President’s Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes  
December 2, 2016


President Mercer welcomed the group and noted new members. Members introduced themselves.

Approval of September 23, 2016 Minutes

The minutes were approved.

President’s Report

President Mercer commented on the membership of PAC as a representative and advisory body. He reiterated the purpose of PAC and thanked the membership for its service and contributions thus far.

President Mercer outlined the membership of the Library/Learning Commons Task Force noting that it too is representative of faculty, staff, students, and trustees. He went on to describe recent actions taken by the Board of Trustees regarding the Library/Learning Commons Project. At a special meeting in November, the Board unanimously:

- Approved a revised tentative budget, with defined funding sources, for the project not to exceed $40 million without additional approval by the Board
- Authorized a new debt issuance of $10 million in tax exempt bonds
- Authorized a forward refinancing of the 2006I Bond series to yield approximately $6.6 million in future cash flow savings, which are expected to offset the costs of the new debt issuance
- Approved a provision of $15 million to be generated by a combination of institutional fundraising and capital reserves with the express qualification that any drawdown from reserves will require future approval by the Board
- Approved the engagement of the firm Bohlin, Cywinski, and Jackson of Wilkes Barre, PA for architectural and engineering services for the project
- Approved the engagement of Cambridge Construction Management of Clinton, NJ for pre-construction management/cost estimator services for the project
- Approved the engagement of Prager & Co. LLC of New York, NY for financial advisory services related to the debt issuance and forward refinancing

President Mercer asked if there were any questions regarding the project. There were none.

President Mercer introduced Nicole Morgan Agard, Chief Equity and Diversity Officer/Director of Employee Relations, adding that the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Compliance, was
established in September as part of the Office of the President and is under the leadership of Morgan-Agard.

**Presentation: Overview of the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Compliance (EDIC)**

Morgan-Agard led a presentation of the Office of EDIC. She described the Office’s organizational structure, the responsibilities of some of the positions therein (Director of Affirmative Action/EOO; Director of Title IX, ADA & Compliance; and the Chief Equity & Diversity Officer). She outlined six of the key goals of the Office:

- Work with the Departments of Admissions & HR to further develop recruitment initiatives & hiring programs geared towards increasing the number of diverse faculty, staff & students.
- Work with HR to develop training workshops for faculty & staff on discrimination & sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Connect with Offices of Diversity & Equity at nearby Colleges & Universities to learn what diversity & Title IX programs/models have worked to increase diverse candidates & reduce discrimination & sexual harassment.
- Work with the Administration, Deans, Directors to make diversity a priority at all levels of decision making
- Work with HR to develop a 30/60/90 day meeting with all new employees
- Work to create a safe environment where employees & students can feel comfortable engaging in discussion about race & ethnicity.

Morgan-Agard, in response to inquiries and comments from the PAC membership, noted that her office will be working with the President, the AVP of Government Relations, and others in advocating for public transportation access to the campus.

Melissa Van Der Wall, Dean of Students, responded to an inquiry from the PAC membership regarding the College’s shuttle service. She advised that she would follow-up with PAC with more detail. *Post script: Dean Van Der Wall’s follow-up shuttle information is attached here.*

**Old Business**

There was no old business.

**New Business**

In response to inquiries from the PAC membership and audience, Provost Barnett described the context surrounding the issuance of credits for science lab instruction. She shared that when lab courses are offered for zero (0) student credit hours, no tuition and general fees are collected for those courses. However, the College must still compensate the faculty that teach the courses and the lab assistants who set up and break down the labs, monitor lab safety while the lab classes are meeting, and order and track the appropriate supplies for the labs.

In response to concerns raised regarding elective credit hours, Provost Barnett noted that there is no reduction in their number. All major programs at Ramapo College must include 40 credits of general education, 68 credits for major and school core credits, and 20 elective credits. She advised that the faculty of the School of Theoretical and Applied Science did away with the school core in order to
provide eight additional credits in the majors and that her office agreed that the math and science requirements in general education could be satisfied through courses taken in the lab science majors. These actions, the Provost added, provided 8 additional credits for up to 16 new credits for lab courses.

In response to an inquiry about faculty workload, Provost Barnett advised that Ramapo College faculty are represented by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The AFT Collectively Bargained Agreement with the State of New Jersey currently states that when the number of regularly scheduled average weekly class hours is greater than the number of student credit hours, those class meetings which are typically designated as “laboratories” or “studios” shall be equated on the basis of two-thirds (2/3) of a teaching credit (workload) hour for each class hour.

Audience members shared that while Town Halls were held on this issue, there remains some confusion around the credits and clarity is needed. As a result, it was moved forward as an agenda item for the PAC’s next meeting on March 24, 2017.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:07pm.

Bwg/
Post Script Follow Up from Concerns Voiced at 12/2 PAC

Provided by Melissa Van Der Wall on 12/14/16

Concern

The Shuttle does not align will with the train schedule (cited a 40 minute wait time)
The Shuttle schedule is designed to align with the train schedule, class schedule and the employee work day of 8:30am to 4:30pm. The schedule also takes into consideration the trains in both directions. With these competing priorities, it can sometimes be a challenge to design a schedule that meets all of the interests.

If the Shuttle is scheduled to be present and is not there, riders are directed to call Coach USA at 845-610-2620. This number is posted at the on-campus stop and also the Ramapo website for the shuttle. For riders who have general questions about the Shuttle, they should contact Eddie Seavers in the Center for Student Involvement at 201-684-7593.

Concern

Ride Analytics and Capacity
The driver gives Eddie Seavers analytics on a weekly basis. There have been about 1300 shuttle trips in the Fall 2016. Of 1300 trips, there have been 4 trips with more than 20 people (Trip 1=24 riders, Trip 2=26 riders, Trip 3=26 riders, and Trip 4=27 riders). The shuttle has 24 seats and 8 standing spots. Since the Shuttle has the capacity for 32 and the most riders we have seen this semester is one trip with 27, we have yet to see a day when there was not enough room. If we ever experience a time when the shuttle is full, the driver would follow the protocol to take the full van to campus and return back for those who are waiting.

Concern

There is a gap in serve in the middle of the day.
This is accurate and was designed to give the driver a break. The gap from 2:20pm to 3:50pm is only a gap of when the shuttle goes to the station. The shuttle gap only exists from 3:00pm to 3:50pm

Concern

The schedule is not published in advance
This past summer was an anomaly because we changed companies. Eddie Seavers keeps the website updated with the schedule. He will add language to show what the anticipated schedule is for each semester with the caveat that it may change. We will engage Nick Salter and Jill Brown in sending out information to employees. Riders are encouraged to join Ramapo’s Twitter account as this is where we also send immediate updates to the schedule (e.g., emergencies such as the Hoboken accident or inclement weather updates).

Concern

Searching for who manages the schedule is a challenge
We revamped the shuttle website so that it is the first “hit” when someone types “shuttle” in the search bar on Ramapo’s homepage.

Public Safety has received an update, so that callers can be properly directed.

The website was updated to make it clear to the user who is in charge of the shuttle. The website has a Monthly Update box at the top, so users can quickly find out about changes that impact them.