

COWBOY PARENTS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

June 3, 2011

The Cowboy Parents Council held its spring meeting on Friday, June 3, 2011, beginning at 1:30 p.m. in room 506 of Coe Library on the UW-Laramie campus. Brad Irion, Chair, presided. Those present included Council members – Becky Adair, Trish Arthur, Sara Axelson (*ex officio*), Julie Balzan, Robert Balzan, J.B. Chapman, Paula Chapman, Jolene Freeburn, Joe Gulino, Maryalice Gulino, Dan Herlihey, Vickie Herlihey, Patricia Horton, Stan Horton, Brad Irion, Carlene Irion, and Trenda Weisshaar; Staff – Janicca Lee and John Nutter; and Guest – Eric Webb.

Welcome: Brad convened the meeting and welcomed all members and guests and asked each to introduce himself/herself. He welcomed Paula Chapman as a new member of the Council.

Vice President's Update: Sara expressed appreciation for the time and efforts contributed by Cowboy Parents Council members and noted the unique value they bring to the University. She mentioned her recent trip to Nepal and Thailand where she met UW students from those countries, learned more about UW's involvement in projects sponsored by the Colleges of Agricultural & Natural Resources and Education, and the many ways in which UW, its faculty, staff, and students give back to the state, the nation, and the world.

New Student Orientation sessions are underway, and the parent receptions on the evening of the first day appear to be going well.

Sara updated the Council on several personnel changes in the Division of Student Affairs. Robbie Darnall has retired as Director of Alumni Relations and Keener Fry from the Cowboy Joe Club has been selected after conducting a national search to replace her, starting July 1. Noah Buckley is resigning as Director of Admissions to take a similar position at Oregon State University. Shelley Dodd, currently Assistant to the Vice President, will serve as Interim Director of Admissions. Matt Caires, Assistant Dean of Students, is resigning to become the Dean of Students at Montana State University in Bozeman. Kate Steiner, Coordinator of Greek Life, will serve as Interim Assistant Dean. Tony Earls, Associate Director of Residence Life, is resigning to take a position as Associate Dean of Students at the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The new Executive Director of Residence Life, Dining Services & the Wyoming Union is Patrick "PC" Call. PC replaces Beth McCuskey and comes to UW from the University of New Mexico. Searches for the directors of financial aid and admissions will be started in the fall.

A special opportunity was presented to Student Affairs recently with the allocation of an additional \$450,000. It will be used to support administrative positions in the TRiO programs, for a STOP violence coordinator, for a transfer student center, support for the Veterans Services Center, and internships and graduate assistantships in Student Affairs. Unused scholarship dollars are being redirected to recruitment of non-resident students, because Wyoming high school graduate numbers are still declining. A federal AmeriCorps grant, providing service learning opportunities, has been funded for the upcoming year.

Sara noted Bill Gern's (VP for Research & Economic Development) enthusiasm about the substantial impact on UW of the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) super computer. Carlene remarked that UW has unique advantages and is in a position to attract more interest nationally, especially given UW's comparative technology advantages over other institutions. Sara added that UW will be taking a new look at admission standards. Some high-risk students may be better served if they start their college careers at a community college and then come to UW. With access as part of UW's mission, admissions standards and persistence to graduation are continually being examined. She also assured members that they would be added to the list of recipients for *UWyo* magazine, if they are not currently receiving it.

Maryalice mentioned the impact on the community of international students' spouses and family members who do not have health care/insurance. Sara acknowledged that UW's student medical insurance will be re-bid for the 2012-13 academic year. The current offering could be characterized as high cost and low service. She will invite Joanne Steane (Student Health Service director) and Laura Peterson (Risk Manager) to join a discussion of this topic.

Council Membership: Council members discussed the size of the Council and the candidates for membership. Trena Weisshaar submitted her resignation from the Council, effective after the annual meeting in September. She has been invited to serve on the Wyoming Board of Certified Public Accountants, and will not be able to devote the time she feels she should to the Cowboy Parents Council.

Council members discussed expanding the size of the Council given the increasing interest of parents to serve. Comments included how having the strength and interest to expand, need to keep the Council to a manageable number, using Skype for meetings, the impact of spouses being added if slots are available, not wanting to change the bylaws frequently just to meet demand, keeping volunteers involved without having to be on the Council, Council meetings and activities being open to all, the current size is manageable at 20 plus two student members, creating more opportunities for volunteer involvement, forming committees that would include volunteers to address specific projects, and the need to have a job for those who volunteer. In conclusion, *Pat offered and Joe seconded a motion to maintain Council membership at 20, plus two students. The motion carried.*

It was therefore determined that four Council slots are open for the 2011-12 academic year. Ballots with the names of all nominees were distributed. Lida Citroen, Kimberly Conci, John Rundel, and Mark Vaporis were elected. Chairs Brad and Carlene Irion will notify those elected by phone and letter and will contact the other nominees as well. She will send an updated list of Council members to current members.

Recognitions: Brad recognized Trena and Jolene for their exceptional work on the Council and their special efforts on the silent auction. Council members applauded their approval. Janicca expressed her appreciation to John for his help with several Council activities. Council members officially welcomed Paula Chapman to her first meeting.

Family Weekend: Janicca reviewed the draft schedule for Family Weekend, September 9-11, 2011. The Council will meet Friday afternoon, September 9.

Council members will help with the Fun Run/Walk registration at 8:00 a.m. on the Saturday of Family Weekend. Janicca suggested moving the silent auction and Council meet & greet to the pre-function area south of the Ballroom. This was widely accepted as a better venue. The Council discussed the time for the auction. Entertainment (a guitar player or jazz ensemble) was recommended to attract potential buyers to the area. It was decided to hold the auction from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., with close out from 11:00 – 11:30 a.m. It was suggested that weekend registration and the silent auction be listed as separate items on the schedule, even though both start at the same time. It was recommended that it be listed with an explanation such as, “Silent Auction (benefitting the Student Emergency Fund).” Another suggestion was to post a large sign listing the items available for bid, to attract people to the auction.

There will be no resource fair, for Campus Pass Day occurs at the same time and has its own resource fair. Rather than “Council Meet & Greet” a suggestion was to label the event “Cowboy Parents Meet & Greet” with a notation that “All parents are members.” Janicca said she is working with the Campus Activities Center to determine if an evening concert/event might be scheduled for after the football game on Saturday night.

The cost will remain at \$65/adult for 2011. Students are admitted free of charge. Hotel rooms have been blocked at local hotels and motels. It was suggested that parents be reminded to ask for the Family Weekend block of rooms.

Silent Auction: Dan and Vickie will coordinate the auction, but they want help, especially with creating displays for the auction items. Council members discussed the need for a coordinated professional look for all persons soliciting items for the auction. Take along a letter of explanation for times when a manager is not available. Normally solicitations occur in one day in July, with pick up of the item in August. Seeking auction items was noted as a possible activity for volunteers. The Council discussed having a limited number of items of quality, given the short time for the auction. Items that parents can purchase for their students are always popular, such as ski packages, food, etc. Janicca offered to set up a conference call for auction planning. Maryalice volunteered to help. Pat and Joe volunteered to help with displays.

New Student Apartments: Eric Webb, Interim Executive Director of Residence Life & Dining Services/Wyoming Union, discussed plans for new student apartments on the east campus. The Summit View Apartments were removed last year. Eighty-four new units will be built, providing 332 bedrooms in two- and three-story townhomes. All units will be furnished. The complex will include a community center open seven days a week, with a small computer lab and individual mail boxes. Each bedroom will be rented and locked separately and each renter will have a mailbox. There will be five resident assistants. Each room will have a 12-month lease. The

complex will be located south of Willett Drive, with easy access to the campus shuttle buses. Each townhome will have some sandstone exterior and the bikeway/pedestrian walkway will connect it to the rest of the campus, as required by the UW Long Range Development Plan. A creative funding arrangement has been developed to allow UW to concurrently fund other projects. Ground will be broken in mid-July with a completion date of August 2012.

Eric acknowledged that an alternative project is being discussed by a private builder. That project will require a UW easement and a zoning change. That developer has been talking with UW for a little over a week. Other matters under discussion are impact of the project on the aquifer and the need for a traffic signal at 30th and Willett Drive. The proposed project would be a flat by-the-bedroom design versus the multi-story townhome design to be used by UW.

UW will offer roommate matching for its apartments. There are no plans for mixing genders within an apartment. Only UW students will be allowed to lease spaces. The units are designed strategically to limit their functionality (no room for large parties). Rent may be paid on site, at the UW Cashier's office, or on-line. Rent can be paid by the month, the semester, or the year. A \$15/month credit toward utility charges (gas and electric) is offered. Each unit is metered and the charges are split evenly among the four tenants. Wireless Internet service is provided along with cable television service and bicycle racks.

Eric explained that UW hopes to renovate White Hall starting in May 2012, much like it has renovated the other Washakie residence halls. Later plans may include renovating Hill and Crane Halls into suite-style units. The 11th and 12th floors of White Hall will not be occupied in the coming academic year, because that hall does not yet have a sprinkler system. It was noted that the White Hall webcam is no longer working; this has been used by parents to observe Laramie weather.

Summit 2011: The Summit transition to college program will be held August 18-20, with Move-In Day on Thursday, August 18. Cowboy Parents will host a reception for parents from 1-3:00 p.m. on that Thursday. Calendars and t-shirts will be sold, and Family Weekend registrations will be accepted. Becky mentioned that parents are needed to talk with other parents in the individual halls during Move-In Day, as well.

Orientation 2011: Janicca circulated a sign-up sheet asking Council members to commit to helping greet parents during the June sessions. A few open dates remain.

Budget and Finances: Janicca circulated a draft Balance Sheet and a draft Income & Expense Report. Council members found the formats acceptable, although the total assets figure was incorrect. The Income & Expenses Report has no figures, because it will be used for the new fiscal year starting in July.

Janicca explained that all money raised goes into the discretionary fund; \$2500 was transferred to the Endowment in 2010 at the direction of the Council. In the fund raising mailer, respondents had two options for giving—to the discretionary fund or to the endowment. She then distributed a report showing Cowboy Parents giving patterns and totals for the past four years.

The Student Emergency Fund was not used in 2010-11 because other funds were available to be used. Janicca gave statistics on the use of this fund since 2002. In past years, the majority of the awards have been repaid. Council members expressed their desire that repayment occur whenever the recipient can do so. They suggested adding a request for eventual repayment to the award letter. They also expressed an interest in learning more about the number of requests for assistance versus the number of awards actually made.

Welcome letters: Janicca reported that welcome letters were sent on May 9 to parents of incoming students who plan to attend New Student Orientation. The same letter was sent this year on behalf of the Irions to parents regardless of their geographical location. A letter could be sent after orientation to parents of students who signed up for orientation after May 9.

Orientation video: Council members complimented Janicca on her orientation presentation, saying they liked the video and the texting/voting interaction.

Homecoming 2011: Cowboy Parents had a float in the 2010 Homecoming parade and earned 2nd place in the small float category. They agreed to have a float in the 2011 parade. It was suggested that Council members again meet early on the day of the parade to assemble the float. More candy and volunteers are needed. They settled on Poke Parent Pride as a theme. It was suggested that an email invitation be sent to all parents (especially Laramie parents) encouraging them to work and ride on the float and to come dressed in UW colors and bring a bag of candy. Having coffee and hot chocolate for float builders would be appreciated. It was noted that Cowboy Parents Council members usually receive an invitation to the President's reception before the football game at Homecoming.

Concluding comments: It was mentioned that Council members might still want to consider some type of event for parents associated with a basketball game in the spring. There was also a discussion of Cowboy Parents hosting a concession stand at an athletic event, as a fundraiser. It was said that arrangements can be made through Landmark, the concessions contractor. Training is required for those working the stand.

Adjournment: With no further business to conduct, the meeting concluded at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Nutter