

**Senate Community Relations Committee Meeting
Minutes
February 15, 2011**

Attendees: Denise Chisholm; Laurie Cohen; David Givens, GPSA; Marian Hampton; Peter Hart, University Times; Peg Rosenzweig; Tara Sherry-Torres, Oakland Planning & Development Corporation; Tracy Soska; Martha Ann Terry; John Wilds, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Community Relations; Steve Zupcic, Community Relations.

Old Business:

Minutes from CRC Meeting of January 18, 2011: Denise Chisholm asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 18, 2011 meeting. John Wilds moved for approval, and Linda Hartman seconded the motion. The minutes as submitted were approved by the committee.

New Business:

Co-chair Remarks: Co-Chair Denise Chisholm reported that the Faculty Assembly had discussed the evaluation process for school or departmental deans and chairs at the January 25, 2011 meeting. The discussion was lively, and further clarification of the evaluation process will be forthcoming. Denise noted that she had invited Tara Sherry-Torres of the Oakland Planning and Development Corporation to speak to the committee today, and that Paul Supowitz, Charlie McLaughlin and Renny Clark will speak to the committee at a future meeting.

Co-Chair Martha Terry stated that she and Denise were working on the proposal for the fall 2011 Plenary, and were considering Meredith Minkler from the School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley, as the keynote speaker along with a panel discussion. The scheduling of the plenary depends upon the availability of the Chancellor and Provost. Martha and Denise congratulated Tracy Soska on his receiving the 2011 Community Ally Award from Community Human Services.

Port Authority Service Cuts:

Denise noted that she had received an email from a prospective student who declined attending Pitt due to pending cuts to public transportation slated to take effect mid-March. PAT plans a 15% reduction in routes and services by mid-March, totaling to a 35% reduction by year end. John Wilds stated that Pitt was in discussions with PAT concerning this issue, and was working with state legislators to identify funding sources. John noted that Representative Jay Costa spoke to Pitt students about the pending cuts a few weeks ago, and he encouraged everyone to write their state legislators. Denise asked if there was a sample letter or sample talking points available on the Pitt website; John stated he would check the Government Relations website. Tara Sherry-Torres of OPDC said the OPDC was arranging community meetings and creating an informational packet to help people contact their legislators. Pitt has no plans at this time to institute new shuttle routes, and John noted that by law Pitt could not independently establish transit routes alone, and could do so only in concert with PAT.

University Update: John Wilds reported that the work on the Chevron addition was moving along well, with the structure completed and the siding going on. The target date for completion is the end of summer 2011. The Benedum construction is continuing, and the work on New Salk Hall is planned to begin in the spring. Work on Bouquet Gardens is well under way, with an intended completion date of August. Bouquet Gardens will offer 185 new student housing units. Pitt has petitioned the Pittsburgh Historical Society to allow demolition of 121 University Place to make way for a 500 student residence hall. This would allow Pitt to have over 7000 students living on campus, and guarantee incoming freshmen at least 3 years of on-campus housing. Work on the Peterson Sports Complex is finished, and the facility will host its first event February 28, 2011. Eat & Park will begin construction of a restaurant in Schenley Park in the spring. The demolition of the old Children's Hospital is going well with an intended April 2011 completion. Magee Hospital will start an expansion project in April 2011.

GPSA Update: David Given was unable to attend the meeting but submitted a written report which was distributed at the meeting. Highlights include: 1) Pancakes and Politics session, co-sponsored with SGB – State Representative Jaret Gibbons, March 3rd, 8:15-10:30 am, William Pitt Union Lower Lounge; 2) Bicycle Advisory Council – newly established student led group, long term objectives include discussing all bicycle-related issues that may involve the campus, creating a Bicycle Action Plan for the University, addressing the development of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure on campus, and communicating to the wider campus community on all actions of the council.

Community Service Events: Steve Zupcic reminded members of the upcoming Annual Pitt Food Drive in April 2011, including the popular virtual food drive. Denise inquired if a donor could select which food bank receives the donation during the virtual food drive, and Steve confirmed that they could. Steve noted that Pitt raised enough money during the least virtual food drive to fund the Oakland Pantry for a full year plus buy equipment and offer new services. In May, the Pittsburgh Children's Festival will be held on the Pitt campus.

Community Partners Reports:

Tara Sherry-Torres from the Oakland Planning & Development Corporation discussed the 2011 Community Plan project with CRC members. The Plan is designed to create a "blueprint" of how Oakland can move forward into the future. The planning process is modeled on the *Everyday Democracy* model which emphasizes community participation and identifying realistic and attainable goals. Involved community members will work within facilitated discussion groups to identify community goals, and then these members will work to enact goals identified during the discussion process. The Kick-Off Event will be held on March 24, 2011, from 6pm-8:30pm at the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 419 South Dithridge Street. Ms. Sherry-Torres encouraged any interested CRC members to join in the event and the planning process.

Future Meetings:

Next CRC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 12, 2011, from 12:00 – 2 pm.

Submitted March 9, 2011 by Marian Hampton