

MINUTES
LSU AG CENTER FACULTY COUNCIL
May 25, 2007

Members Present: Miles Brashier, Roberto Barbosa, Denyse Cummins, Wayne Gauthier, Mike Hebert, William Hogan, Collins Kimbeng, Joan King, Donnie Miller, Rich Vlosky and Jerry Whatley.

Members Absent: David Blouin, Mary Grodner, James Hendrix, Clayton Hollier, Donna Lee, Kenneth McMillin, Dale Pollet, Markaye Russell, Cynthia Stephens, Phillip Stouffer.

Guests Present: Ann Coulon, Roger Husser and Chancellor William Richardson.

A. The chairman, Rich Vlosky, called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. on May 25, 2007 and invited Chancellor Richardson to speak.

B. Chancellor Richardson

1. Because of the extra state revenue available as a consequence of federal monies made available because of the 2005 hurricanes and the level of crude oil prices, the governor and legislature are allocating more monies to all of higher education in the 2007-08 budget. The allocation to the AgCenter of \$7.7 million dollars represents an increase which should provide for funding raises and mandated cost increases. Although raises were calculated at an average of 5 percent (%), monies need to be set aside for retirement pay adjustments and other associated personnel costs. Thus, average raises will be less than five percent and will be merit-based. Raises will likely range from 0 to 10 percent (%). The expectation is that the LSU Board of Supervisors will approve the pay raises in August with supplementary checks being issued for July.

2. The allocation contains the first new money for the LSU Agricultural Center in some time. In addition, Representative Morris and Senator Heitmeyer introduced unexpected legislation to increase the budget of the LSU AC by four million dollars at the request of their constituents. The LSU AC has experienced and continues to experience shortfalls in allocations relative to the other institutions of higher learning as the allocations are based on formulas developed by the Board of Regents. According to the formula developed by the Board of Regents, the LSU AC is over-budgeted by 123 percent (%).

3. The animal and food science complex has been included in HB 2 which makes it eligible for funding provided the bond commission authorizes the sale of bonds for construction. Inclusion in HB 2 is a necessary first step for any new capital construction project. Physical construction activities, however, do not begin until the bonds are sold.

4. Until now, the legislature has been preoccupied with The Road Home Program, insurance and health and hospital issues. Now that the Revenue Estimating Committee has issued its projections, Chancellor Richardson expects the legislature to address budget items.
5. Chancellor Richardson does not know the current status of the earmarked monies issue in the Congress. He indicated that there is a major movement underway to reorganize USDA and CSREES, in particular. CSREES is the major funding agency for land grant university research and extension activities. The effort is designed to create a National Institute for Food and Agriculture. Likely there will be no action on this initiative during this session of Congress. Chancellor Richardson feels that the LSU Ag Center will fare better if the earmarked monies are redirected into formula funding in the immediate time frame.
6. In response to a question about a Department of Energy project for the Audubon Sugar Institute associated with the University of Michigan, Chancellor Richardson indicated that it was an appropriation not associated with the USDA earmarks.
7. Regarding the search for the president of the LSU system, Chancellor Richardson observed that a consultant had been hired so that the best candidates could make their interest in the position be known privately and confidentially and without jeopardizing their current positions. Whatley observed that the process was proceeding as planned and announced by the Board of Supervisors. Regarding his own candidacy, Chancellor Richardson indicated that he had had two contacts to date with the search committee. The first was a letter acknowledging receipt of his application and the second consisted of a brief interview with a subset of members of the search committee.
8. In response to a question from Gauthier, Chancellor Richardson indicated that his vision for the LSU Ag Center was positive and that the Ag Center was focused on long run initiatives with the greatest promise such as alternative fuels. He also told Gauthier that “things had changed”.

B. Ms. Ann Coulon, Head, Human Resource Management (HRM)

1. Ms. Coulon reported that the unit head evaluation process appears to be going well. However, there was only about a 30 percent (%) response rate from the faculty. Observations from different members of the FC suggested that the relatively low response rate was attributable to the short time frame (less than two weeks) and lingering suspicions about true anonymity. It was agreed that unit heads need to advise people of the evaluation process and to encourage their participation. A component of that process is the selection of a three person committee within each unit selected by a procedure entailing input from the faculty in the unit, the FC, the vice-chancellors of research and extension and the Chancellor. That committee’s function is to summarize all of the comments and

interview whomever they might wish for additional input in compiling a report assessing the performance of the unit head. That report would then be passed on to the vice-chancellors for their review and use in meeting with the department head. In response to Vlosky's question as to whether there were any negative reactions from the unit heads, Ms. Coulon responded that they thought the questions were fine, but none of them chose to respond to the questions.

2. In response to a question from Whatley, the project to have individuals develop job descriptions was assessed as not successful. One of the reasons for the absence of success was its open-ended nature that created too many diverse responses resulting in an inability to develop and apply uniform criteria in the evaluation process.
3. Ms. Coulon identified the creation and forwarding of e-mail messages addressing religion and race topics on LSU Ag Center computers as being quite serious from a number of perspectives. First, some of those topics could become liability concerns. Secondly, it constitutes non-business use of public resources. Thirdly, it is divisive and works against some of the values the Ag Center is seeking to promote amongst its personnel and clientele. It was recognized that politics is not a federally protected category as is race, religion, sexual preference, ethnicity, and age. Subsequent discussion concluded that it was hard to recommend that people use common sense in their interactions with others.
4. Vlosky reported on his work to "mask" promotion and tenure (P&T) templates being created to provide people with example of how to most effectively prepare their vitas for the promotion and tenure process. The HRM office was requested to send e-mails to remind people of the upcoming P&T meeting to be held on June 4, 2007 in Efferson Hall from which it will be broadcasted. It was observed that June 4, 2007 is also a meeting day for agents.
5. There was a discussion as to whether the members of the HRM service committee should start now or on January 1, 2008.
6. An observation regarding the ombudsperson position led Gauthier to introduce a core set of recommendations from the Ombudsperson Committee consisting of Pollet, King and Gauthier. A motion by Whatley was seconded and passed on voice vote to accept the recommendation of the Ombudsperson Committee, add three additional recommendations to the core set and to forward the set of recommendations to Chancellor Richardson for his necessary use and action. The recommendations to be forwarded to Chancellor Richardson regarding the ombudsperson position are as follows:
 - a. Because LSU Agricultural Center employees live and work in every parish of the state, the work of an ombudsperson would probably be more effective if there were two, half-time ombudspersons employed by the LSU Agricultural Center. One of those ombudspersons would work out of

Baton Rouge and provide services to employees in those parishes situated on an east-west line South of the Atchafalaya River in Simmesport, LA . The second ombudsperson would be primarily responsible for employees North of that same east-west line. However, AgCenter employees would and should feel free to interact with the ombudsperson of their choice regardless of their primary work location.

- b. Ombudspersons would be employed for at least 20.5 hours per week so that they might qualify for such benefits as pro-rated sick and annual leaves.
 - c. Any individual employed as an ombudsperson would be required to be a member of the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) as the IOA offers professional training and educational programs for practicing ombuds professionals.
 - d. Ombudspersons report directly to and only to the Chancellor of the LSU Agricultural Center.
 - e. The office of the ombudsperson will not be in close proximity to the LSU Agricultural Center. The individual employed to serve south Louisiana employees would preferably be housed in an office within the Harry D. Wilson Building or the LSU John M. Parker Coliseum. Office space for the ombudsperson employed to serve North Louisiana could be housed on the LSU-A campus or in some other locale housing multiple activities any one of which might explain an Ag Center's employee's presence.
 - f. The ombudsperson does not participate in any management functions of the LSU Ag Center or administration-linked committees.
 - g. The ombudsperson should not be linked in any way to other internal departments of the Ag Center.
 - h. The ombudsperson is to operate in accordance with the Ombudsman Association Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.
7. Gauthier reported that Dr. Kirsten W. Schwehm, the ombudsperson for LSU-BR, had provided the Ombudsperson Committee with insightful information and guidance. She had also lent them a document that she had prepared entitled "Terms of Reference LSU Ombuds Office" for review and approval by LSU Chancellor Sean O'Keefe regarding the conduct and operations of the Ombudsperson's office and its incumbents. In Gauthier's opinion, the document reflected the spirit and the guiding principles of Independence, Confidentiality, Informality, and Neutrality identified by the IOA as central to the functioning of an ombudsperson's office. Because Chancellor O'Keefe had not yet acted on the document, she had requested that it not be disseminated at the time she lent it to

the Ombudsperson Committee. After reading it, Gauthier said that he had requested permission from Dr. Schwehm to disseminate it, but had not heard back from her. Gauthier requested if and when Dr. Schwehm gave her permission to use the document, he would like to model a similar document for the LSU Ag Center and submit it to Chancellor Richardson for his consideration. The FC approved Gauthier's request with the provision that he would first disseminate it to members of the FC for their review.

8. Ms. Coulon expressed a concern regarding the stipulation that an ombudsperson would not take actions and retain strict confidentiality upon learning of situations that under federal law compelled individuals to act. The concern generated discussions in which some of the operating principles of the IOA were brought to the attention of all in attendance. The discussion concluded with the note from the chairman, Rich Vlosky, that he would contact Dr. Schwehm with specific questions regarding Ms. Coulon's concern.

C. Mr. Roger Husser, Director, LSUAC Office of Facilities Planning

1. Mr. Husser began his presentation by clearly stating that the LSU Ag Center's Office of Facilities Planning was distinct and separate from the LSU Office of Facilities Services. Personnel from the two offices sometimes coordinate actions together, but the provision of daily housekeeping, maintenance and repair services of offices and buildings on the LSU-BR campus was the sole responsibility of the LSU Office of Facilities Services. There are approximately nine million square feet of space under roof on the LSU-BR campus. Personnel associated with the LSU Ag Center occupy one million square feet of that space. The LSU Ag Center is billed by and pays the LSU's Office of Facilities Services for the associated costs of that space which is determined by formula that distinguishes between offices, classrooms, laboratories, shops and other uses.

2. Mr. Husser explained how the office originated with the assignment of an agricultural engineer, Ted Nissing, to provide advice and counsel to the research stations about construction and maintenance of their physical facilities. Upon Nissing's retirement, Mr. Dennis Stipe assumed those responsibilities for some 36 years. Six years ago, Mr. Husser assumed responsibilities for the operation of the office. The LSUAC Office of Facilities Planning is staffed by five employees. Three are licensed engineers, one is a licensed architect and one provides administrative support.

3. The LSUAC Office of Facilities Planning ideally becomes involved at the initial point of facility conception and at every stage thereafter to insure that all aspects of facility design and creation are consistent with the building's intended function and in compliance with all applicable building codes and regulations. As needed, the Office of Facilities Planning will contract services from outside entities.

4. Mr. Husser distributed a handout describing the range and scope of the activities engaged in by the Office of Facilities Planning in managing the 950 buildings covering 3,000,000 square feet of space and the 20,000 acres of property statewide for which the LSU Ag Center has responsibility. These activities include:
- a. Design and oversight of construction projects
 - b. Determining and prioritizing needs and management of deferred maintenance funding of assets
 - c. Annually formulate and submit the Ag Center's capital outlay request
 - d. Coordinate all Ag Center property and building donations, sales, leases, right-of-ways, servitudes and kindred activities
 - e. Maintain property maps and building inventories for all Ag Center assets
 - f. Coordinate with the Office of Risk Management on damages to Ag Center facilities
 - g. Provide oversight of LSU-BR campus's Office of Facilities Services with special emphasis on the indirect cost charges
 - h. Improve physical appearance of Research Station Offices, and
 - i. Provide drafting services.

D. Approval of March 23, 2007 Minutes

1. A motion to accept the March 23, 2007 minutes taken by Joan King in Gauthier's absence was made, seconded and approved on the condition that they be paginated and spell-checked especially for proper names.
2. Vlosky directed Gauthier to send the faculty a broadcast message summarizing accomplishments of each meeting and inserting a link to the meeting minutes.

E. Board of Supervisor's Report: Whatley

1. A new chancellor of the LSU Law School has been named.
2. As noted earlier, the search for a President of the LSU System is a "Catch-22" situation with respect to identifying potential candidates without jeopardizing their relationships with present employers.
3. The new chairman of the LSU Board of Supervisors is Mr. Jerry Sheea.
4. The report issued by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) regarding how institutions within the LSU System impacted by Hurricane Katrina treated its faculty and staff was very negative.

F. Other Business Matters

1. It was recognized that the International Programs (IP) office could facilitate interactions among people within and external to the LSU Ag Center. Vlosky provided an example of his collaboration with others on a foreign assignment addressing forestry matters. This is a major assignment in which Vlosky makes a contribution within his area of specialization. As a consequence of his involvement, however, he became aware of the project's need for other specialists in other areas of forestry. Vlosky could share his awareness with the IP office which could then become the conduit for publicizing the need for those specialists and coordinating their involvement.
2. Greg Lutz was identified as the chairman of the International Programs committee. There is a need for him to call a meeting so that the committee members and others could learn more about the committee and what it does.
3. Hogan moved that the FC create a report and provide it to the Chancellor as to the number of times the service units meet annually. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.
4. Hogan moved that the FC implement its recommendations regarding membership on the service committees. Discussion indicated that there are members of the HRM committee who have chosen to not attend any of its meetings. Thus, they need to be replaced with individuals who will discharge their obligations as members of any service committee. Motion was seconded and approved on a voice vote.
5. Vlosky voiced the need for a survey of the faculty to determine their level of satisfaction with the work of the FC and other aspects of life within the LSUAC. There was verbal agreement to consider doing such a survey in the fall.

G. Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was made by Brashier, seconded by Hogan and adopted on voice vote at 1:15 p.m. on May 25, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier
Secretary