



Cornell University Employee Assembly

Cornell Employee Assembly
Minutes of the May 2, 2018 Meeting
12:15-1:45 PM
401 Physical Sciences Bldg.

I. **Call to Order**

- a. C. Wiggers called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.
- b. *Members Present:* B. Ayanfodun, C. Dawson, H. Depew, K. Fitch, A. Haenlin-Mott, A. Howell, P. Andersen, H. Sheldon, J. Kruser, K. Mahoney, B. Nicholson, B. Roebal, C. Sanzone, P. Thompson, C. Wiggers, S Willcox
- c. *Members Absent:* I. Allen, M. Carcella, T. Grove, D. Harris, A. Hourigan, L. Johnson-Kelly, M. Mosereiff, K. Sheils, S. Vaccaro

II. **Call for Late Additions to the Agenda**

- a. H. Depew suggested discussing the report from the Committee on Organizational Structures in the Social Sciences. She asked if there was interest in getting a consensus around whether or not it is supported before the EA meeting with the co-chairs of the report.
 - i. C. Wiggers reminded the EA that the report only consists of ideas.
 - ii. J. Kruser said he does not think they need to bring it to the floor for any decision making.
 - iii. K. Fitch added that the UA wanted this dropped and instead focus on the other ideas.
 - iv. H. Depew said there were a lot of ideas concerning creating a center for social sciences and other components in the report as well.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

- a. Motion to approve the minutes of the EA meeting of April 18, 2018 – **approved** with no dissent.

IV. **Committee Reports**

- a. Employee Education & Development Committee
 - i. M. Mosereiff was not present.
- b. Employee Welfare Committee
 - i. L. Johnson-Kelly was not present.
 - ii. B. Roebal said regarding the smoking referendum, the hope is for a survey with questions and then extrapolating from those responses. There is a link to colleges and universities that are smoke-free and it is almost like Cornell is at the end of the bus getting on. Smoke-free campuses are out there and they not beginning something.
 - iii. C. Wiggers added that B. Roebal was quoted in The Cornell Daily Sun on Monday regarding this topic, and there will be more to follow in the early parts of the fall semester.
- c. Elections Committee
 - i. P. Thompson said most of their new members are here today and will participate in the organizational meeting after this.
- d. Personnel Policy Committee
 - i. S. Willcox was not feeling well last week so the committee did not meet.
- e. Transportation Task Force
 - i. K. Mahoney said they have suspended meetings until August. The consultants are involved in data gathering and inputting, and will be prepared to begin community engagements in September. They are meeting with Senior Director Bridgette Brady from the Facilities and Campus services. There is an anticipation of a release of a commuter behavior survey.
 - ii. C. Wiggers said K. Mahoney brought up that the Transportation Task Force is not an official committee, but it is something they can consider.

- iii. K. Fitch said the Transportation Task Force, even if not an official committee, is well thought of. The UA supported the transportation study.
- f. Staff Recognition, Awards & Event
 - i. C. Wiggers said he accidentally skipped over this committee, but announced that while T. Grove is not present, she has expressed willingness to step aside as the chair of the committee if anyone is interested in the position. She will stay as a committee member, but in the event nobody steps forward, she is willing to continue as the chair.
- g. Employee-Elected Trustee
 - i. C. Wiggers thanked C. Coates for his work. There will be more to follow on this position as the election process is outside the EA. EA members can submit or nominate for that position, but it is controlled and handled logistically through the Office of the Assemblies.
 - ii. C. Coates said he is willing to speak with anyone interested.
- h. Retiree Liason
 - i. P. Andersen has nothing to report.
 - ii. H. Sheldon said their HR Liason Michelle Artibee was honored by the Advocacy Center of Tompkins County for her work in integrating sexual harassment training and other harassment training to the Cornell HR fabric. There is a huge effort within HR to have outreach to employees, retirees, and the rest of the Cornell community.
 - iii. C. Wiggers urged members to reach out to M. Artibee or Linda Croll Howell to talk to their units.
- i. Executive Committee
 - i. J. Kruser said they have been discussing the transition. One thing they are grappling with is how to keep institutional knowledge within the EA. Discussion has been around ways to build procedures to document and pass along knowledge. They also talked about the election processes and how they stagger terms or elect people, particularly committee chairs and the Employee Elected Trustee.
 - ii. C. Wiggers encouraged everyone to use their listserv. Regarding the Board of Trustees (BOT) report, he would like to highlight individuals who have made some significant contributions on campus. For example, the interpreter he had in Iraq in 2017 is now in his fifth year employment in Building Care at Cornell and is also receiving his citizenship soon. There is another gentlemen in Facility Services who made the decision in February 2016 to have gastric bypass surgery. He now runs in races and through promoting a healthy lifestyle, six other employees have also had that surgery. These are stories that the BOT would be interested in hearing about. It is because of Cornell that they have these unique benefits and opportunities to take advantage of life-changing experiences. He has eight minutes for the presentation, five for speaking and three for questions. He is looking to highlight 4-5 people and tie that back into how the EA can connect these individuals on campus and be the active voice for their constituents.
- j. SA Representative Christopher Schott brought up that a former Cornell student who was expelled is now offering storage spaces for students. He is concerned that storage items will not be returned and will be reporting it to CUPD.
 - 1. C. Coates corrected that this student was not expelled from Cornell.
- k. Communications Committee
 - i. C. Sanzone said the committee has a table lined up for a showcase on Friday, June 1st. They do not have the most engaging table setup, so she is open to ideas for what they might do or bring. She is also looking for volunteers to come staff the table throughout the day.
 - ii. C. Sanzone said they also have a couple events throughout the summer, including Staff Development Day. Regarding staff recognition, they have been partnering with the Campus Sustainability Office for the Sustainability Champions Program. They are planning on continuing this program and nominating staff members every month.

V. Business of the Day: Discussion on the report from the Committee on Organizational Structures in the Social Sciences

- a. ILR Representative for the next term A. Sieverding said there has been a lot of discussion within ILR. There was a survey conducted and the ILR staff are about 80% opposed to the merger with HumEc. The other proposed ideas did not seem to be impacting them at this point. She has a document of ILR staff responses to that survey and the general sentiment is that this would not be in the interest of the ILR staff. She suggested having ILR staff join the meeting the EA is having with the co-chairs of the report. They do have a special meeting coming up this Friday and they have been informed that this is just an idea. There has been no discussion on implementation or dollars assigned to bring this about. Personally, she is opposed to the measure and it would be great to see an EA resolution that could support the staff of the ILR school that has indicated strong opposition.
- b. K. Fitch asked if ILR staff were opposed due to fear of their jobs or what the college already has.
 - i. A. Sieverding said jobs was articulated less rather than the identity of ILR. It is a school established for a particular purpose and they cannot find a rationale for the merger, making it difficult to get behind.
- c. J. Kruser supported having staff from ILR and HumEc come into to talk to them. As representatives, he urged hearing from the employees who will be impacted. Writing and presenting a resolution is a bit premature. However, having conversations is the first step and getting thoughts in line in case it does progress to the need for a resolution is a good idea.
- d. A. Sieverding said there were two junior faculty members on the social sciences committee and suggested inviting someone from the committee to talk.
- e. K. Mahoney said HumEc is meeting with the chairs of a committee, so she will report back next week. There is a lot of distraction in the college right now because of renovations and moving so there is not much of a focus on this right now.
- f. H. Sheldon said he has been through this twice and found both times that the underlying matter is something that is made at a higher level. It is something usually regarding space or salaries that employees have no real say. It would be nice to somehow figure out what the drivers are for this.

VI. EA Meeting Adjournment

- a. C. Wiggers thanked everyone for their involvement and adjourned the meeting at 12:48pm.

VII. Organizational Executive Session for 2018-2019 Assembly

- a. Elections Executive Committee
 - i. Chair
 - 1. K. Fitch motioned to nominate C. Wiggers as the Chair of the EA.
 - 2. C. Wiggers said he has been in the role since late January and they are figuring out how to be the voice representing the assembly. He has enjoyed the challenge up to this point and he looks forward to next year.
 - 3. P. Thompson asked what the most difficult thing taking over in January was.
 - 4. C. Wiggers said it was recognizing some of the external roles the chair has, particularly on the UA. That was not clear to him when he started the position and he is still figuring out the UA, which is a different set of people with strong personalities. One of their primary goals should be reconnecting with staff and constituents, and getting that message out there that they are here for them and are partners within the larger university structure for shared governance.
 - 5. C. Wiggers was **reelected** as chair with a vote of 17-0-0.
 - ii. Executive Vice Chair
 - 1. C. Wiggers nominated H. Depew as executive vice chair.
 - 2. H. Depew said she has been on the EA since January. She is the Less than 5 Years of Service Representative At-Large. She is a financial analyst for HumEc. She has been here

for three years and a lot of the units she has been working with has been with individuals that have been here for less than five years. They represent a different sort of employees, ones filled with optimism and hope. A lot of the social issues are still very prevalent, such as sexual assault, women and children. Those issues are important to her and she wants to do as much outreach as she can.

3. C. Wiggers said H. Depew is setting the example so well with the advocacy and volunteerism.
 4. K. Fitch suggested changing the bylaws so that if there is no opposition they can have the chair put in the ballot so they do not have to go through these procedural processes. He is not making a motion now but he plans to.
 5. H. Depew was **elected** with a vote of 16-1-0.
- iii. Vice Chair of Operations for Finance
1. K. Fitch nominated P. Thompson.
 2. P. Thompson works in the Vet College and has been at Cornell for 7 years. She is the International Relations representative is a dual citizen. She has been on the EA for four years and does like the internal operations and finance roles. She enjoys bringing employees to the table as well as making sure their voices are heard. The EA does need to look at their governing documents, which are not as smooth and efficient as they can be. She is on a committee with Dean of Faculty Charlie Van Loan to address the nontenured track and right now, these 1100-1200 individuals are under the EA. They should instead be given their own voice and we should focus on our core. Her personal opinion is that their goals fall more on the faculty side.
 3. P. Thompson added they would prefer to be separated from us as a whole. None of them have been willing participants, but they still in theory still take up seats.
 4. C. Wiggers said he makes mistakes every meeting and P. Thompson will direct him.
 5. K. Fitch, who currently holds this position, said P. Thompson is really good at continuing to approach to get the results that they are looking for, one of which is finance. The EA approves the budget in the beginning but they do not get any input other than that. The duties for this position should give the assembly a report so they know what is going on and, he is sure she will be good at that.
 6. P. Thompson was **elected** with a vote of 17-0-0.
- iv. Vice Chair of Communications
1. EA member nominated C. Sanzone.
 2. C. Sanzone said she has been at Cornell for 15 years, most of that working in University Communications. The best part is the team they have plus a couple engaged constituent members. This was a building year, and they have had some points where they got great turnout and engagement, such as the President's Address and the transportation survey. Her approach is to build the new employee outreach engagement done in partnership with the Onboarding Center and HR. They are going to be starting regular meet and greets for new employees. If they get people on their way in, they can establish who they are.
 3. C. Sanzone was **elected** with a vote of 17-0-0.
- v. Parliamentarian
1. K. Fitch nominates C. Dawson.
 2. C. Wiggers nominates A. Howell – A. Howell respectfully declined as he is interested in another position.
 3. C. Dawson says he does not know much about the role.
 - a. P. Thompson said the OA is very helpful.
 - b. C. Dawson says he can do it if no one else wants to but he would rather not.
 - c. P. Thompson said they do not want to force people.
 4. C. Wiggers asked for self-nominations.

5. K. Fitch said the Parliamentarian goes through parliamentary procedures and sees that meetings and amendments are done properly. Everything has to be proper in case some legal action is taken.
 6. P. Thompson, who has held this position said the position is part of the executive committee. In addition to executive committee meetings, the position will meet with the Office of Assemblies when necessary. If the EA submits any review of their bylaws or documentations for shared governance, they will be part of that as well. In reality, outside of regular meetings, the commitment is about an extra 1.5 hours a week, including doing research and attending meetings.
 7. P. Hampton from the Office of Assemblies said the office would be thrilled to work with the position. As a governing body, the EA establishes all their governing documents. Robert's Rules is what they agree upon in order to manage the meeting space. They can choose how firm or flexible to do that and the Parliamentarian provides a check. They have cheat sheets, and the role will go through training over the summer so that takes a lot of pressure off.
 8. K. Loparco said it a time commitment she would have to think about.
 9. K. Fitch said he will self-nominate himself for a year and if K. Loparco is intrigued still, she can work with him.
 10. C. Wiggers suggested changing the bylaws so that they do not have to vote in handwriting. They can work on identifying ways to make things more efficient.
 11. K. Fitch was **elected** with a vote of 17-0-0.
- b. Elections: EA Representative for University Assembly
- i. C. Wiggers said regarding the time commitment, the UA meets every two weeks from 4:40 to 6:00pm on Tuesdays. There are opportunities for identifying ways to create a more positive atmosphere. It is a challenging group with very strong opinions. It is important that whoever is representing is able to articulate what is as important to the EA at the university level.
 - ii. K. Fitch said being on the UA does open up eyes to all the things that happen on campus.
 - iii. P. Thompson said the SA pushes resolution after resolution. The faculty senate has their specific points of views and backgrounds. Being an employee at that table is a privilege because they are able to keep reminding them of things important to employees.
 - iv. P. Hampton the flavor of what that leadership style is varies on who is leading. The current chair is graduating and it would be great to have an EA member or staff member running for chair. The UA has oversight over the Codes and Judicial Committee that manages the codes of conduct for the university, which they all agree to abide by. They are in the process of doing a major overhaul and this will carry forward into the next session.
 - v. P. Thompson said this is one of the few rare cases where employees are asked to be at the table and are given an important vote that actually matters. They have the chair of the EA, the vice chair of the EA, and a current employee who is appointed by the EA finishing up one more year. They have one more spot open.
 - vi. P. Hampton clarified that the vice chair is not the one who sits on the UA. It just happened to be J. Kruser in that role. It is the chair, one EA member, and one representative from the larger staff population.
 - vii. K. Fitch said he has another term left but he cannot complete it, which is why they need two nominations right now. He lives an hour away and the meetings are twice a month and most of them were always extended, which is where his frustration was.
 - viii. P. Thompson said they have an interested individual from the staff community which they will all vote for. They do need someone from the EA.
 - ix. P. Thompson said there are five members from each constituency making up the UA. All assembly meetings are open to the public.
 - x. K. Fitch suggested that B. Roebal would be a good representative to the UA. A lot of the things he has concerns with, such as the smoking policy, are addressed in the UA.

- xi. A. Haenlin-Mott nominated D. Hiner and K. Barth.
- xii. B. Roebal turned down the nomination.
- xiii. D. Hiner and K. Barth are **elected** to be the EA representatives on the UA with a unanimous vote.
- xiv. P. Thompson said they also have interest from I. Allen who works with in residence hall.
 - 1. I. Allen **elected** as representative by the EA to the UA.
- c. C. Wiggers said he will solicit information for dates for the annual retreat. At that time they can look at committee chairs and they can set the agenda for that time so he is open to anything anyone would like to see done during that retreat.
 - i. P. Thompson said new members can come to the next EA meeting on May 16th. They are not obligated to as the EA is still finishing up the old term. New members will officially take their positions at the start of June.

VIII. Adjournment of the Organizational Executive Session for 2018-2019 Assembly

- a. C. Wiggers adjourned the meeting at 1:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Catherine Tran
Clerk of the Assembly