



Cornell University Employee Assembly

MINUTES Employee Assembly November 5, 2014 12:15-1:30PM 401 Physical Science Building

I. Call to Order

G. Mezey called the November 5th Employee Assembly meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

Present: N. Bell, L. Croll Howell, M. de Roos, B. Esty, C. Ferguson, T. Grove, H. Hall, S. Jenks, G. Mezey, J. Rogan, B. Schaffner, BJ Siasoco, M. Stefanski Seymour, P. Thompson

Absent: J. Ballerstein, D. Brooks, B. Cristelli, E. Lee, L. Morris

Also Present: C. Lender, A. O'Donnell, U. Smith, *The Daily Sun*

II. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda

There were no late additions to the agenda.

III. Approval of the Minutes

T. Grove moved to approve the minutes. C. Ferguson seconded and the EA unanimously approved the minutes from October 15, 2014.

IV. Business of the Day

A. Recap of the President's Address

G. Mezey thanked the EA members for their help with the President's Address to the Staff. He then opened the floor for discussion on the event and changes for the future. H. Hall explained the formatting of the award presentation made it challenging for the audience to understand who was receiving the award. BJ Siasoco explained the awards were a bit rushed in order to ensure President Skorton received his before he left the event. It was suggested that awards should be presented before the actual address to ensure maximum viewing from all staff.

L. Croll Howell received a suggestion for vegan-gluten free lunches instead of just one or the other. She asked Cornell Catering about possibility of having this item and they are capable of providing it, so she suggested the person in charge of food next year should consider ordering this option. G. Mezey stated about 310 employees attended but approximately 100 more tuned into the live stream. He is working with the Office of the Assemblies to find out where the live stream was viewed to see if employees at the NYC Tech Campus were able to access the President's Address. L. Croll Howell suggested having viewing areas at different locations on campus to for people who could not easily make it to Bailey Hall. P. Thompson explained this idea was discussed but that the EA thought it would be better to encourage physical attendance

for President Skorton's last address to the staff.

G. Mezey added the first point of order for next year is to ensure President Elect Garrett continues to give an address to the staff. He suggested creating a formal resolution that makes the President's Address a standing annual event. Finally, T. Grove suggested emailing staff before the event to generate questions in case there is a lull in the question and answers portion of the event.

B. Economic Impact Study

G. Mezey explained at the Leadership Breakfast, Gary Stewart and Mina Amundsen discussed the economic impact study they put together. One thing that came up was how this information will be interpreted and understood by the diverse range of employees. G. Mezey suggested having G. Stewart present to the EA on the topic to help the EA grasp a better understanding of what information is relevant for employees. G. Mezey then opened the floor for discussion.

M. Stefanski Seymour asked if the report had information on the land grant colleges and the money they receive from New York State. She suggested making this more prominent in the report as well including a definition on the details of being a land grant college. She also expressed concern that Cornell is moving away from the Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva to focus on the NYC Tech Campus. B. Schaffner suggested publicizing the meeting with G. Stewart so employees could attend.

G. Mezey asked the EA if they had any thoughts on how staff will perceive the report. S. Jenks asked how or if the report is being sent out to staff members. G. Mezey explained there has been a couple of articles in *The Chronicle* as well as *The Sun*; however, unless you are looking the information could have easily been missed. There was some discussion on the importance of the EA presenting this information to employees as well as making the topic relatable for staff. G. Mezey suggested tabling the topic for the next EA meeting and asked members to email him with questions and/or suggestions on topic of interest regarding the study by November 12, 2014.

V. Report from the Chair

A. Housing Study

During the executive meeting with M. Opperman there was some confusion with whom the housing survey was supposed to be sent to and who actually received the survey. M. Opperman was adamant about sending the survey to all staff; however, after a show of hands it was determined most of the members of the EA did not receive the email. Some background on what the housing survey entails as well as its importance to the staff was discussed. G. Mezey concluded the report with the suggestion to bring in K. Whang to discuss housing at Cornell.

B. President Skorton and M. Opperman Visit

G. Mezey reminded the EA that President Skorton, Mary Opperman, and Glenn Altschuler will be attending the EA meeting on November 19, 2014. G. Mezey asked for suggestions on topics to discuss with the President. C. Ferguson suggested asking how President Skorton intends to ensure commitments to the staff are carried over to the new president and if the EA can do anything to help. G. Mezey agreed and added all the members of senior leadership are working on documents for the president elect which will help with the transition.

M. Stefanski Seymour brought up that at the President's Address, D. Skorton said some staff cuts went too far beyond and he seemed to indicate that Cornell might be in a position to begin hiring again. Her question, if this is the case, is will current staff have the time to take advantage of what Cornell offers, such as the degree program?

T. Grove proposed asking President Skorton about the budget, specifically if it is balanced and what staff can expect. M. Stefanski Seymour added it would be good to ask about the endowment and how that is affecting the budget as well. Finally, C. Ferguson suggested asking if, in reference to the Bain Report, all of the recommendations were successful and if not what President Skorton would have liked to change.

BJ Siasoco requested that any other questions for the president be sent to him by Friday, November 7th by 10:30 a.m.

VI. Old Business

A. EA Constituency and Policy Making

BJ Siasoco explained the executive committee is looking into amending the current meeting structure so a portion of the meeting is spent in small groups working to create actions and resolutions.

BJ Siasoco then discussed at the retreat the EA discussed understanding who their constituency is and how to accurately represent them. B. Esty added the Communications Committee is attempting to change the EA's branding and this question on who the constituents are is central. There was some discussion on the availability and importance of knowing staff diversity and divisions within units and colleges. B. Schaffner offered once this information is gathered it should be included on the assembly's website.

U. Smith suggested in order to bring people into the EA there has to be a clear definition of what the EA does. He offered that reviewing and amending the EA charter might achieve some clarity with this matter. He also suggested structuring meetings so one week there is a guest presenter and then the following week will be a follow up and action/resolution creation.

VI. Adjournment

M. Stefanski Seymour moved to adjourn the meeting due to time. T. Grove seconded and the EA meeting of November 5, 2014 was adjourned at 1:34 p.m.