

**Staff Advisory Council Meeting  
January 28, 2019**

**Call to order**

This meeting of the Staff Advisory Council was held via Webex on January 28, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

**Attendees**

Cheryl Hill, Debbie Ross, Dee Dee Allen, Nevin Dawson, Jennifer Dorr, Jody Parrish, Sara Barnard, Joni Reed, Katheryn Kinsman, Wendi Potter, Wanda Guard, Roberta Cvetnick, Michelle Harman, Kristi Evans, Jill Hauser, Wendy Dilworth, Tamara Scott, Debby Cunningham, Brad Paleg, Peyton Moncure, Jim Hanson, Vinh-Bao Nguyen, Joyce Browning, Caroline Johnson, Lynn DiBastiani, Chris Dowell, Kelly MacBride-Gill, Patricia Hoopes, Ria Malloy, Lisa Strong, Sara Arnold, Cassandra King, Jennie Schiazzi, Ariel Delgado, Melissa Russell, Barbara Dobbins, Laurie Arnold, Stephanie Mathias, Linda Smith, Lori Augustine, Melanie Abbott, Brett Kinnamon, Victoria Stone, Donna Witkowski, Kathy Decker, Cindy Morris, Kelly Carroll, Suzanne Klick, Liz Laher, Rhonda Barnhart, Susan Barnes, Taylor Garrett, Stephanie Jackson

**Agenda**

1. Cheryl Hill, Vice-Chair welcomed everyone and introduced the SAC Executive Committee. Debbie Ross and Brad Paleg were thanked for technical support.
2. Staff were requested to enter their county and name into the chat box for accurate attendance to be taken.
3. Cheryl Hill began today's meeting with an icebreaker. To help with getting staff comfortable with speaking in WebEx conferences, Cheryl requested that staff state their name and their job title. The counties were unmuted one by one and staff replied.
4. Explanation and purpose of SAC and UMEC were discussed. The purpose of these bylaws is for the operation of the University of Maryland Extension (UME) Staff Advisory Council (SAC) created by the University of Maryland, Extension Plan of Organization (EPO). The SAC shall advise Associate Dean/Associate Director (AD) in staff related matters. The purpose of the SAC as stated in the EPO is to provide recommendations related to staff matters to the University of Maryland Extension Council (UMEC).

**SAC has accomplished the following.**

- a. We started the process of creating the first SAC executive committee in February 2017 with a call for nominations.

- b. The Staff Advisory Council Executive Committee began in May of 2017 with the creation of the By-Laws.
- c. We have asked the entire SAC general committee to respond to online surveys and WebEx meetings as to the needs of Staff.
- d. From those lists we have shared with our leadership that professional development was of prime concern. As a result of this and our leadership recognizing the same need. The professional development series began in October of 2018 also, funds that were available to staff in 2017 for personal professional development.
- e. We have addressed the best ways for us to meet as a group. We determined that WebEx is the most efficient, cost-effective and most useful way for the entire group to meet.
- f. It has been brought up about not being able to go to campus to attend various opportunities. It was suggested by our Staff to have more opportunities through WebEx which has happened a little more frequently.
- g. It recommended that there need to be more ways for staff to network. The SAC has shared this, and there is a possible staff conference that is being planned.

5. The following was brought up by our most recent survey.

- a. How do we increase staff participation in SAC meetings?
  - Share what we do and why we are here with your co-workers. If the ability to participate is an issue please let us know so that we can talk to your AED. The meetings are approximately one hour every three months so it doesn't take too much time away from regular routines.
- b. How can we have more two-way discussions?
  - There is a need to improve our knowledge through the use of WebEx. However, we do have the chat box in WebEx and also an audio and video function. We would like this meeting to have dialog and more two-way discussions.
- c. How can we resolve workplace conflicts?
  - One way is for the employee to discuss the situation with their AED. In addition, Jamie Morris is hosting a series of workshops that discuss conflicts. The sessions are especially helpful for people working as the lead of a program or volunteer manager. More session information can be found here:  
<https://form.jotform.com/81153864684162>
- d. Advancement opportunities for office staff.
  - If anyone wishes to obtain a different position please view Eterp <https://ejobs.umd.edu/> which has a listing of open positions and opportunities throughout the state. Speak with your AED during the PRD process to discuss ways you could grow in your current positions. Also position announcement are sent via email from UHR.
- e. Being in a field office, we do often feel out of the loop. Can more measures be taken to bring more of campus to us? For example, some of the lunch and learn topics are

so appealing, but we can't take advantage of that opportunity when we are hours away.

- Debbie Ross addressed opportunities she discussed with Dave Riegler on campus about maybe using a room in Symon's Hall that would have the technology needed to WebEx the seminars. That is being looked into. At this time, if there is a class that is being offered that you would like to see via WebEx please email Debbie (or any SAC board member) and we can keep a list and go to him with it. The more people that are interested the better. Brad Paleg suggested that if there is a seminar you would like to view, send an email to your colleagues to see if they would be interested so we can show that it is needed. Dee Dee Allen suggested copying the email to Norm Pruitt with UHR as well.

- f. Would love to see the University offer ABLE accounts to its employees and their families. They are set up just like the College 529 Savings plans. <https://www.marylandable.org>. To have the deductions taken from one's payroll would be ideal. This is a savings plan enacted by Congress in 2014 for disabled individuals.

-Debbie Ross suggests to see what is offered campus wide, which would be a discussion with Dave Rieger or Norm Pruitt. Debbie will talk to them initially to see what is offered and to find out further information.

6. Wanda Guard discussed the Dean's Staff Advisory Council. The committee's purpose is to function as an advisory board to the Dean. The board meets usually at College Park with Dr. Beyrouthy and provide mechanism for input on issues and concerns of campus and non-campus staff. The term is a two year term that starts in January. The Staff positions for the Staff Council to the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources have been chosen. Congratulations to Cheryl Hill and Lisa Trice. Please feel free to email them [chill1@umd.edu](mailto:chill1@umd.edu) or [ltrice@umd.edu](mailto:ltrice@umd.edu) with issues and they will gladly take them forward to their meetings. Theresa Rich and Wanda Guard previously served on this council and we thank them for their terrific work there.

7. SAC moving forward -in April 2019 Dr. Hanson's office will put out a call for nominations for positions vacant on the executive committee. Please nominate yourself or someone that you know (with their permission) that would be interested to serve.

8. Additional issues:

- Dr. Jim Hanson discussed Cheryl Hill sending him and Payton the agenda for today so that he can make sure issues are being dealt with in a timely fashion. He would like to stay on top of things such as the ABLE accounts etc. and offered to lean on the folks that would know more regarding the issues. He will review staff's needs assessments as he wants to make sure that someone is making progress on them and not just setting them aside.

-Debbie Ross discussed that the support staff advisory committee in the college HR office is hosting a college wide support staff conference. It is scheduled to be held Fall 2019. If anyone in the field is interested to assist with the conference or willing to serve on the committee in any aspect, such as to help find speakers or topics, she would love to talk to you. Please email your

interest to her [debbier@umd.edu](mailto:debbier@umd.edu) Cheryl Hill added that this is great for staff and an opportunity we could meet colleagues to network with.

- Cheryl Hill reiterated the request that anyone who is having problems being able to attend these meetings, please contact Trish, Cheryl, your AED or even anonymously through the suggestion box below (please leave your unit/county). Everyone has the right to attend. At this time we only get 1/3 of the participation we should get.

### **Unfinished business**

The topics and issues that resulted from information gathered during this meeting will be reviewed and followed up by the SAC Executive Board, processed, and forwarded to the UMEC.

### **Announcements**

Please encourage participation to all staff in any location. This committee was started for staff so that we can voice our ideas and concerns, and have our voices heard. If any staff has any questions or concerns not conveyed in this meeting, please feel free to contact any member of the Executive Board. Again this council is for each of you and anyone who is staff that was unable to join us today. We encourage your participation and thank you for all you have contributed so far.

Here is the Suggestion Box link [https://ume.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_7aKdoo3NOM0JG5L](https://ume.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7aKdoo3NOM0JG5L). Please share your ideas, thoughts and concerns. The Staff Advisory Council is for you.

The next SAC meeting will be on April 22, 2019 at 10 a.m. via WebEx.

Meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.