

Staff Advisory Committee Meeting
February 19, 2008
11:30am – 1:30pm – Dining Rooms 8&9

Present: Doreen Burgers, Ruth Crane, Ron Dunleavy, Pam DeSimone, Heather Dominey, Jeff Fitton, Deborah Healey, Walter Hunter, Angel Hilliard, Karen Leonard (Chair), Nancy Magers, Lori Maguire, Beth Murphy, Chris O’Neil, Sarah Peri, Joe Sarno, Lisa Sheehan, Lea Snyder, Kristen Soule Alfred Tente, Steve Tompkins, Amy Umstadter, Courtney Wuethrich

Absent: Maritza Marti

Karen welcomed the group. Amy made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/5/08 meeting; Kristen seconded. All were in favor.

Announcements

Pam DeSimone – Staff Participation Subcommittee

Pam was pleased to announce that Jill Rossi was selected as the newest member of the University Resources Committee (URC).

Jeff Fitton – Events Subcommittee

Jeff invited Laura-Lee Radtke, Catering Event Manager, to the last Events Subcommittee meeting to discuss affordable food options for the large April SAC event, which has yet to be scheduled. The Rebuilding Together event will occur on April 26th, and Brown is awaiting its assignment from the Providence chapter of Rebuilding Together. A “Sounds of Spring” organ concert is scheduled for March 27th. The final logistics are being worked out.

Steve Tompkins – Outreach & Communications Subcommittee

A letter was sent to President Simmons thanking her for the Winter Break, including a summary of staff comments. The group is working on a list of priorities for the year: featuring an employee on the SAC website, a mission statement for the subcommittee, web clean-up, creating more of a SAC presence on campus (BDH, on-line, etc.) The Rebuilding Together event will be a good opportunity for PR.

Staff Concerns:

Ruth brought up the following two staff concerns:

1) The Health Buy-Out at Brown: a staff member was wondering when the last time this was reviewed. They did a small amount of research at other private institutions in Rhode Island and found that Brown's pay-out is much smaller in comparison.

Walter responded that Brown is aware of the fact that other employers have a higher buy-out and feels that, often, the motivation for companies to offer a higher buy-outs is to motivate employees to take insurance from their spouses, thereby saving the company money in the long run. This issue never gets much traction at Brown because our coverage is comprehensive and is arguably the best plan in RI. B Therefore, Brown keeps it at its current fair rate. With that said, once the new VP of HR is hired, this issue could go to the HRAB.

2) A staff member asked if Brown could develop a Research/ Administrative paid leave for one staff member annually to pursue a special project, internship or finish a master's program. A program of this nature is unprecedented and, as such, it is unlikely that it will happen at Brown at this time.

3) Beth raised the issue about increasing awareness of volunteer opportunities at Brown and in the Community. It was suggested that SAC invite a rep from the Swearer Center to discuss ways to better share this type of information with the entire campus.

SAC Guest Speaker Presentation

Guests: Ricky Gresh, Director of Student Activities, John Cooke, Project Manager/Facilities, and Robert Silver, Schwartz/Silver Architects

Topic: From Center Of Campus To The Campus Center: Stephen Robert '62 Campus Center and J. Walter Wilson student services

Ricky informed SAC that Faunce House and the J. Walter Wilson buildings are getting major overhauls in order to centralize and streamline a new Campus Center and Student Services Center

What students, faculty and staff say they want:

- Informal meeting/lounge spaces (Blue Room)
- Evening/weekend activities and dining
- Balancing private/reserved with shared/community space
- Maximize available/useable space
- Flexibility -spaces have different uses at different times
- Welcoming, comfortable, appealing (natural light)
- Student group space: more opportunities for collaboration
- Technology (wireless, event/meeting services)
- Dance/practice group needs are critical

Stephen Robert '62 Campus Center at Faunce House: Three "Requirements"

1. Adequate space for a fairly broad range of activities, in order to create enough reasons for people to go there on a regular basis;
2. Be identified clearly as belonging to the whole campus community; and

3. Located in a central place identified with the whole campus community and easily accessible to as many people as possible.

Timeline for Campus Center:

- Construction ongoing
- Offices occupy building July/August 2008

J. Walter Wilson Student Services Center “Requirement”:

1. Centralize student services and resources

Goal: Increase Programmable Space by moving the following to J. Walter Wilson Student Services Center:

- Mailroom and US Post Office
- Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life
- Student group storage (TF Green, etc.)
- Dance/Practice space (Leung Gallery)
- Campus infrastructure (cable, etc.)
- International Students and Scholars Office (additional space for TWC)

Timeline

- Construction ongoing
 - Offices occupy building July/August 2008
 - Spring 2008: Community input into program and scope development
 - Summer 2009: Renovation begins
 - Building may close completely; offices and programs temporarily relocated.
 - Target Date for Completion: August 2010

Ricky asked suggestions; what would staff like a campus center to include? Suggestions included: food court, working cash stations, declining card charging stations, moveable coffee cart/outdoor seating, space for winter Farmer’s Market, a manned information desk, better info kiosks (electronic?), more accessible e-mail/internet kiosks, bike racks, expanded campus market.

Ricky also encouraged interested SAC members to volunteer for ushering commencement weekend. Karen will follow-up with SAC members.

Ricky encouraged SAC and their colleagues to send their Campus Center thoughts to robertcampuscenter@brown.edu and to check the web-site: brown.edu/sao/faunce/campuscenter.html.

Advisor’s Report:

Walter indicated that the HRAB subcommittee approved HR’s recommendation that criminal background checks must be completed on all new staff hires, including LDEs, effective immediately.

Walter announced that Brown's new emergency siren will be tested on Thursday, 2/28/08. Letters will be sent to Brown neighbors prior to test date. There are three sirens on campus: on the BOB, on the Athletics Department roof and on the roof of the Ratty. Brown is contemplating whether to place a siren in the Jewelry District. With that said, the University understands that the city of Providence is considering placing its own siren in the Jewelry District given that it is near such a busy port.

Joe Sarno reported that HR has developed a formalized telecommuting policy; the draft is nearly complete. It has limited applicability. It should be posted along with the other HR policies soon.

Walter informed SAC that the Corporation would be meeting over the weekend of 2/23/08. They will focus on the University budget, including staff salary increases. There is pressure regarding Brown's financial aid policy, donations and the endowment. Some discussion occurred regarding the cost of living increases (oil prices, increased grocery prices, etc.), and how Brown does benchmark salaries with comparative organizations in the state and country. Walter suggested that SAC invite Betsy Warner (Director, Compensation & Organizational Services) to be a guest in order to discuss these concerns.

Some additional staff concerns were brought up. Steve suggested that B.E.A.R. Day not be held late Friday afternoons, as some staff have never been able to attend due to their religious beliefs and obligations.

Karen reminded the group that the next meeting will be held on March 4th in University Hall's Corporation Room.