

STAFF

ADVISORY

COMMITTEE

Yearly Report for 1994

**Staff Advisory Committee
1994**

**Human nature is such that when we face a tremendous critical situation, the human mind can wake up and find some other alternative. That is a human capacity.
His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet**

In 1992, the name of the organization was the Staff Council Research Committee. In 1993, the name was the Staff Advisory Council. In 1994, the name is the Staff Council.

The year 1994 was a turbulent one for the organization. Serious questions were raised in January by an officer at the highest levels of the Saint Louis University administration as to the need for a staff council at Saint Louis University. In the remaining months of the year, staff members had a great deal of communication with one another in the form of memos and meetings as they sought to justify the organization's existence and address the concerns raised by the officer. The Human Resources Advisory Committee became very active this year, responding to the need of staff members who wanted a place where concerns could be voiced and issues could be addressed. The Mission Statement developed in 1993 underwent two more revisions this year, one in January and one in July. Betty Andrews decided in September to step down as chair of the Coordinating Committee, take a leave of absence from Staff Council activities to concentrate on her M.A. degree course work. As the year ended, the fate of the organization was unclear. Without formal sanction by the University, the future was in doubt.

The year began with each member of the ByLaws Committee receiving the rough draft. The Mission Statement in the rough draft and at mid-year were different, reflecting the changes that resulted from meetings with the committee. Both are given so that variations in wording can be noted.

January 20

In accordance with the Jesuit mission of the University, the purpose of the Staff Council shall be to advocate the interests and concerns of the University staff; to function in an advisory capacity in the development, review and implementation of University policies which affect the staff; to provide a means of communication with the administration and faculty, and support them with the knowledge skills and abilities of the staff; and to create and nurture a spirit of unity among all employees at the University.

July 18

In accordance with the Jesuit mission of the University, the purpose of the Staff Council shall be to advocate the interests and concerns of a diverse University staff; to function in an advisory capacity in the

development, review and implementation of University policies which affect the staff; to provide a means of communication with the administration and faculty, and support them with the knowledge, skills and abilities of the staff; and to create and nurture a spirit of unity among all employees at the University.

The mission statement is followed by

Article 1: Name

Article 11: Eligibility/ Membership

Article 111: Council Elections

Article 1V: Meetings

Article V: Organizational Structure

Article VI: Parliamentary Authority

Article VI1: Amendments

Article VI11: Ratification of the ByLaws

The committee meeting on January 20th was for the purpose of reviewing any changes of the documents, deciding where we go from here and looking into the possibility of a meeting with Dr. Hayes and Mrs. Kathy Hagedorn.

Dr. Alice Bourke Hayes is the Executive Vice President / Provost at Saint Louis University. With the responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the University, she is the first woman to ever hold the second highest position at a Jesuit university. She has held the position since 1989. On January 28th, she had a meeting in her DuBourg Hall office to discuss the Staff Council ByLaws document. Present at the meeting were Kathy Hagedorn, Betty Andrews, Karl Schultz and Jane Holwerda. The impact of the meeting would be felt for many months - time to review, re-assess, re-evaluate.

In her memo of Feb. 4th, Dr. Hayes does not encourage any focus of energy on the staff council model based upon the many problems she sees with the document and the small number of staff who have shown sufficient interest to attend the meetings held thus far. She sees a need to have staff meetings or open forums on issues of interest. In regards to the sensitivity of individuals with concerns but reluctant to express them in open meetings, she suggested a staff member who could serve as ombudsperson.

The staff council issue would surface again in August over the proposed mass mailing of the ByLaws draft by the Human Resources Dept.. Dr. Hayes told Kathy Hagedorn she "was surprised that we were still attempting to establish this organization." She felt the past 2 years of involving staff in University committees was sufficient. Toward year's end, Betty Andrews said that the U. S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich had spoken that companies need to see employees as assets to be invested in, an attitude necessary for a company's success. She said this attitude might be a good idea to take into any future dialogue with Dr. Hayes.

In their memo of Feb. 3rd, Karl and Jane (the co-chairs of the ByLaws

Committee) felt 2 issues were noted:

- 1) representation- how do we know the level of support we have from the whole body?
- 2) organizational structure- what other organizational formats have been considered?

The Coordinating Committee wants the ByLaws brought to staff at the next meeting with Karl and Jane reading the Document article by article.

In her memo of Feb. 5th, Betty Andrews (Chair of the Coordinating Committee), took a positive approach and said that even though Dr. Hayes sees many problems in the document and the organizational model is something she cannot recommend to the President, she does urge us to continue conversations with Mrs. Hagedorn. Betty made note that both the Faculty Senate and the Women's Commission had initial low numbers.

Just one month after their last memo, Karl and Jane in their memo of March 2nd asked the members of the ByLaws Committee:

- 1) Why did you become part of this group oh so long ago?
- 2) Is this worth doing?

In the large group meeting on March 8th, Karl and Jane urged everyone to discuss our vision, our purpose for the future.

Mrs. Kathy Hagedorn, the Vice President for Human Resource Management, in her memo of March 2nd said that perhaps it is necessary to step back and look at all that has been accomplished. Staff participation has been on several committees as:

- 1) Human Resources Board
- 2) Parking Committee
- 3) Flextime and Timekeeping Committee
- 4) Sick Leave and Family and Medical Leave Policy Committee(both policies issued Feb. 1994)
- 5) Childgarden School Advisory Committee

Staff helped in the revision of the University Primary Medical Plan, a staff corrective counseling policy, planning of holiday schedules, review of internal promotion / transfer procedures on Frost campus, change of policy for jury duty where staff now keep the checks for jury duty pay. Kathy Hagedorn points out that the Human Resources organization exists to facilitate the accomplishment of the mission of the University by staff and faculty.

In March, it was decided to change the ByLaws to incorporate the method of selection of officers used by the Women's Commission. The back of the meeting notice will include the mission statement , synopsis of the last general meeting and agenda for the upcoming meeting.

In May, the Coordinating Committee stated that their agenda is to have

committee reports followed by discussion of specific issues and finish up with planning the agenda for the general meeting. An attendance sign-up sheet will become a part of the general meeting . The emphasis now must be on keeping all meetings positive with the tone of solidarity and confidence.

At the June 14th general meeting, the issue was time. While those present agreed that the Staff Council was a good idea and something that people wanted, the problem was how to get away from work for a meeting lasting one hour plus. Regarding timekeeping measures, the PCC (the President's Coordinating Council) has mandated consistency in the way time is kept. The tool and the philosophy are being determined with " What constitutes a break" a question. Breaks and lunch time are not mandated by law. They are a product of the 1930's production line which necessitated everyone stopping at the same time to take care of personal needs because one person leaving would stop the line. The University wants to make sure that employees are paid for the hours they work but no more. The present Corrective Counseling policy does not address discussion or recourse on the part of the employee nor does it mention a grievance process. The current policy needs to be more specific.

At the general meeting on August 8th, the Staff Council and the SLU Committees and the chairs:

Coordinating Committee	Betty Andrews
Communications	Shirley Fortman, Jeanene Kreevich
Nominating	Susan Sanner (Sharon Stark resigned in June)
ByLaws	Karl Schultz, Suzie Poole (Jane Holwerda resigned in June)
Human Resources Advisory	Marcia Deering
SLU Committees	
Parking	Jeanene Kreevich
Childgarden	Jeanne Young
Bookstore	Susan Sanner
Smoking	Dinorah Bommarito, Pat Munz
Timekeeping Measures	Joyce Huelsmann

The Nominating Committee and the Human Resources Advisory Committee are the main vehicles of influence since our group has no formal status in the University. On August 29th, Kathy Hagedorn urged people to attend meeting of the Human Resources Advisory Committee since there will be no " staff council" meetings. On August 31st , Betty Andrews suggested working with this group until the administrative climate becomes more favorable.

In September, with the very existence of the group in question, there was a flurry of activity:

- 1) the Coordinating Committee sought input on what the next steps should be

- 2) the ByLaws Committee(following up on the decision in March) started re- working our model to follow the model of the Women's Commission
- 3) a meeting with Kathy Hagedorn led tomembers looking back over our evolution to get a solid sense of how we have come to where we are now

Also in September, Betty had lunch with Dr. Betsy McKenzie, the President of the Faculty Senate. Betsy told her that " Dr. Hayes is very protective of what is in SLU's best interests." We would do well to tell her how the staff council would serve those interests. Betsy suggested, among other things, that we write a letter to Dr. Hayes stating clearly our appreciation for what has been accomplished, express our desire to work with the administration, tell how we want to resolve her concerns and tell her we need a process of staff reporting back to staff.

Betty ended the year saying a compromise solution can be struck with each side feeling they have got a bargain.

Meetings this year were held in a number of different locations on Frost Campus and at the School of Nursing Building on the South Campus. On Frost Campus, meetings were held in the DuBourg Hall office of Dr. Alice Hayes, the Argentum Room and room 306 in Busch Memorial Center, room 111 in Ritter Hall, the Conference Room in O'Donnell Hall and the Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture.

It was a year of deep reflection -accomplishments made on behalf of staff, the ways we communicate with and support one another.