

**Idaho State University  
Council of Professional Employees  
Board meeting  
Minutes**

Location: Student Affairs Conference Room - Hypostyle

Date: February 14, 2007

Time: 12:00pm – 2:13pm

**Present:**

JoAnn Hertz, Jay McMillin, David Buck, Connie Guthrie, Bonnie Frantz, Angela Askey, David Buck, Ray Hart, Graham Garner, Michael Spall and Mike Pritchett.

**Excused Absence:**

Shawn Akina

**Guests:**

Reese Jensen – ISU Internal Auditor

Brian Sagendorf – ISU Human Resources Office

Melody Lockhart – ISU Federal Credit Union

**Call to order:**

Meeting was called to order by Chair JoAnn Hertz at approximately 12:04pm.

**GUESTS SPEAKERS**

*Reese Jensen*, ISU Internal Auditor, addressed the issue of taxes being withheld from the COPE Scholarship. The scholarship awarded to Erin O’Leary Jepson has not been paid to her due to concerns expressed by the Accounting Office. Reese reviewed the IRS tax code and consulted with the Accounting Office. Today he brought suggestions to the COPE Board for revising the form used to apply for the scholarship. He suggested we remove the word “scholarship” from the application form and call it “COPE Professional Development Award.” For the funding to be considered as non-taxable it must meet one of the following criteria;

- required by the employer;
- show the purpose and benefits to the employer;
- that the educational experience maintains or improves the employee’s present job duties; or
- improves the employee’s skills

Mr. Jensen will speak with Karen Sparks (ISU Accounting Office) and advise us if Erin needs to complete the new COPE form if they can process with the current one on file. JoAnn asked Graham to revise and up-date the form on the COPE web-page.

*Brian Sagendorf* from the Human Resources (HR) Office spoke to the group regarding Employee Recognition Week and training seminars offered during that week. He reported that last year there were 60 sessions and approximately 600 employees attending various in-service training and they had two keynote speakers. This year Employee Recognition week will be held April 30 – May 3, 2007. Brain asked the Board if COPE would be interested in sponsoring one of the keynote speakers for this year. The event will be held in the Wood River Room. Several ideas were discussed and much discussion followed. HR hopes to have the program set by mid-March. Brain will forward the agenda to the Board as soon as it is finalized. It was agreed by all that we have excellent resources on campus regarding individuals who can teach time and stress management and we can also utilize other state agencies. Another topic of interest would be diversity awareness. Avenues for getting the information to staff were discussed as well. Release time for attending the events planned for Employee Recognition Week has not yet been approved by Dr. Vailas but is anticipated. COPE will explore the possibility of funding refreshments for the Benefits Fair. It was suggested that Dr. Vailas be a keynote speaker or have him use the time as one of the regularly scheduled General Staff Meetings. The Idaho Falls (IF) and Boise campus employees can attend if they choose, but the Pocatello campus will try to have Dr. Vailas or the keynote speakers broadcast to the IF and Boise campuses. Brain will contact Scheduling and Events Services to set this up for Friday, May 4<sup>th</sup> if possible.

*Melody Lockhart* from the Idaho State University Federal Credit Union (ISUFCR) informed us the Credit Union offers six \$1000 scholarships for ISU students and two \$300 professional development scholarships for teachers to maintain their certification to teach. She is looking for ideas for the Credit Union to partner with COPE members and ways they can assist staff. Much discussion followed with several ideas being offered to Ms. Lockhart. She will address these suggestions with her boss and let us know the results. The Credit Union participates in the Benefits Fair and would possibly be interested in assisting with Employee Recognition events.

JoAnn mentioned the GIS Department will bring a time management presenter to campus and the cost will be \$2500 for 30 people to attend. Melody mentioned perhaps the Credit Union may wish to offer financial assistance for this event.

#### **Approval of January meeting minutes**

The minutes from the January 2007 meeting were approved with the following corrections

- a) Agenda Item #4, paragraph 2 - Mike attends the President's Cabinet meetings and Graham will post the notes from those meetings;
- b) Agenda Item #7 – Margo in the Human Resources department will up-date the list serve; and
- c) Agenda Item #4, paragraph 5 – the terms president and president-elect should read chair and vice-chair

A motion was made by Connie to approve the minutes with the noted corrections and a second was made by Angela. The minutes with corrections were approved.

### **Budget Report**

Connie amended the December Treasurer's Report due to timing of the posting of items to the COPE account. The scholarship for Erin O'Leary Jepson and the funding for COPE members for the December joint luncheon with CEC were deducted on the December 2006 Treasurer's Report, when in fact they were not deducted from the COPE account by Grants and Contracts until January 2007. The funding to Ms. O'Leary still has not been deducted from the account. The amount will show on the Treasurers Report for the month that it is actually paid to her. There was no activity on the December report and only the meals for December on the January report. Angela made a motion to approve the December and January Treasurer's Report and a second was made by Mike Spall. JoAnn called for a vote and the Treasurer's Reports were approved with the noted corrections.

It was noted the Human Resources Office funds the awards and meal for the recognition luncheon. COPE funds will be used for decorations and table centerpieces, which may also serve as door prizes. Awards will be discussed at the next joint Staff Council meeting. It is necessary to coordinate years of service with the award given for both CEC and COPE members as we are all ISU employees.

### **Committee Reports**

Jay reported on the Parking Board meeting held on January 26, 2007. Copies of the minutes from the meeting are attached. He mentioned the potential for parking permit fees to increase and perhaps a fee for parking at Holt Arena.

Angela reported on the Professional Leave Committee meeting. Two employee requests were approved and one was denied due to their application being incomplete. The two approvals will now be forwarded to Mr. Ken Prolo for his review.

Bonnie reported on the Multi-cultural/diversity Committee meeting. They are working on a better support system for students and a task force headed by Dr. Barbara Adamcik is being formed. JoAnn outlined their discussion on policy and Dr. Vailas wants all student functions on and off campus to be tracked by Student Services. Much discussion followed.

### **Up-Coming Elections**

Graham reported this is the time of year to form an election committee to send out requests for nominations, call the nominees to verify they accept and send out ballots for voting. Much must be done to insure accuracy of the votes collected and to be sure all groups are represented equally. The vice-chair is responsible for organizing the voting process and counting the votes. Connie and David volunteered to assist with the process.

### **By-laws**

Graham passed out the finalized version of the new COPE by-laws and they have been reviewed by Dr. Vailas who concurs they are keeping with University policy and procedure. Graham made a motion to accept the new by-laws and Bonnie made the

second. JoAnn called for a vote and they were approved unanimously. Graham will post them on the COPE web-page.

### **Tuition Benefit**

Mike Pritchett reported Dr. Karl DeJesus has abandoned Plan A and shifted to Plan B in pursuing tuition benefits for dependents of ISU employees. Plan A was to allow an employee the flexibility to transfer one tuition reduction to a family member. Plan B will be to do a cost plan to present to Dr. Vailas. One concern stems from the definition of a dependent. David suggested we use the Internal Revenue Service's definition. Much discussion followed. More clarification will occur at the Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> meeting with Karl, Mike, JoAnn, and Wade Mooso.

### **New Business**

Ray reported on the increase in salary being discussed by the state. At this time there is a proposal to allow for 5.8% increase for the next 10 years to bring employees up to the median with other universities and colleges. There is a fact funding committee whose sole purpose is to gather data and input. Dr. Vailas believes raises should be merit based. Much discussion followed. It was the consensus of the group to put the educational benefits discussion on the back burner and focus our efforts on salary increases which we feel will better benefit ISU employees as a whole.

### **Blood Screening**

David mentioned the blood screening will take place on February 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Snake River Room of the PSUB from 7:30 until 9:30am. People must call the Wellness Center at extension 2117 to schedule an appointment. COPE will pay up to \$12 per person for members who wish to have their blood drawn. Graham will send an email notifying members of this opportunity.

Based on survey results, first aid and CPR classes will not be offered through COPE but may be offered as part of employee development or recognition week.

Angela noted the topics of interest most people listed on the recent survey were

- stress management;
- time management; and
- ISU sponsored events.

Human Resources will offer some during Employee Recognition Week.

Mike suggested the Montana men's basketball game as a sponsored event with the cost of the tickets being \$5 per person and COPE will pay \$3 of the \$5 for its members. David made a motion for COPE to sponsor the tickets and the motion passes unanimously. COPE members will be allowed to purchase an unlimited number of tickets. The game date will be Monday February 26<sup>th</sup> with tip-off at 7:05pm at Holt Arena. Mike will give Connie 60 tickets for the game and members may also purchase the tickets by contacting Connie Guthrie in the Financial Aid Office. Once Mike gets approval from Athletics, JoAnn will compose an e-mail for Graham to send to all COPE members.

A non-athletic event will also be funded by COPE. Mike Spall will contact Theatre ISU to gather information about their up-coming events. It was decided that members may purchase tickets for either or both events at the reduced price.

JoAnn began the discussion of COPE assisting the GIS department in bringing in a motivational speaker. After much discussion the group felt it would better for COPE members as a whole to spend our resources elsewhere, especially when ISU has qualified and capable presenters.

JoAnn has a list from Margo in HR of COPE members, the department they work for and their COPE group number. The lists need to be reviewed to be sure all members are listed only once and the groups need to be reviewed to verify equal representation. She will assign board members to help with the review of the lists.

### **Employee Recognition Lunch**

A sub committee will be formed to plan and organize the luncheon and events of the day. The event is planned by the vice-chair. Angela and Connie offered to do the decorations and center pieces for the award luncheon. The CEC lunch will be held on April 24<sup>th</sup> and the COPE lunch will be held on April 25<sup>th</sup>. (*Note: Subsequent to the meeting, JoAnn called to reserve the Ballroom and the only date available for COPE luncheon was **April 26<sup>th</sup>***).

### **Other New Business**

Graham suggested we allocate monies for Staff Council for travel purposes. This item will be placed on the agenda for our next meeting.

### **Next Meeting**

Next COPE meeting will be held on March 14, 2007 in the Student Affairs Conference Room located in the Hypostyle at twelve noon.

### **Adjourned**

Angela made a motion to adjourn and it was second by Graham. Unanimously approved

Meeting adjourned at 2:13pm.

Submitted by:

Connie B. Guthrie on behalf of Shawn Akina COPE secretary