

Chair's Report
May 2019
Submitted by John Smith

Strategic Planning: The three workgroups are active and moving forward. I am serving on the Executive Committee, which oversees the workgroups. It is time for “rubber to start meeting the road” and the work groups look to have been doing a good job at that. We have a meeting Monday morning, May 13, and I will know more after that.

Chick Fil A: Permits are in hand and construction/renovation of the space has begun. Because of noise created when the required venting system is being installed, the renovation on the space has been temporarily suspended per request from that campus. Work will resume when we are through the end of the semesters for the programs on that campus. We are now looking at an August opening.

HSC Meetings: Krista Wallace Boaz, Faculty Senate Chair, Jonathan Fuller, SGA President and started a new initiative of being on the Health Science Campus on day per month for lunch. Our lunch this month included a cookout in the quad area and drew hundreds of participants. Dr. Bendapudi attended and met many students, faculty and staff. Many faculty and staff pitched in to help with the event. The event was sponsored by the Student Government Association.

Red Book Review: The Red Book review process is gaining traction. We are into section 4 of the book, which is faculty related materials and will soon be getting into section 5 which is specific to staff.

Dr. Bendapudi Meeting: Dr Bendapudi meets with Krista Wallace-Boaz, myself and Jonathan Fuller once a month to discuss anything on our agenda. In the future that group is being expanded to include the Provost and Chief of Staff since they could provide relevant information on many topics we discuss. The items we discussed this month were of a highly confidential nature so I am not able to share those at this point but will when appropriate.

Board of Trustees: The Board of Trustees met three times. One was committee meetings and the other two regular board meetings. The committees that met

were not ones that I serve on but I attended all the meetings. During the April 18 meetings, a raise for an administrator was passed in committee. In the full Board that followed I spoke against the raise on the grounds of staff and faculty equity, and explained how raises to administrators while we are not receiving any are very damaging to morale. I made a motion from the floor to approve the extension of the administrator's contract and to remove the interim from their title but to keep their pay the same as it was. The motion received a second and passed unanimously. I have spoken to administrator raises consistently. In the May 9 meeting we conferred degrees on our graduating students. That was a very meaningful experience for me and really helped me focus on the reason we are all here. Dr. Bendapudi's evaluation was also done during the public portion of that meeting. I expressed my pleasure in the increased access that I believe she has made available to our chair and other constituency groups on campus and pointed out the strategic planning process where we had over 1,400 people volunteer to serve on the workgroups. I was informed we had normally received around 80 to 90 requests to serve in those roles in the past. The second part of the meeting was giving Dr. Bendapudi a raise. I voted in favor of that. I know that sounds contrary to what I said above but I did so for a number of reasons. Some of those revolve around sending a strong message of commitment to the legislature, donors who had walked away from us, new donors and new corporate partners like IBM who just announced an exciting new partnership with us. Those are all important. Another major factor for me was to make a statement about gender pay equity. You may remember Rachel Flatt's interview with Dr. Bendapudi when she first began her time here and asking her about her salary compared to her male counterparts.

There are two bigger reasons that I voted for her raise. They are pieces of information that only I had at that time that were either personnel matters or something that had been shared with me in confidence. Those are this.

The Board of Trustees intentionally asked Neeli to come here at a low salary for one year. At the end of that year, if her evaluation were good, they would adjust her salary to bring her in line with comparable institutions.

She had shared with me in private that if she were to receive the raise, she was going to donate it back to the University.

For me, the vote was a matter of ethics and integrity. Can we ask our president to model ethical behavior and integrity and then not do what we presented to her to accept the position. When I cast my vote in any matter on the Board of Trustees, my first thought is always, will this vote reflect the thinking of the Senate and our constituents. While I knew the initial reaction would be largely negative, I also thought that if you each had the information I had, you would have probably voted the way I did.

I have told Neeli personally, that if those two items had not been present, I would not have voted for the raise.

Foundation Board of Directors: We had the important “spend” meeting on Wednesday, April 10. This is where the Foundation gives the University insight on their investments and what portion of those would be safe for the University to spend. This is a critical function with the Foundation and part of the reason for some of the issues we have had to deal with the past several years. Largely due to the market tanking in the 4th quarter last year, the spend to the University will be 6M less than it was last year. Dr. Bendapudi fought for a larger spend and relayed what negative impacts this could have on our University but the Foundation stayed at their amount. This is actually understandable given the scenarios that took place in prior administrations that lead to a lot of the financial issues we have dealt with in the past 6 or 7 years.

List of Meetings I attended in April to date:

Tuesday, April 9, Redbook Review, 9:30, Shumaker 228

Tuesday, April 9, Monthly Meeting of Constituents, HSC Campus, Noon, TBA

Wednesday, April 10, Foundation Spend Meeting, 1:00, Foundation Central Avenue Office

Wednesday, April 10, Tuition and Fees, 3:30, SAC W117

Monday, April 15, Staff Senate Leadership, 9:00 AM, MITC

Wednesday, April 17, Dr. Bendapudi, 9:00 AM, Grawemeyer Hall

Wednesday, April 17, Free Speech, Noon, West Lawn

Wednesday, April 17, Mark Watkins, 3:30 PM, Grawemeyer 108

Thursday, April 18, Board of Trustees Committee Meetings, 12:15, Jefferson Room

Thursday, April 18, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 1:00 PM, Jefferson Room

Friday, April 19, Senate Leadership, 11:00 AM, MITC

Friday, April 19, Strategic Planning Executive Committee, 1:00 PM, Jefferson Room

Friday, April 19, Strategic Planning Executive and Steering Committees, 2:00 PM, Jefferson Room

Monday, April 22, Free Speech Policy Meeting, 9:00 AM, DOS Conference Room

Monday, April 22, Staff Senate Executive Committee, 3:00 PM, SAC 118

Tuesday, April 23, IM Awards, 11:00 AM, Red Barn

Tuesday, April 23, Redbook Review, 1:00 PM, Shumaker 228 (they know I won't make it or will be late)

Tuesday, April 23, Student Affairs Graduation Reception, 3:00 PM, SAC

Wednesday, April 24, HSC HR Meeting, 9:15 AM, SGA Office

Thursday, April 25, Foundation Committee Meetings, 10:00 AM, Foundation Offices

Thursday, April 25, Foundation Regular Meeting, 12:00 PM, Foundation Offices

Friday, April 26, Music School Concert for Chris, 7:00 PM, Music School

Monday, April 29, Strategic Planning Executive Committee, 10:00 AM, Jefferson Room

Tuesday, April 30, Dr. Bendapudi, 3:00 PM, Grawmeyer Hall

Monday, May 6, Senate Leadership, 9:00 AM, MITC

Monday, May 6, Dr. Bendapudi, 11:30, Grawmeyer Hall

Monday, May 6, Mark Watkins, 1:00 PM, Grawemeyer Hall 108

Tuesday, May 7, Redbook Review, 1:30 PM, Shumaker 228

Wednesday, May 8, Student Affairs Assessment Committee, 10:00 AM, DOS Conference Room

Thursday, May 9, Student Affairs Social Media Committee, 11:00 AM, SAC W312

Thursday, May 9, Board of Trustees Executive Committee, 8:30 AM, Jefferson Room

Monday, May 13, Strategic Planning, 8:30 AM, Jefferson Room

Monday, May 13, Board of Trustees Budget Workshop, 10:00 AM, Jefferson Room