changes and volunteers suggested for service groups were approved by the chancellor and sent to the advisory committees.

It was planned that the Staff Council chair would attend our March 24, 2006 meeting to inform us about what they are doing.

Paul asked how many administrative services people were unclassified vs. civil service. There was no answer.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 PM.

7. Meeting Dates

Meetings time will be 9:30 AM approximately every 4th Friday of each month in Sullivan Conference room. Next meetings: March 24th and April 28.