

Bellarmino University
Staff Council Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2017

Mackenzie Hundley began the meeting at 9:00am with introductions. Once everyone on the Council introduced themselves, Ms. Hundley introduced Dr. Susan Donovan.

Dr. Donovan shared how Staff Council is a great opportunity for everyone to come together, and she reminded everyone that at her State of the University address, she stated that when something is done collectively, it is always better. Dr. Donovan reiterated that Bellarmine is not in bad shape, but these are challenging times, so Bellarmine must start over from square one and consider how we can use our resources better. Dr. Donovan then shared that Bellarmine's budget issues were due to a lower enrollment but that education of students happens all over campus and we should all look further than just ourselves.

Dr. Donovan commented on how pleased she was that Bellarmine has a staff council because it gives a sense of autonomy, which is important to employees, just as coming to work and knowing that one's time and talents are well spent is important. Dr. Donovan would like the Council to concentrate on quality of work life, one reason being that happy employees make for happy students, and we want students to flourish. Dr. Donovan feels that employees are key in helping students stay focused and stay on track, and that friendly, helpful faces help students feel at home and like they belong at Bellarmine.

Dr. Carole Pfeffer and Mr. Bob Zimlich then gave a background of the Resource Management Committee to the Council. Dr. Pfeffer reminded everyone that Dr. Donovan called for the Committee in her State of the University address. Individuals were nominated, six staff members and six faculty members were chosen, and the Committee has met for their third meeting at this point. Dr. Pfeffer shared that the Committee is wrapping their brains around the financial reality and are leading the charge on how to save and raise money, as well as how to reallocate resources. A website has been launched where the Bellarmine community can provide feedback and suggestions. Dr. Donovan has already initiated some things as well.

Dr. Pfeffer stressed that every recommendation affects actual people at Bellarmine and their way of doing things. She warned that it could become a little painful as things move forward, so all must be careful to "not go after each other's areas," but at the same time, all must try to develop a thicker skin and not take suggestions personally. She asked that we all be ambassadors and share that people are not trying to give personal attacks to anyone with their suggestions. Dr. Pfeffer also stressed that the Committee is a recommending body and not a decision-making body.

Mr. Zimlich shared that working with the Committee is an immediate issue and going forward they will be working with a smaller resource committee. He stressed that all must be strategic with programming and that retention is important for every area because every student makes a difference. Mr. Zimlich said that Bellarmine will do some belt-tightening because \$3 million in projections was missed. However, Mr. Zimlich commented that Bellarmine was fortunate on a few points that will take care of two-thirds of the budget issues:

- Selling the Glenview property
- Expanding the DPT program
- Bellarmine's interest rates will be re-financed, which will save \$800,000-\$900,000 in the first year.

Mr. Zimlich notified the Council that the 18 month budget will be presented to the Board of Trustees. There is a hiring freeze currently unless a search has already begun or if there is an accreditation issue and someone must be hired to meet accreditation standards. Mr. Zimlich explained to the Council that the Sheffield House was bought as a capital investment and was purchased by the endowment so it did not at all affect Bellarmine's bottom line.

Dr. Pfeffer and Mr. Zimlich shared a few examples of how immediate changes were saving some costs: the Faculty Accomplishment booklet is being done solely online; the two Presidential Merit Awards will not be given in the spring; and the number of issues of the BU Magazine is being decreased.

Ms. Lynn Bynum asked about employee raises. Mr. Zimlich said that although it has not yet been decided, it is highly unlikely because each 1% raise equals around \$400,000. Ms. Bynum said that it would be helpful for the Staff Council to go back to their respective departments with accurate information. Dr. Pfeffer agreed but emphasized that although everyone needs to be transparent, it would not be helpful to single out any specific departments. Mr. Zimlich re-emphasized that there will be more transparency going forward than there has been in the past. He also commented that 75% of the budget is made up of salary and benefits for all employees.

Ms. Hundley moved forward with discussing the Staff Council Bylaws. She said that she would like to present any changes to Dr. Donovan soon. One change would be the creation of the Staff Council Past-Chair position. Ms. Hundley said that at the Council's next meeting we will go into more details on changes, and she asked that everyone send feedback to her.

Dr. Donovan had mentioned multiple times the importance of work-life balance and employees having a sense of autonomy. The Council needs to establish the mission and vision of the Council moving forward.

Ms. Bynum spoke about how Dr. Donovan has empowered the Council and on what we want Staff Council to be, which opens the door on the Council's impact moving forward. One large change that could apply to employee benefits is the family leave policy. Faculty Council is already putting forth an effort to increase parental leave for faculty, and Ms. Bynum stressed that an update to the overall family leave policy needs to be considered for all. Dr. Donovan has commented that two weeks of parental leave is not sufficient, so Ms. Bynum obtained a list of peer institutions so that the Council can compare. Ms. Bynum suggested that a sub-committee be formed to look at all benefits for staff members, and that it is extremely important for the Council to speak with those in their respective departments to see what they would like and what the work-life balance will look like going forward.

Ms. Bynum also spoke about how staff development is another area to look at going forward. There is no budget currently to outsource, so it will need to be done in house. 2018 will bring

many possibilities, so the Council should find out any concerns from their own areas and departments.

Ms. Hundley mentioned that Dr. Nancy York and Dr. Sean Ryan will attend the next Staff Council meeting to discuss the task force they are chairing. Ms. Hundley asked that the Council look over the current Bylaws and send suggestions to her by November 1st. The suggestions will be shared with everyone before the next Staff Council meeting.

Ms. Bynum suggested that a sub-committee be formed regarding employee benefits and that the sub-committee meet before the next Staff Council meeting. The following Staff Council members volunteered to serve on the sub-committee:

- Kate Brabandt
- Kim Connell
- Sarah Davis
- Jeremy Doyle

Ms. Bynum also mentioned that she always invites representatives from the Staff and Faculty Councils to the benefits meeting with the broker to look at insurance claims, increases to health insurance, and so forth, and she will continue to do so. The meeting will be held in November.

In attendance:

Brian Atkinson
Bridget Babcock
Calene Baldwin
Kate Brabandt
Lynn Bynum
Kimberly Connell
Patrick Coons
Sarah Davis
Jeremy Doyle
Bryan Hamann
Mackenzie Ray Hundley
Walter Parker
Emily Werner

Guests:

Dr. Susan Donovan
Carole Pfeffer
Bob Zimlich