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February 2000 - Staff Meeting Minutes

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Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication
Staff Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 18, 2000
1:00-3:00 PM – 311 Ag Hall

Present: Barbuto, Barrett, Bell, Fleming, Fritz, James, King, Parsons, Randall, Russell, Wilhite
Guest – Edna McBreen

Russell called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2000 staff meeting. Motion passed and the minutes were approved as distributed.

Input on Nominees for Advisory Council Replacements – Russell led the discussion of nominations for replacement members of the AgLEC Advisory Council. Nominations have been received from the current Advisory Council members. Discussion followed. One suggestion that emerged was that we should include four student members – three undergraduates and one graduate. They could be the current presidents of the four student organizations associated with AgLEC.

Discussion Items

Status of Search for Agricultural Education Faculty Position – Bell reported that the Search Committee has six applicants and will be meeting on Monday, February 21. They will forward suggested names to Russell for applicants to be interviewed for the position.

Russell discussed the Wilhite position that will become vacant on July 1, 2000, with Myra's retirement. Should it be a teaching and extension position or a teaching and research position? Discussion followed. A suggestion was made that the position be redirected to Ag Journalism. A non-binding straw vote indicated a narrow preference for the Ag Journalism position. This issue will be considered further at the March 24th faculty meeting.

Outreach Committee Open House Planning – Wilhite passed around sign-up sheets for the Open Houses that will be held during April Preview and CDE Events in April. She requested that faculty sign up and be available to greet visitors.

Outreach Committee Award Presentation – Russell presented Dick Fleming with a gift certificate to the Green Gateau as the winner of the NUFACTS Contest. Thanks was also expressed to Kathleen Lodl for leading this competition on behalf of the Committee.

Congratulations to Susan Fritz as the recipient of CASNR's Distinguished Teaching Award for this year. Also, the UNL Parents Association recently presented awards of appreciation to Susan Fritz, Ozzie Gilbertson, Jan Kauffman, and Myra Wilhite.

Marcia Torr, Vice Chancellor for Research, will attend the staff meeting on April 28 – 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Budget Report – Russell distributed copies of the budget report. Spending in the operating lines of teaching, research and extension all continue to be ahead of schedule.

Edna McBreen joined the group to discuss concerns from faculty and possible interim department head candidates. Parsons led the discussion on the mixed messages faculty are getting from IANR administration. McBreen does not want (nor does she have time) to micro-manage AgLEC or any other department. She will try to emphasize when something is “my opinion only” or is a policy of IANR. She cannot guarantee every opinion will be supportive of AgLEC. McBreen said the administration should help faculty, not hurt them. AgLEC needs to have good solid programs with a connection to agriculture to be a part of IANR. McBreen also said that if faculty in AgLEC are getting mixed messages from the Deans, they should go to the Vice Chancellor and say “What are we supposed to be doing?” McBreen says that AgLEC’s new action plans are very good.

McBreen does take responsibility for the paper “IANR Social Science Initiative – Rationale and Content” and would like reactions to the paper. She encouraged faculty to attend the Town Hall Meetings on the social science initiative.

McBreen discussed the steps for selecting an interim department head for AgLEC. We don’t know how long the interim head will serve or when a national search for a new department head can be conducted. She would like individual input from faculty. Please send e-mail to her by Monday with the names of people you would like to nominate or send your own name if you would like to volunteer. You may include nominations of people internal and external to AgLEC. Leverage Barrett, Don Edwards, and Susan Fritz have been nominated so far. The IANR Vice Chancellor’s Council will discuss this at their meeting on Friday, February 25.

Russell thanked McBreen for attending the meeting and for the excellent discussion.

Barrett discussed ALEC 996 – Research Other than Thesis. Procedures need to be followed and faculty are reminded that students need to make a presentation for this course.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Submitted by Betty James
February 21, 2000