TN Conference AAUP Spring 2016 meeting, Sat. April 2, TTU

Minutes

In attendance: Valerie Belew; Tammy Ruff; Janusz Polanowski; Troy Smith; Diane Eagle; Josie McQuail; Coley McGinnis; Scott McMillan; Jennifer Jones; Dora Estes; Yvonne Simerman; Jeff Roberts; Patrick Reagan; Pippa Holloway; Julia Gruber

1. **Guest: Mark Stevens, Senior Associate Provost, TTU**

Dr. Stevens said the policy changing process, from TBR to the new TTU, was just being sorted out: mostly editorial and wording changes. He noted that community colleges are worried they are being consolidated. It was noted that some cc staff were being converted from salaried to hourly as part of standardization.

1. **Dora Estes** **gave the treasurer’s report.**

Recent expenditure included lobby service fees, food for the spring meeting, and 3 dollars per month bank fees. The fee structure from National has changed, so that we now only get $2,000 instead of $3,000.

1. **Scott McMillan gave update on the website**.

Both contractors we looked at were expensive, charging around a thousand per month to run the site. We could, however, get space on one of their servers for 20 to 30 dollars per month and run it ourselves. A bad website is better than none. There was a question about EMMA: now that National sends updated membership lists regularly, there is no longer need for EMMA. There was a recommendation to pay someone to set up the site then let the state conference secretary run it. Scott stressed the value of available analytics if a company ran it, but did not want to commit to anyone if there was not conference consensus.

1. **Coley McGinnis gave a report on the FOCUS Act.**

We *were* able to effect some language changes in the act. Legislative discussion went back to the 1972 act that created THEC and TBR. They are now trying to make THEC a true coordinating committee. Much of the impetus for the change came from the University of Memphis. There was an amendment being considered, that would probably pass, making it the two legislative speakers who appoint Board members.

We should be very vocal, at every point, that board members are expected to be advocates for their institutions and should be held to that. Also: the language says that boards are responsible for course content; everyone involved is saying that does not mean they will interfere in the process. They have to be made to realize that the language does *not* mean they are *in charge* of course content.

Coley stressed that we have to talk to the reasonable legislators. Beth Harwell, who wants to be governor, knows that administrative costs are going up and instructional costs are going down. We can work with her –we could do a lot worse. Make contact with your own local ones. We can have influence if we go about it quietly. Legislators think professors are Marxists corrupting our youth, and are underworked and overpaid. We must approach legislators as advocates for our students, and emphasize it is ALL ABOUT THE STUDENTS, not about us as faculty. We must get people in the community to understand what we are up against, and change the mindset. This is the most important thing activist faculty can do. We have to get people in there who understand higher ed and have some idea what it is we do on a day-to-day basis. Board members are to lobby the legislature on the institution’s behalf- the first two years will be critical.

The funding formulas will not change.

A question was asked about instituting a Lobby Day. Coley’s response: my biggest fear is that we’d have one and no faculty would show up, making us look bad. The best thing to do is work on local legislators. Invite them to your classes- any way you can do it, to get personal, informal contact with your legislators. They can be of help to us, but it will be *quietly.*

There were mixed responses to a suggestion of liaising with UCW. Scott pointed out that just because a legislator seems reasonable in private doesn’t mean they will be in public, or in the chamber. Coley replied that they do listen to money, i.e., pressure from businesses.

They are claiming this whole thing will only cost $416,000 plus two more THEC staffers.

The faculty representatives are to be chosen by the faculty senates.

1. **A report was received about issues at Nashville State.**

A motion was made by Pippa Holloway, seconded by Jennifer Jones, for the conference to give $3,000 to help fund an investigation of these issues by CORE (Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness.) It passed unanimously.

1. **Election issues.**

President Scott McMillan, Vice-president of Community Colleges Jennifer Jones, and Secretary Troy Smith decline to stand for new terms.

Pippa Holloway nominates Josephine McQuail for Presdident

Valerie Belew nominates Scott McMillan for President, but he declines

Josephine McQuail nominates Julia Gruber for Vice-president of Public Institutions

Jennifer Jones nominates Diane Eagle for Vice-president for Community Colleges

Scott McMillan nominates Yvonne Simmerman for Secretary

Pippa Holloway nominates Dora Estes to continue as Treasurer

Josephine McQuail and Dora Estes volunteer to stand as delegates to the Assembly of State Conferences

The slate is passed unanimously.