Members Present: Matthew Crawford, Samantha Kite, Lisa Dent, Robyn Diven, Melissa Todd, Bill Edmonds, Kevin Bowers, Allison Tanner, David Betsch, Dan Lawless and Lisa Bernadyn.

Members Absent: Bertha Fladger, Sandra Cannone, Lynn Silver and Judy Davis.

Approval of Minutes: A motion to accept the February 19, 2015 minutes was made by Matthew Crawford and seconded by Bill Edmonds. The minutes were approved by the members.

Old Business

Follow up discussion on the following items:

- Suggestion: “I would like to suggest that the Staff Advisory Council discuss the option of the LGBTQ community being a protected status on our campus. There are many faculty, staff, and students who identify as LGBTQ; this is an important matter.”

  D. Lawless completed research on the non-discrimination policies/statements of other South Carolina institutions and Coastal’s peer and aspirant institutions. The findings showed that five other South Carolina institutions, and all of our peer and aspirant institutions, do not discriminate on the basis of an individual’s sexual orientation. Ten of those institutions further refined their policies/statements to also specify that discrimination on the basis of gender expression and/or identity was prohibited.

  The Council’s findings are very clear: this is an area that we currently lag behind our peers that deserves consideration. The findings are being forwarded to T. Meacham, University Counsel.

- A. Tanner shared with the council that she has been in contact with Aramark to find out options for Staff/Faculty meal plans. Ms. Tanner shared the commuter plan is the only one that is offered, with no discount.

  D. Lawless contacted Jeff Stone, Food Service Director, and shared that the meal plans are set by Aramark and they are in line with other Universities.

- “Athletics should do a promotion to trade in USC or Clemson shirt for a CCU ticket, to engage community pride.

  This suggestion will be divided into three parts: B. Fladger will take the first part of the suggestion. Ms. Fladger was not present at the meeting.

- “Here at the golf course we receive many inquiries about student community service. I am curious to see if there was ever a thought to have some sort of community service division on campus where a supervisor would seek out areas on campus needing attention maybe cleaning signs or picking up trash down the BLVD. Then have a time frame from say 9am to 2pm and students needing service would attend. This would serve as community service work for the students and also a beautifying process for campus. Just a thought.”

  D. Betsch reported he spoke with Charles Johns, Director of Golf, to get more clarification on this suggestion. Mr. Johns shared he has a growing number of students coming to the golf course looking to perform community service hours. Most of the students have been sanctioned from the Conduct office.
and about 10% are just looking to volunteer. Mr. Johns doesn’t want to deter students from coming to the golf course because he does have projects they can work on. Mr. Johns shared there are times when he has a major influx of students and doesn’t know where to direct them.

D. Betsch then spoke with Jordan Smith, Coordinator of Civic Engagement and Orientation. Mr. Smith reported as it stands now there is no set days when students can report for community service hours. Mr. Smith did share the Dean of Students Office does post on campus opportunities. Mr. Smith does keep record of community partners and different opportunities in the neighborhood. For the interim, Mr. Smith advises that students be redirected back to the Dean of Students website or to Mr. Smith.

D. Betsch will also reach out to Travis Overton, Dean of Students Office and Whitney Comer, Executive Director of Student Life, and share this suggestion.

D. Betsch was not in attendance at the meeting, this suggestion will be discussed at the next meeting. D. Lawless also shared he spoke with Dean Overton and was informed there is a website that students can find community service opportunities to participate in.

D. Betsch shared the Dean of Students office maintains a website with a number of community service options for students. It ultimately is the student’s responsibility to look at the website and contact the individuals listed on the website.

- “It would be great if all the classrooms (except computer classrooms and specialized classrooms) were on the same key. Since my professors teach in every building on campus, I am constantly having to order a key to open up one classroom. Some of my professors have five keys - one for their office, one for the computer lab and three for three classrooms in three other buildings. This doesn't make any sense to me. Thank you!”

K. Bowers, Lock/Key Control Supervisor, shared every building has its own master key to cut down on rekeying if a key is lost. Kevin will forward this suggestion to Rein Mungo, Interim Director of Facilities.

K. Bowers shared after speaking with Rein Mungo, Interim Director of Facilities, the buildings having their own master key cuts down on someone having access to a build they may not need to have access to. If a master key is lost it is very costly to rekey the buildings.

- “I'm curious to know why on CCU’s main webpage the weather temperature always says 65.5. Is this to convince people from the north that it is always nice down here? Thank you for your time.”

L. Dent shared at the present time the weather has been taken off the website while they work on the system to see why it is not updating properly.

- “I know this may have been addressed before, but a few of us still have concerns with the cleaning of Baxley Hall. This a high traffic building that has prospective students, parents, current students and faculty/staff in and out all day. We feel the bathrooms are not cleaned properly and we frequently run out of supplies (seat covers, soap, etc.) Also, when the floors were mopped there was a sticky residue left behind. Customer service is our main focus in Baxley and we would like our building to look good to our customers as well.”

D. Lawless has contacted Buddy Hendrick, Director, Facility Operations, regarding this suggestion.

- “The state DOT has a twitter account setup for the Pee Dee region (@SCDOTPeeDee) which sends out rapid alerts and updates regarding traffic around the area, much of which occurs to directly outside the CCU campus on 501. The CCU twitter accounts (chant411/Coastal News) could retweet and publicize these alerts so that students, staff and faculty would know to avoid nearby areas with particularly bad traffic. Although this would be most useful during the summer months, it could help everyone avoid
running into unexpected traffic jams. Because the twitter feed is controlled by another state agency, it is reputable, and there should be no challenge involving the trustworthiness of their information.”

S. Kite shared she contacted April Betsch, Associate Director Conference Services and William Plate, Vice President for University Communication. S. Kite shared the following response, “best practices suggestion that if an individual has an interest in following the twitter account they will and they should follow that twitter account. Coastal will consider retweeting major announcements, however the community can follow the day to day tweets directly from the SC DOT twitter account.”

- S. Kite shared she was asked to see if there is a trolley that transports people from main campus to University Commons during lunch hours and to Human Resources. M. Crawford will inquire about this to Sandy Baldridge-Adrian, Senior Manager Contractual & Business Services.

  M. Crawford shared after speaking with Sandy Baldridge-Adrian there is a route that is dedicated to transport to Human Resources from main campus called the Black route, Sandy did not see why someone could not use this route to University Commons.

- “On January 13, 2015, Dr. DeCenzo emailed CCU employees to inform us that all slotted and time-limited employees are eligible for a .5% pay increase due to the 65% freshmen retention goal we reached. To be eligible for the increase, employees had to have been actively employed in either type of position as of June 15, 2014.

  As you know, July 1 usually marks the beginning of a new budget year for Coastal. On that date, many people begin their employment with CCU. There are also numerous current Coastal employees who may change departments within the University. Any current CCU employee, who was time-limited or slotted, on June 15, 2014, but moved positions within CCU on July 1, 2014, is not eligible for this pay increase as they are seen as a new hire among administration.

  As an employee at CCU for the past three years, I find this policy discouraging. Myself, and many other Coastal employees, aided in getting to that 65% retention rate. I do not feel that it is fair that because an internal job change occurred, that we are now ineligible for this pay increase.

  I believe that it would be in the administration’s best interest to reevaluate this policy and look into how it can benefit their current employees who may have changed positions within the university, or those who are planning on doing so in the future.”

D. Lawless forwarded this suggestion to Staci Bowie, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, and expressed this suggestion had been discussed by the council and the council supports a review of the policy. D. Booth also forwarded this suggestion to Belinda Pope, Associate Director of Human Resource Operations and Kim Sherfesse, Director of Human Resources.

  Dan shared the following response from Kim Sherfesse, Director of Human Resources, “If certain employees experienced status changes (e.g. movement from time-limited to slotted) or were hired into different positions on or after June 16, 2014, they were deemed ineligible for the 1/2% CCU General Increase. Based on the position or role changes, these employees are essentially considered new hires, resulting in the ineligibility for the October 1st increase.”

New Business

Suggestion Boxes: There was no suggestions in the suggestion boxes.

- Web Page Comments:
• Suggestion: “I just want to mention; today I do not "Feel the Teal". I feel that the university does not value the safety of its employee. Classes were cancelled but employees are still required to go to work? Therefore, I do not "Feel the Teal". We are not all treated fairly and equally. It is very sad.”

• “I’d like to provide feedback regarding communication during inclement weather. I woke up at 5am this morning and checked my Coastal email and the Coastal website to see if a decision had been made regarding closing or delaying the University. Nothing was posted or emailed at that time. I didn’t fall back asleep and saw the CCU Winter Weather Alert text come in at 5:23am. I interpreted the wording "classes cancelled" incorrectly and thought that the University was cancelled. I turned off my alarm and went back to bed. When I woke up just after 9am I saw the much clearer email which stated that classes were cancelled but University faculty and staff were still expected to report. Although I do not fall into this category, it is my understanding that many faculty and staff heard on the news that Coastal Carolina University was closed.

Not only am I frustrated that the wording within the text was not clearer I also don't believe that the decision to have faculty and staff report was in the best interest of those individuals. If the University deems it unsafe for students to travel thereby cancelling classes, the same logic should hold true for non-essential employees. I understand the option of using vacation time, however, I do not believe one should have to due to safety concerns.

I hope that future communication to the University community is clearer and that all safety is taken into consideration when deciding to keep the University open. Thank you.”

• “CCU must implement a better system of informing students AND faculty/staff regarding closures and cancellations.

Today's alert was unacceptable, and extremely confusing for my family. My spouse is faculty and I am an employee; CCU failed to immediately clarify whether my spouse was off only and I was expected in, or if we were both off. Staff have families and responsibilities outside the workplace, including making arrangements for children, and need to know, immediately, what the situation is; we cannot wait for clarification, because someone inevitably got it wrong and missed that follow-up.

I know of several CCU employees who did not come in today because of this confusion. This resulted in loss of vacation time and/or pay, depending on circumstance. That is very frustrating. Employees should not be penalized in time, money, and stress for the incompetence of the administration.

The messaging was also extremely unclear regarding student workers: were they expected in, or were they exempt due to their student status?

Further, the fact that the messaging was bungled is inexcusable considering the several days of cancellations and closures experienced just last year. What will happen when the winters are clear for two or three years?

These lessons cannot be forgotten; just as no massive hurricanes have destroyed the city of Myrtle Beach since the 1950s, this does not mean a similar disaster will not happen this year. The institution should not preach readiness for all situations for its employees, then hypocritically turn around and fail to do so itself.

CCU is a state institution, and needs to be prepared for inevitable weather situations. Professionalism is expected and demanded of all faculty and staff; the same must be provided by the institution in turn. This failure to communicate on what amounts to a relatively minor issue also raises serious concerns about what level of communication may be expected should a truly significant emergency or crisis ever occur.

Please do a better job next time.”
“In regards to the closing/cancelling (or lack thereof today), a suggestion for the future would be to sync up the time frame of the procedure:

5:24am Text message sent out saying classes cancelled

5:40am Email sent out telling employees that annual leave is required if you are absent today. I didn't receive the email until 5:42am and others have reported 5:46am

5:45am Coastal website [finally] updated to reflect the email sent

There was 20 minutes between receiving a text message and then being told I must use leave to be absent. I know of many who didn't bother waking up this morning after they saw the text message. It is completely unrealistic and ignorant if the university expects employees to wake up when they get a text at 5am and then proceed to wait around to find out if they have to go out in the elements. Normal people will receive the text, then turn off the alarm and go back to sleep. No one wakes up to the text message and says "Gee, I bet I should forgo sleeping and stay awake for another half hour to find out if I am included in the message." The timing was extremely poor in this morning’s events and the university can do better.

This is the second time since January 1st that the university has said one thing, then some time later gone back and said "oh by the way, if your staff..." (I am referring the Singleton incident without heat/water when we were told we can leave for the day, then an hour later we get an email saying we had to use time if we left. Very shady move.)

In regards to the wording of "classes cancelled", if you would like staff to still report, then type it out that staff should still report like other schools in the area have done. Why leave any doubt? It's one extra sentence that would mean the difference between many employees being 'forced' into a leave day and them coming in. I would expect a university of our stature to do a better job considering word choice and the lack there of when sending out information publicly.”

D. Lawless shared throughout the day as the suggestions came in he forwarded these suggestions to the President’s office. D. Lawless also followed up with William Plate, Vice President for University Communication and Carissa Medeiros, Director of Emergency Management Safety and Transportation.

The following response from Carissa Medeiros was shared, “Thank you for the information that you provided there is always room for improvement and I welcome suggestions. I am happy to answer questions and provide information to the Staff Advisory Council anytime regarding the emergency management and decision making process. Bill and I will discuss these issues and try to resolve the ones that are in our control. Please let me know if there is anything else you need.”

D. Lawless will extend an invitation to Ms. Medeiros to attend the next Staff Advisory meeting.

“The volleyball net in front of Ingle Hall is torn and looks shabby. Needs to be repaired or replaced. Looks bad as potential students are on walking tours.”

D. Lawless forwarded this suggestion to Steve Harrison, Director of University Housing, and was informed this is scheduled to be replaced on March 15, 2015.

“Please actually post the minutes to the Staff Advisory Council meetings online, in a timely fashion. Currently, the only 2015 minutes posted are two months old (January 8); the council was scheduled to meet twice since. Taking suggestions doesn't help if the community cannot see what the response is.”
The council will work on posting minutes in a timely fashion. It should be noted, the council meets every three weeks and are unable to post minutes until they are approved at the next meeting.

- “I am just interested to find out if there will be additional work done to the new crosswalk on University Boulevard. The initial work is terrible and is going to destroy the front end of cars. Please consider fixing this poor work.”

D. Lawless will forward this suggestion to Rein Mungo, Interim Director of Facilities.

Additional Discussion items by members:

- D. Lawless shared with the council members two previous suggestions that have been acted on.

  1. A previous suggestion that was submitted regarding the drop off around the drainage pipes has been corrected. There are now railings as you walk pass the drop off areas.

  2. Additional parking spaces will be made for staff/faculty behind Baxley Hall in row GG.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Next Meeting: The next SAC meeting will be held April 2, 2015 in Edwards 164.