

Senate Community Relations Committee meeting

12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Room 272, Hillman Library

September 17, 2013

Attendees: Kimberly Barlow, *University Times*; G. Reynolds Clark, Chancellor's Office; Laurie Cohen, ULS, CRC Co-Chair; Megan Fabbri, OPDC; Maggie Folan, Nursing; Lovie J. Jackson Foster, Social Work, CRC Co-Chair; Ryan Gayman, Honors College; Marnie Hampton, ULS; Linda Hartman, Health Sciences Library System; Mona Kazour, SGB; Patrick Loughlin, Bioengineering; Penelope Morel, School of Medicine; Hilary Scherer, OPDC; Tara Sherry-Torres, OPDC; Eli Shorak, Business Office; Tracy Soska, Social Work; Trevor Smith, CHS; Paul Supowitz; Governmental Relations; Pam Toto, SHRS; John Wilds, Community Relations; Mary Davidson Williams, OBID.

We began the meeting by introducing ourselves to the new committee members and reviewing the draft schedule for the new term's meetings. The minutes from last June were read and approved.

Dr. Wilds discussed the list of projects for the upcoming Day of Caring. More than 360 Pitt faculty and staff have signed up for projects so far. Because this is also Homecoming Week, some of the alumni are also expected to volunteer. There are twenty-one volunteer sites and forty project, with a description of each project online.

Pam Toto raised the question of volunteers being allowed to work on half-day projects due to scheduling difficulties (like teaching), but was told that since it is difficult to know where and when some of the projects will end, this hasn't been encouraged in the past. Pat Laughlin said that he has wanted to volunteer for the Day of Caring but has the same time restrictions in terms of teaching schedules.

John also spoke about the new Student Guide to Campus Life, created by the Community Relations Office. The guide covers civility, being a good neighbor, housing, responsible partying, and many other things. It was used at the PittStart events over the summer, and given out to both incoming students and their parents. Pitt has been organizing block parties in three Oakland neighborhoods to encourage better student-resident relations. The first party was in South Oakland, followed by one on Dithridge Street, and finally the last was held in Oakland Square.

Paul Supowitz brought up the issue of complaints from part-time Oakland resident, Carlino Giampolo. Mr. Giampolo has been a topic of conversation for the CRC for a number of years. This began when he demanded that the university pay to clean up Oakland. Various Oakland partners have responded to his complaints, but he never seems to get satisfaction from their efforts. He has what amounts to a vendetta against Pitt, and is not really interested in working cooperatively with anyone from Pitt. His most recent complaints are about the noise and danger presented to Panther Hollow residents from the Pitt Homecoming Fireworks.

He recently wrote a six-page letter to the Board of Trustees in regard to their search for a new chancellor. In 2012, he was interviewed by the *Post-Gazette*, and Tara Sherry-Torres wrote a rebuttal to that article, correcting a lot of Mr. Giampolo's false statements and accusations. Last month, he wrote a letter to the editor, and Paul wrote a rebuttal to his letter. Tracy mentioned that he appeared at a CRC meeting about five years ago, but since then, we have only gotten e-mails and letters from him.

Eli Shorak reported that new steam lines were being installed to connect Pitt and UMPC hospital buildings with our upper campus Carillo Street Boiler Plant. The entrance to Salk Hall will be moved to Sutherland Drive from Terrace Street. Construction continues at GPSH and Benedum Hall. The University Store is now open and there are computer consultants inside to help people with computing problems. There has been a good reaction to the new Oakland Bakery and Market, located next to the University Store. Nordenberg Hall is open and the PNC Bank from across the street on Fifth Avenue will move into the new hall soon. A full-service Starbucks will occupy the place where PNC stood.

There are new railings and a widened sidewalk about the William Pitt Union, and a new traffic light in front of Nordenberg Hall at University Place. Patrick asked if there were any plans to enhance the crosswalk on Bigelow Blvd. between Forbes and Fifth Avenues. Eli replied that traffic studies have been conducted there and the conclusion was that there was not enough pedestrian traffic to warrant a light.

Mona is our new SGB representative, and she told us about plans for Pitt Make a Difference Day (PMADD). They are currently raising funds from local businesses to fund the project. More than 2000 students have registered for the 100 volunteer sites. The event takes place on Saturday, October 26th. Graduate students are also registering, as are faculty members.

Hilary Scherer is a new intern at OPDC, and she spoke with us about the School 2 Career program. School 2 Career is an afterschool program for high school students, which provides services supporting high school graduation and preparing students to pursue a career and/or post-secondary education. These services include mentoring, tutoring, career skills development, and job shadowing. The program currently has 44 students, but can accept more from the Uptown, Hill District and Oakland areas. Applications can be found online (<http://www.s2c.opdc.org/>), and anyone with questions can contact Karla Stallworth, Program Director, at 412-682-1144.

On October 17th, School 2 Career will be hosting its Annual College Fair. School 2 Career has partnered with the United Way and their "Lights On After School" Program, to host the event at the Consol Energy Center. The event is open from 1:00 to 5:30 pm on Thursday, October 17th.

In other OPDC news, they will hold a City Goes Green blitz on Friday and Saturday, handing out energy saving gadgets to whoever attends. Saturday is the Adopt a Block program, and from 8:30-4:30 there is a free homebuyer workshop at 295 Semple Street.

The Green Team is meeting on Thursday at 6:00 p.m. at 294 Semple Street to discuss the invasive weed abatement problem on Bates Street, from the Boulevard of the Allies to the Parkway. This is a three-year project and funding is being provided by UPMC and an anonymous donor.

The Coalition of Oakland Residents, or COR, is holding an Oakland Town Hall meeting on Thursday, October 17th from 7:00-8:30 in Alumni Hall. There will be baked goods, and students are encouraged to join and take part in community activities.

CHS has decided to skip their annual Sleep-In for the Homeless event this year, and instead will sponsor an event with a zombie theme, entitled No One Survives Alone. This takes place on October 19th.

Mary Davidson Williams gave us some updates on OBID activities. On September 27th, there will be a Oakland Fashion Pop-Up on Oakland Avenue near Maggie & Stella's. Three fashion trucks will be selling their wares.

On October 23rd from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., the Anchor Districts Forum will be held in Alumni Hall. Speakers include Provost Beason and the President of Shadyside Hospital. There will be a panel discussion and best practices will be discussed.

OTMA is holding their first-ever Transportation Fair on September 26th.

John mentioned the Bike-Sharing program, which we will discuss further in a future meeting. This is a bike version of the Zipcar membership program. There are a lot of details to be worked out, including the amount of space on the sidewalk or street that the bikes and bike station take up. Tentative locations for the bikes/stations are in front of the Carnegie Library, Bigelow between Fifth Avenue and Ohara Streets, Coltart Street, and Zulema Street. The website for this project is at: <http://www.pghbikeshare.org/>

Tracy mentioned that there will be workshops and forums regarding the Affordable Care Act, which goes into effect in October. A flyer was passed around with more information regarding the public forum.

Next meeting: October 15, 2013

Submitted by Laurie Cohen, October 7, 2013