Northern Virginia Community College Senate
Meeting Minutes
9/19/2019


Absent: Tammy Currie, Maureen Townsend, Debbie Wyne

GUESTS: Barbara Canfield (alternate – Loudoun), Mary Pat O’Brien (alternate – MEC), Trace Main.

I. Senate Chair Donna Minnich called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

II. Approval of meeting minutes. Minutes from 4/18/19 meeting were approved by unanimous voice vote.

III. OLD BUSINESS
   a. Committee on Committees. Senate Chair Donna Minnich thanked those who assisted with the committee this year. The committee’s work is winding down. She is stepping down as chair and Senator Ed Zuniga has volunteered to chair the Committee. Senate Chair Donna Minnich said that she will remain available to assist Senator Zuniga as needed just as Senator Lisa Stelle assisted Senate Chair Donna Minnich when she became Chair of the Committee. Senate Chair Donna Minnich thanked Senator Lisa Stelle.

IV. NEW BUSINESS
   a. Continuity of Forum Council Meetings. A discussion about when campus forum councils meet and whether it should be synchronized across campuses.
      i. Alexandria meets on Friday after Senate.
      ii. Annandale meets on the 1st Thursday of every month
      iii. College Staff meets on the 4th Thursday of every month
      iv. Loudoun meets on the 2nd Thursday of every month (Fridays would not work)
      v. Manassas meets on the Friday after Senate.
      vi. MEC meets on the Wednesday following the Senate’s meeting
      vii. Woodbridge meets on the 4th Thursday of every month.

   Forums seemed happy with their selections of meeting times and said that the schedule is working. No further discussion.

   b. Update: Senate Panel completed for Presidential Candidate Visits. Senators on the panel:
      i. Donna Minnich – PF - Manassas
      ii. Julie Combs – PF - Loudoun
      iii. Michelle Gee – CS – College Staff
      iv. Imran Kukdawala – CS – MEC
v. Kristen Balbuena – PF – College Staff
vi. Diane Mucci – AF – Manassas
vii. Ed Zuniga – PF – Manassas
viii. Teba Aljumaili – PF – Alexandria

Senators serving on other panels:

i. Alex Case – AF – College Staff
ii. Kathleen Deal – TF – MEC
iii. Mike McMillon – CS – Loudoun
iv. Elizabeth Lanthier – TF – Alexandria
v. Mary Vander Maten (alternate) – PF – Annandale
vi. Mary Mosely – TF – MEC

Many people wanted to serve but it was hard for teaching faculty to participate given their teaching schedules and the requirement that a participant had to attend all panel meetings.

c. Update: Formation of Constitution Committee. Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes is forming the committee. He needs someone from College Staff or Student Services (preferably from Manassas or MEC)

d. Elections and Credentials Committee formation. Senator Kerry Cotter (last year’s chair of the E&C) said that the bylaws require that the committee be comprised of 7 Senators; one from each forum council. The committee conducts elections for forum and Senate as well as checks the credentials of nominees. The committee has also been charged with increasing interest in forum and Senate participation and “getting new faces” involved. The following Senators from each campus volunteered to serve:

i. Alexandria: Marilyn Odaka (CS)
ii. Annandale: Kelly L. DeSenti (PF)
iii. College Staff: Michelle Gee (CS)
iv. Loudoun: Julie Combs (PF)
v. Manassas: Ashlie Warnick (TF)
vi. MEC: Imran Kukdawala (CS)
vii. Woodbridge: Kathy Bohnstedt (AF)

The committee should choose its chair, vice chair, and secretary. MOTION to allow Senator Kerry Cotter to remain on the committee in an emeritus role for institutional knowledge. Passed by unanimous voice vote.

e. Ad Hoc Appointment Advisory Committee. Comprised of teaching faculty, professional faculty, and administrative faculty. Open to non-Senators. The Committee reviews multi-year contracts for employees. Nominations (self or others) are solicited and Brandon Nzekwe from Dr. Gabriel’s office conducts the elections. Those up for a multi-year contract cannot serve on the committee. Senator Lisa Stelle said that last year the college sent a request college-wide for volunteers. Senate Chair Donna Minnich said that she would ask Dr. Nzekwe if that was possible again. Senator Lisa Stelle offered to provide last year’s email language.
Policy: Window Covering Policy 3xx.

i. This policy was sent to Senators and Forum Chairs for comment. Comments outside those listed below should be sent to Forum Chairs for forwarding to College Senate.

ii. Senator Jack Lechelt asked what this policy was aimed at. Where did it come from? Senate Chair Donna Minnich said that it originated out of safety concerns. For example, some doors have small windows and if they are covered, security or police may not know the room is occupied. The police, working with facilities, pursued the policy.

iii. Concerns about the policy:

1. Ability to hide in active shooter situation. Can we have temporary coverings for if that happens?
2. The policy exempts “legitimate business purposes.” What constitutes a “legitimate business purpose”? Who decides? What are the exceptions? Can we have a general carve out for them?
   a. Senate Chair Donna Minnich said that supervisors would decide
   b. Senator Ed Zuniga said that this needs to be explained and made clearer.
3. Nursing mothers. Senator Kristin Balbuena noted that there are not lactation rooms in every building on at least some campuses and it is sometimes impossible, given schedules and distances, for a nursing mother to get to a lactation room so rooms with windows covered are the only option. Senator Ellen Fancher-Ruiz said that an exception needs to be made for nursing mothers.
4. Labs.
   a. Senator Beth Shewmaker noted that for some classes, the windows are covered to hide quiz questions/topics from students.
   b. Senator Ed Zuniga added that if a student can see into the room, they will be able to see what is on the test.
5. Privacy.
   a. Senator Beth Shewmaker said that nursing assessment labs need privacy since participants wear bathing suits.
   b. Senator Stacy Slaten said that some art classes use nude models. They use temporary blinds. There should be some allowable temporary coverings.
6. Inconsistency in language. Senator Katherine Hitchcock suggested that the policy language needs to be clarified. For example, one part says no temporary coverings allowed but other parts say when temporary coverings will be allowed.
7. Some offices on some campuses are all windows (CG building in Annandale for example). Security and police can still see in if some is covered.
8. Temperature concerns.
iv. Support for the policy:
   1. Title 9 concerns about student interactions with faculty and staff.
   2. At least one life was saved when a passerby saw someone lying on the floor through an un-covered window and called for help.
   3. Aesthetics.
   4. Policy would make it easier to keep people from “hiding” in their offices since there would be a policy prohibiting using window coverings to keep those outside from seeing it is occupied. Others said that, on some occasions and with some office formats, we need to “hide” to get work done. Senator Kathy Bohnstedt said that this might be a management issue – if people are “hiding,” that should be addressed by their supervisor rather than a “thou shall not” policy.

v. Suggestions:
   1. College should make an investment to identify suitable window coverings.

vi. Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes asked for a MOTION. MOTION to ask Policy Work Group to hold on the policy until feedback considered and to redraft the policy for additional review by the Senate and its constituents. Discussion about MOTION: Senator Jack Lechelt said maybe these should be campus-based conversations and case-by-case rather than a college policy. Senator Tykesha Myrick said that we don’t have the information that we need; we don’t have any data from emergency management or the police. The Senate should ask for additional information so we can make a better decision. Senator Rob Johnson asked if the Policy Work Group wasn’t already awaiting our feedback. Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes said that this motion also asks the PWG to send the revised policy back for additional review rather than just revising the policy and moving forward with it. MOTION to send the policy with feedback to Policy Work Group with request for revision and an opportunity for review by the Senate and constituencies. Motion passed by voice vote with 1 NAY vote.

vii. Ad Hoc Grievance Panel Pool of Volunteers. Ad Hoc Grievance Panel Pool of Volunteers may be called upon if needed; please refer to Section 3.13 VCCS Alternative Dispute and Grievance Procedures; Classified Staff still follows DHRM. Teaching faculty, professional faculty, and administrative faculty volunteers needed. Those on the panel come from pool of volunteers. If interested, contact Senate Chair Donna Minnich. Human Resources oversees the process. A campus-wide email will be sent out seeking volunteers. It is a one year commitment. Senate Chair Donna Minnich would like the names for the committee by the end of September.

h. Resolution from the College Staff Forum Council:

   We, the College Staff Forum Council, would like to have a formal invitation for faculty and classified staff to attend commencement each year. This invitation would be separate from volunteering. We recommend this because:
   • Many offices can operate on smaller staffs based on the 2019 data we collected
• Volunteering requires two absences from the office (training and actual attendance) whereas attendance is only one day out of the office.
• We should be celebrating the students’ successes as a college community.

Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes reported the Motion. Motion open for discussion.
Senate Chair Donna Minnich reported that graduation in 2020 will again be on a Friday.
Senator Kelly L. DeSenti asked why there needed to be an invitation to attend.
Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes informed the Senate that, in the recent past, staff were not invited to attend but were asked to volunteer. Senator Kristin Balbuena noted that this proposal was not about closing offices. Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes said that staff choosing to attend would have to discuss it with their supervisor. This motion would not give anyone clearance to attend; it is just an invitation. Senate Secretary Ashlie Warnick said that we need people to go to graduation and an invitation to staff might encourage them to attend. Senator Pamela Hilbert asked who would be sending the invitation. Senate Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes said that, traditionally, faculty have been invited by the President, Provosts, and Deans. Senator Katherine Hitchcock asked if anyone objected to this motion. Senator Alex Case said that he looked at staffing and classified staff had felt excluded in the past. They perceived that the only role the college wanted them to serve at graduation was as a service worker. MOTION passed by Voice Vote with no objections.

i. Faculty Evaluation Plan. The Loudoun Campus Forum submitted the following proposal:
   Based on the plan document, the process is to be reviewed every 2 years. The plan was implemented in 2014 and, to our knowledge, has never been reviewed.

Senate Chair Donna Minnich asked what the Senate wants to recommend. Much of the procedure comes from the VCCS. Senator Katherine Hitchcock said that she chaired the VCCS Committee for adjuncts and it was brought up that the full-time faculty evaluation plan should be reviewed. It has been 5 years. The VCCS’s plan needs to be reviewed (which doesn’t mean changed).

Senate Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes asked for a Motion for the Senate to review our plan or for the Senate to ask the VCCS to review their plan. Senator Mike Polcen asked who we should talk to to get this done. Senator Katherine Hitchcock said that after the VCCS reviews the plan, NOVA can review ours. Senator Beatrice McKeithen said that ASAC (Academic and Student Affairs Council), CFAC, VCCS Council of Deans and Directors, or the ACOP (Administrative Council of Presidents) would be the proper avenue. Senator Pamela Hilbert said that it should start at the system office and proposals for change would go through the process. Is this on Charlotte Calobrisi’s radar already? Senate Chair Donna Minnich asked if there were recommendations that the Senate wanted to make. Do we want to ask VCCS to review? Senate Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes recommended that the Senate send questions to Charlotte Calobrisi and ask her to report out at the next meeting about what the best course of action is for
NOVA and for VCCS Review. Senator Mike Polcen said that Loudoun supports this proposal.

j. Reorganization Review. Loudoun Campus Forum proposes that a review of the reorganization implemented last year be undertaken. “What is working well and what is not working well. It’s been a year, we should know by now.” Senator Pamela Hilbert said that the provosts put together all the feedback about the reorganization. Maybe if there were specific topics and Senate Chair Donna Minnich could get a panel or a discussion leader for the topic together? Senator Hilbert asked what specifically the subject would be: “what about the re-org do you want to talk about?” Senate Chair Donna Minnich suggested that those interested should put together questions and then a panel can be formed. Senate Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes suggested that Forums could gather this information. Senator Lisa Stelle said that those supporting this review want more transparency. Senator Jack Lechelt made a MOTION: the College Senate supports a review of the academic reorganization and recommends that forum councils and Senators provide more specific questions that can be asked of a panel of provosts at a near-future Senate meeting.

Mary Vander Maten (proxy for Senator Braddlee) asked since it has only been a year, is a review too early. Senator Kathy Bohnstedt raised the question of how the new President will impact this. Senator Julie Combs asked why only provosts would present information. Senator Katherine Hitchcock said that the Provosts are the chief academic officers on their campuses and they are the right people to ask. MOTION passed by voice vote with 1 Nay vote and 2 abstentions.

k. Resource Allocation. The Loudoun Campus Forum asks to know how decisions about faculty/staff allocation among campuses are made; requests increased transparency in the budgeting of campus allocations. A discussion began. Senator Katherine Hitchcock said that we have an attrition model for resource allocation that may not be suiting the college’s needs. Senator Kelly L. DeSenti asked if OIR could run a report. Senate Parliamentarian said we can ask.

l. Presidential Search. Senate Chair Donna Minnich relayed a message from Dr. Gabriel urging people to attend the upcoming presentations and panels for Presidential candidates. A survey will go out immediately after panel discussions and participants should fill it out immediately. The survey will be open until 7 PM on the second day of the candidate’s visit. Senate Secretary Ashlie Warnick said that more people could go if the panels weren’t scheduled during peak teaching times. For example, there are no teaching faculty on the Senate’s panel. Senator Pamela Hilbert said that the panels will not be recorded and the Board will get together soon after all candidates have finished their interview processes. Questions were raised about the time limit on giving feedback. Senator Katherine Hitchcock raised a question about whether there will be sufficient time to give feedback on the third candidate. Senator Kathy Bohnstedt noted that the third candidate’s second day of his visit falls on Rosh Hashanah – practicing Jewish faculty and staff will have to choose to observe a high holy day or miss part of
the Presidential search.

m. Great Places to Work Survey. Senate executive team is going to get the results and it will be sent to all Senators and Forum Chairs. The plan is for the Senate (in conjunction with the forums) to choose 3-4 specific items or areas to work on.

n. [Discussion shifted from survey to how new President will or should be involved in the process]. Senator Jack Lechelt said that morale is an issue and we want to know what the candidates will do to help. Senator Kelly L. DeSenti said that everyone should get a fair shot.

DISCUSSION OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

- Dr. Kress’s vote of no confidence is a big deal. The Senate should voice their concerns.
- Every candidate should be looked into
- We were told there were deep background checks yet we have a candidate who had a vote of no confidence at her college. We were told there was a large pool of qualified candidates.
- The NY community college system is different than the VCCS. The vote was a union issue. Union Board was in a dispute over financial terms.
- A few people have said they are disappointed with the choices. But we should give each candidate a chance to be heard. But, with morale being a concern…
- The presentations will be live-streamed and we can submit feedback online. We need to make sure the information about this is dispersed.
- Who gets the letters of recommendation and does reference and background checks? Consultants do this for the top candidates. The Chancellor presents the candidates to the Board of Trustees who certify the candidates.
- Where is the respect for faculty and staff with this timetable?
- Senate is an advisory board and we can write letters and speak on behalf of the Senate. We can send these messages to the Chancellor and the VCCS, NOVA’s president, the Board of Trustees.
- We should reach out to the Board of Trustees about the timeline. Some people were told they had to complete the surveys within 24 hours. Why the rush?
- MOTION for the Senate Chair to email the Chair of the Board of Trustees for timeline on trustee’s decision on candidates and that that information be disseminated to the Senate.
- We should make the best decision. Is it a foregone conclusion that one of the candidates will be the next President? The three candidates were the only ones certified. If no one is hired, that is a failed search and we have to start over.
- Discussion about MOTION. What would wording be. Senate wants to be informed. Timeline seems rushed. If no time for us to comment, suggests that our comments aren’t important. We want to know the timeline. Concern that not all voices will have the opportunity to be heard given the timeline.
• Showing up and speaking up during the panels and presentations is the best plan.

• If we want to extend the review period, why not just say that? IT says that isn’t viable. They need to close out one survey before they open another.

• To ensure that we get an opportunity to be heard and to evaluate the candidates, perhaps we should ask the Board to push back their dates.

• This process privileges those who think quickly over those who need time to ruminate.

• But there is time and the survey is short.

• But our answers can be long and that can be time consuming. Timeline shows disrespect.

• Can’t hurt to ask for more time. We can ask for it to be extended to one full business day after the candidate’s visit. MOTION that the Senate ask Dr. Gabriel to keep the surveys open for one full business day following each interview and ask Board Chair to delay decision until all responses have been received and reviewed.

• Can we ask for a recording of the public presentations? MOTION to ask OIR and other appropriate bodies to record public portions of presentations. Passes by Voice Vote.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting: 1 PM on Thursday October 17.