

LSU AgCenter Faculty Council Meeting Minutes for November 17, 2006

Attendees: Joan M. King, Allen Hogan, Debbie Melvin, Clayton Hollier, Ken McMillin, Linda Hooper-Bui, Denyse Cummins, Miles Brashier, Jerry Whatley, Bill Branch (non-member)

Absent: Paul Wilson, Dale Pollet, Wayne M. Gauthier, Todd Shupe, Donnie Miller, Brian LeBlanc, Roberto Barbosa, Markaye Russell, Rich Vlosky, Cynthia Stephens, Troy Menard

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

No final deadline has been set for the search for the LSU System President. Laura Leach is the point of contact and they hope by next Spring to have a President. A search firm was helping to find candidates.

The LSU AgCenter came out of financial exigency and the information from the Board of Supervisors will be posted on the web.

The rest of the year and next year looks rosier than the last 20 years for the LSU AgCenter, which is still in a \$2 million deficit. Department head and faculty searches are ongoing. The LSU A&M campus was glad that the LSU AgCenter came out of exigency due to their search for a provost.

LSU A&M in cooperation with LSU Law School and the LSU AgCenter are in the midst of a fundraising campaign with \$260 million raised so far. Regular fund raising brings in \$30 to \$40 million a year. Dr. Richardson is actively seeking donors.

The department head search for Food Science and the search for a state director for 4-H were almost complete. The Ag Leadership program was searching for a leader for a one half time position. The search for an RNR head will begin again soon. It was not possible to get someone to take the job last time.

December 11 from 6:30 to 9 PM was the LPBN fundraiser and they were looking for volunteers to answer the phones.

Ken asked about AgCenter forms and whether there could be a standard format for all forms that are fillable. Dr. Richardson said he would look into it.

Allen mentioned that field agents do expense accounts online which was promised years ago, but the forms cannot be handled fully because they must be signed by hand. The same was true with leave slips. Gary Landry said travel vouchers were being worked on by IT.

Joan asked how many persons in the AgCenter still had three-way appointments. Richardson said not many, maybe a dozen and that he could find out. He said that one area usually suffers in three way appointments. Jerry said extension kind of work can be seen as service if there is no formal extension appointment.

Debbie mentioned that the HRM retirement workshop was very informative.

Richardson said that the AgCenter is trying to get legislation to allow retired people to come back to work part time immediately. It is possible to do this with federal retirement as in Mike Moody's and Mike Futrell's cases. Some people would work half-time if it were available to them. Allen said a way around it is to elect not to draw retirement for 12 months. The more delayed the retirement the higher the retirement pay.

3. HRM Update by Clayton Hollier (Ann could not make meeting)

Allen asked for issues for the HRM committee which was planning to meet on November 27. Clayton and Ann discussed questions appropriate for reviews of supervisors. Clayton requested a copy of questions from 3 years ago for a starting point for conversation. Denyse said people were concerned about anonymity and Allen said no name was on the review so it was anonymous.

Clayton announced that there would be no meeting in December 2006.

4. LaCarte Card Purchasing Issues by Mark Legendre and Jan Bernath

The Faculty Council deals with the big picture regarding purchasing issues. The Accounting Services committee met in September and they meet quarterly.

Bill Branch said it was good that the meeting was at the Dean Lee station so they could see what is going on out there. The local vendor did not bid for supplying the fuel. Clayton said seeing employees in their place or work is better so the employees' perspective can be seen. Bill said that meeting with parish people in the morning was good.

Mark handed out a list of purchases of personal items and other purchasing rules excerpts and went through them. The Louisiana constitution states that materials can not be donated to anyone without following proper process. There is an issue with defining personal items. Gifts can be paid for with Foundation or personal funds. The LaCarte card should not be used for personal purchases unless it is for safety reasons related to work like safety shoes, glasses, etc.

Joan asked why petty cash can no longer be used for reimbursement of food supplies for teaching classes. Jan said we should use the LaCarte card for those purchases.

Linda asked for information to be given when purchases are made and explanation is asked for from the researches concerning the purchase. Mark said that when the form is sent back an explanation is asked for. Mark makes a judgment about questionable purchase to send back for explanation. Clayton said we should explain ahead of time what the purchase was for. Jerry said we are dealing with issues that have to do with keeping us out of trouble. People are searching to prove that these items are only used for public benefit not personal use. Linda doesn't want employees treated as guilty before an explanation is given.

Jerry said meals for the livestock show are reimbursed. Debbie said if there is an advisory council meeting from 1 to 4PM some refreshments can be given with prior approval using the "Request for Approval of Special Meal form AS 499.

Linda said there are still issues even when all the rules are followed with all the required signatures. Jan said sometimes accounting will overrule an administrator if there is an iffy situation as far as what money can be used for.

Miles said sometimes not all people show up for meetings and asked if there can still be a reimbursement for the meals. Jan said if there is a caterer then, for example, reimbursement can be made for the 20 anticipated even if only 10 people show up.

A form was passed around that covered "Request for Authorization to Reimburse Travel Expenses of Guest, Interviewee, Study Participant or Workshop Participant".

Ken asked if the AgCenter had catering lists. Mark said that the AgCenter may have an additional list to that of the LSU A&M campus.

Ken said some departments sell items such as surplus and asked to whom letters can be sent to advertise the items. He asked where the state rules were for competition of sale. He was not allowed to send a mass email about the sale of meats, but horticulture can send emails about vegetables for sale.

IT said the chancellor had to approve it. Mark said clubs are not covered by the AgCenter, so the BAE club's sale of sweet potatoes is not covered by AgCenter rules. Ken said that clubs use department facilities and asked how this was covered in the rules. Ken said that it is not allowed to buy an animal to host a meal, but the station can use its own animals on the station for a meal. Mark said to ask Dr. Boethel. Mark said that state property cannot be donated or given away unless it benefits the state of Louisiana.

Linda stated that LaCarte purchases were processed and sent to the AgCenter and then she gets a phone call that eight LaCarte card purchases will be coming out of her paycheck. She was told that the LaCarte purchase had been processed already, but the forms were sitting on the desk in purchasing for three weeks and not processed. Jan said every Monday the thirty day old LaCarte entrees with all receipts will be reviewed. Reminder emails are sent out and they check around for information. When the time

reaches 60 days for the not having the required information there could be payroll deductions for the purchases.

Bill asked about hotel rates. Mark said he sent information about that. For Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Lake Charles and surrounding parishes, prior approval must be obtained to get 75% above the current rate allowed on hotels. Bills said that now Natchez travel is treated as out of state travel. Mark said you need a travel authorization form for that area.

As far as the Lod Cook Alumni Center is concerned, AgCenter employees should get the state rate. Jan said if the department is paying directly for non-employees, they must use form AS 540, get it approved and send it to the Lod Cook Alumni Center.

Allen asked if only the regional directors approval is needed for 75% over the hotel rate is needed. Mark said yes. The regular instate rate is 25% above the published rate with prior approval by department head or regional director.

Debbie asked whether when a purchase is made and sales taxes were charged, does the person need to go back to the salesperson to get the sales tax removed. Debbie did get the sales tax removed on a LaCarte card purchase, but there was a five cent discrepancy in the billing. This caused a lot of wasted time calling the vendor repeatedly, and accounting services, who refused to pay until the five cents was taken off the bill. Finally the vendor mailed accounting a nickel to clear up the discrepancy. She said that was absurd. Mark said not to sign the receipt if there is state sales tax, but this is not possible when items are ordered online or when an invoice is sent.

Bill mentioned that accounting people from departments should be on the accounting advisory committee as well as faculty and administrators so that all will better understand faculty needs for support.

Ken and Bill stated that out of state people do not want to deal with our regulations.

Jerry said Mary Baronet has a good relationship with accounting. They solve problems together. There is a new accounting system to deal with. Clayton said Mary is very impressive and that attitude is important.

5. Ombudsperson Discussion by Clayton Hollier

Ken urges the council to say we want an ombudsperson. Clayton agreed and will put it on the January meeting agenda.

6. Faculty Council Elections by Clayton Hollier

Clayton asked if we had any feedback about the process. 201 persons voted in the 1st election which was 40%. The run off had 10 votes and 18 votes total for each position.

Jerry said there were still some errors with already existing people being on the list of eligible people. Clayton said there were issues with people voting or names not being on the list. An administrator wanted to nominate one of his faculty but he is not allowed to since it is only faculty, not administrators, who vote. Bill said HRM provides the list so there may have been errors. Allen said HRM is sometimes not notified of changes in personnel by departments and regions.

Clayton listed the new faculty representatives and reiterated his MAP meeting mention of Faculty Council voting importance.

Debbie asked how the Faculty Council members communicate with those they represent concerning the decisions that are made that affects them. Allen sends emails to A&R agents and professional association people. Joan said everything we are doing is on the website. Bill said not everyone goes to the website. Clayton said they need to look at the minutes. Joan said we could send a mass email to remind people once a month to check the website. Jerry said some people may not be interested. Debbie suggested that a list serve be set up so a summary e-mail can be sent by the Faculty Council members with important information as needed. Clayton said a list serve is good for 2-way communication. They need to understand that the list serve e-mails go to everyone. Jerry asked if we could have a list serve for each category of representation.

Allen said he tried to recruit off-campus full candidates, but had trouble getting someone to run.

7. Minutes of September 22, 2006 meeting were approved with corrections.

8. Board of Supervisors Report by Allen Hogan for Jerry Whatley

LSU A&M recommended a revision to system policy for exigency. The LSU AgCenter followed policy rules closely. UNO and the Health Science Center went the force majeure route, instead of exigency. There will be more efforts to review the policy by LSU A&M. There is a difference of opinion between campuses. There was a request to have council representatives on committees of the Board of Supervisors. The committees do not actually meet prior to the Board of Supervisors meeting once a month. They meet the day of the Board of Supervisors meeting so it is not a place for input. Jerry said the chair of the Council of Faculty Advisers will address the Board of Supervisors now each meeting. Jerry's opinion is that Rod West as chair of the Board put together a good search committee. There is good representation of faculty on the committee. Laura Leach has the best interest of the LSU System in mind.

9. LSU Faculty Senate Issues

Clayton mentioned his talk at the LSU A&M Faculty Senate about AgCenter exigency perspective. Ours was cleaner, nicer and was a more positive approach than the UNO issue.

Ken mentioned how LSU faculty invited speakers on exigency due to hearing horror stories. It was suggested that an exigency process be developed by LSU A&M. The Board of Supervisors policy was too vague so a second document suggested changes in the policy and that is now being worked on. Ken suggested that Clayton speak at the LSU Faculty Senate meeting for another viewpoint and to emphasize that we are a separate campus with our own faculty council and how our budget situation is different. People on the LSU Faculty Senate afterwards told Ken that it seemed like AgCenter faculty were really involved.

Allen said we represent faculty and advise administrators as faculty council members. We do not make policy. Debbie said we can promote changes in policy. Clayton said there are two new policy issues coming up next year from Ann.

Ken said that Bill Daley, President of the LSU Faculty Senate is chair of the provost search committee and this shows that Chancellor O'Keefe is receptive to faculty input.

Jerry said that Chancellor Richardson is very open about the use of Faculty Council.

Ken also brought up an issue with the calendar ending on December 21 for graduation, which was going to be discussed at the next LSU Faculty Senate meeting.

10. Tenure and Promotion Committee Issues

Bill said that the tenure and promotion packets represent departmental faculty who are in the best position to understand faculty contributions, and who voted to give/deny the person tenure, promotion or both. He does not feel comfortable voting against a departmental/regional recommendation. In the AgCenter faculty P&T committee, members should be able to vote on persons from their same department or region, even though they voted in the departmental/regional committee. He wants extension people to vote on extension candidates only and research people to vote on research candidates only. Research people voting against an extension person because they do not understand/appreciate the extension function will become less of a problem in a few years as we begin to see promotion/tenure packages from people who were hired with a joint appointment, and who understand that they have to meet research faculty standards for promotion/tenure.

Ken said the committee is only advisory and they are not voting only of the person, but also on what is happening within departments and across departments.

Bill said Dr. Boethel starts the committee process with PS-42 rules, but some research faculty and administrators without Louisiana extension experience ignore the extension components and vote against the extension faculty. The process has improved each year.

Jerry said that whether the written policy is followed or not is up to Drs. Boethel and Coreil. They have to get the rules across to the committee. The committees are split tenure and non-tenure. There may be a party line vote of extension versus research.

Allen said administrators or higher can override decisions.

Jerry said Carolyn Hargreaves and staff read the promotion and tenure packets carefully, so they must be written well if going forward.

Bill said the recommendation written by the supervisor must be well written. He reemphasized that research faculty should not vote on extension faculty.

Clayton said persons on the committee need to explain the appointment split of the person going up so people know that the person is 100% extension. He said there is no publications list, but proper communications for extension. Some persons were voted against for weaknesses. People who are good should move forward.

Allen brought up the issue of early people being exceptional. Last year they were told the person must be exceptional. Ken said it is a system issue with too many full professors, so there is an issue with future retirement.

Allen said six months prior to date is too early.

Ken said if people do not understand research versus extension then they are not doing a good job of interacting.

Ken said the Faculty Council should recommend an outside unit member for the junior faculty mentoring committee to educate people.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 PM.

11. Meeting Dates

Meetings time will be 9:30 AM approximately once each month in the Sullivan Conference room. Next meeting: Jan 12th, 2007.