MINUTES
COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS
March 9, 1987

Present:  Pat Padgett, Tom Kasperek, Gail Jameson, Debra Slice, Hank Goodman, Paul Gable, Mary Ann Eddy, Martin Fowler, Mickey Lewis, Gary McCombs, Pat Seitz, Ray Thompson

Absent:  Judith McNinch, Ron Herrin

The March 10th meeting was called to order by Pat Padgett at 1:15 p.m. Letters were circulated for information regarding Women's History Week and the campus parking situation.

Minutes of the February meeting were unavailable for distribution and will be voted upon at the April meeting.

Old Business
Survey assignments for the "Newsletter" were discussed as follows:
(a) Communications Committee: Attachment A.
  Question 1. Approved as presented.
  Question 2. Question accepted. Response to be amended and voted on at April meeting.
  Question 3. Approved as presented.
  Question 4. Approved as amended (last sentence deleted).
(b) Policy Committee: Responses to be presented at April meeting.
(c) Welfare Committee: Responses to be presented at April meeting.

Followup on letters as indicated:
(a) Policy Committee: Attachment B.
  Attachment B-1. Approved as amended.
  Attachment B-2. Approved as amended.
  Attachment B-3. Approved as amended.
  Attachment B-4. Tabled until April meeting.
(b) Communications Committee: No letters.
(c) Welfare Committee: Attachment C.
  Attachment C-1. Letter regarding merit pay distributed to staff for review and vote at April meeting.
  Attachment C-2. Letter regarding RIF to be reviewed by Ray Thompson and presented for vote at April meeting.

A Commission representative to serve on the Telecommunications Committee needs to be named since Martin Fowler's tenure on the Commission ends in June, 1987. Hank Goodman was nominated at the February meeting but has declined the nomination. It was decided that Pat Padgett will attend the Telecommunications Committee meetings until a Commission representative can be named.

Proposed policy changes to sections of the Personnel Manual are to be reviewed and discussed at the April meeting.
New Business

No new letters had been received by the Commission during the past month. Outstanding staff inquiries to be reviewed at the April meeting.

It was announced that Tom Kasperek as well as Paul Gable, Martin Fowler and Mary Ann Eddy, will end his tenure with the Commission in June, 1987. Tom's name was inadvertently omitted from the March 4 "Newsletter", yet will be announced in the March 25 issue.

A motion was made and approved that Ray Thompson investigate the possibility of his department hosting a luncheon in honor of Commission members leaving in June.

Reports

No reports by the Executive, Communications, Policy and Welfare Committees.

University Committee Reports

Pat Padgett was scheduled to address the University Faculty Senate on March 10 to discuss the progress of the Child Care Committee in order to obtain the Senate's endorsement of the committee's proposal.

The next scheduled meeting of the Telecommunications Committee is to be held Wednesday, March 11. Pat Padgett to attend.

No report from the Blue Light Alarm Committee.

Pat Padgett reported that the Joint City/University Advisory Committee is planning a working luncheon for this summer. They are currently working on the sewer problem in the Clemson Heights area and have developed a recommendation to present to President Lennon regarding the water treatment system in that section of town.

Announcements

Jim Roberts will present a Business Systems workshop on March 31 which will discuss budget processing, payroll and personnel. An announcement will be mailed to employees.

Another workshop to be held at a later date will discuss purchasing and financial management. Announcements will be distributed appropriately.

Adjournment

A motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m.
1. In light of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, how would I go about getting some direction on a tax deferred annuity program or other investment opportunities through the University that would be best suited for my situation?

The Payroll and Benefits Division keeps up-to-date information on numerous companies that offer tax deferred annuity programs. Personnel in this division will be happy to make an appointment with you and help you pick out a program that is best suited to your individual needs. Give them a call at extension 2000.

2. I feel that I am the recipient of undue harassment. Where do I go for help?

The Office of Human Resources, E103 Martin Hall, stands ready to help. Harassment due to age, sex, or other reasons need not be tolerated. Personnel in the Office of Human Resources will handle your complaint in a professional and confidential manner, and will assist you should you feel a grievance procedure is necessary. Call them at Extension 3181.

3. Could you give me information on courses that are available for employees, either credit or noncredit, and information on auditing a class?

The Personnel Division from time to time offers workshops, seminars, and courses that are of interest to staff. They are currently in the process of identifying courses that are of interest and are working toward a continuing training program. Clemson University permanent, full-time employees are eligible to take courses at the University. Each course and its scheduling shall be subject to the approval of the employee's supervisor. Up to six (6) hours per semester may be taken in any regular semester. A fee schedule is listed in the Undergraduate Announcements. All time away from the work station must be made up. University employees are also eligible to audit courses at no cost to the employee. Those interested should have verification of their eligibility from the Registrar's Office and approval of the instructor.

4. What are the possibilities of having tuition waived or reduced tuition rates for the children of Clemson University employees?

In a recent survey of classified staff, this question was asked by numerous employees. At one time another university in the state had this benefit for their employees, and the university was found in violation of state law. Until the state law is changed, this benefit would be illegal. In light of current budget constraints, a change in the law seems highly unlikely.
Dear

Thank you for your letter pointing out a seemingly inequitable policy regarding payment of terminal leave to employees who resign vs. those who retire. This also is a matter of concern for the Commission on Classified Staff Affairs. Clemson's policy is based on state guidelines. *We will explore with University Personnel the rationale behind this policy and work with the Personnel Division to see if this policy can be changed.

Sincerely,

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Dear 

Thank you for sharing your concerns relative to the hazardous weather policy and how it applies to different employees at Clemson. In terms of employment, there are two types of employees: twelve-month, which are comprised of both 12-month faculty, administrators, and classified employees; and nine month, who are almost exclusively nine-month teaching faculty. The 12-month employees earn annual leave and as such are governed by the hazardous weather policy which in effect states either come to work, take annual leave, or make up the lost time. Nine-month employees do not earn annual leave but are contracted to perform certain duties during the nine-month period. Whether they make up the time is dependent upon how the university handles the missed class time.

Again, thanks for your interest.

Sincerely,
Dear

Thank you for your interest in the hazardous weather policy and how it is handled by other state agencies. We cannot speak for other state agencies as to how they handle their situations. The state guidelines for all agencies are quite clear with regard to the policy. Simply stated, it is come to work, take leave, or make up the lost time. Any agency or supervisor not adhering to those options is not in compliance with state regulations. The one exception to this rule is nine-month employees who are contracted to perform given duties during that period of time and do not earn annual leave.

Again, thanks for your interest.

Sincerely,
Dear

Thank you for your interest in the Commission on Classified Staff Affairs pursuing reduced tuition for children of current Clemson employees or retired employees. This is a matter in which we are also very interested. Presently, state law prohibits such benefits being extended to employees of the state. We will look further into the possibility of getting this approved.

Sincerely,
March 10, 1987

Dear

Your letter to the Commission on Classified Staff Affairs voices a concern of many employees, that of the loss of merit pay. Clemson University has appealed through the State Personnel Division many times with a strong case for reinstating merit pay for its employees. However, the General Assembly has been unable to fund merit increases. Unfortunately, as long as the only increase in salaries that can be funded is cost-of-living, employees of the university will remain in the same position relative to the base and top of their grades.

Your letter also indicates that there may be employees of the University who are being paid above the top of their grades. There are only two instances in which this may occur: 1) if an employee has received longevity increases in the past (when this option was available to Clemson University employees), this longevity increase continues to be paid; however, each year this longevity increase is deducted from the employee's salary before cost-of-living is computed and then re-added after the cost-of-living is included for the current year. In other words, the employee will still receive the longevity increase according to state regulations, but it is not figured into the percentage of the cost-of-living increase. This previously-earned longevity increase could result in the employee's being paid above the top of the grade. 2) if an employee is re-classified downward (to a lower grade), that employee is entitled to receive the salary of the former grade without penalty for no more than two years. After two years, the salary must revert to no higher than the top of the grade to which the employee has been re-classified. In this instance, the employee would be earning a salary higher than the top of the re-classified grade for a period of two years. (For example, a department may take on additional staff, giving that additional staff some of the duties of a grade 26 employee, which would result in the re-classification of that grade 26 employee, perhaps to a grade 23. This employee could then only earn a
grade 26 salary for a period of two years, which would be higher than the top of grade 23. After two years the salary would revert back to the top of grade 23.)

You state that "it appeared that since I was offered a pay grade with a distribution of pay across that grade that this institution was guaranteeing me that if I did my job well, then my pay would climb to the upper limit of my grade. I did not assume that once I had reached that limit, that I could still climb higher." Unless you fall into one of the categories listed above, you would not still climb higher. And the guarantee you mention can only be assumed if there is funding for merit pay.

Although this letter cannot satisfy your salary needs, I do hope that it has clarified the situation for you.

Sincerely,

Pat Padgett
Chairman
Commission on Classified Staff Affairs
The Merit Reward issue naturally falls into two very different and unfair categories: 1) those staff who are unhappy with the top level of their pay grade; 2) those who are unhappy that the rate of their rise through their grade has stalled. Each of us agreed to a job description and an accompanying pay rate at the time that we began to work for the state. To me it appeared that since I was offered a pay grade with a distribution of pay across that grade that this institution was guaranteeing me that if I did my job well, then my pay would climb to the upper limit of my grade. I did not assume that once I had reached that limit, that I could still climb higher. Considering South Carolina's tax base, it seems inappropriate that we should attempt to push the pay of some staff above the upper limit of their grade while leaving others stranded near the bottom of theirs. With the exception of cost-of-living increases, each additional dollar above the top of their grade paid to a staff person who is already at the top of his or her grade comes at the expense of the rest of the staff.

What I am leading to is that after working here 8½ years with excellent job reviews, I expect to be at least 28.3% of the way to the top of my pay grade (based on a 30-year working career). Instead I am only 18.7% of the way to the top. Over the years, not climbing in my grade has added up to a lot of lost money and some uneasy feeling about my future at this institution. Certainly, everyone who performs his or her job above expected levels should be rewarded, but this suggestion that some of our good ole' boys will have the sky as the top of their pay grade, while the rest of us just struggle along, disturbs me.
March 9, 1987

Dear

Thank you for your recent letter concerning the University's Reduction in Force policy. There are many questions raised in your letter and I will attempt to answer them as completely as possible within the confines of this letter.

When is Reduction in Force policy invoked and how is it applied

The RIF policy is invoked to deal with budgetary reductions. The first step requires that the Department Head or Director of the affected area determine the budgetary impact on his/her unit. Next, a program evaluation is made to determine the program area wherein a RIF would have the least impact on the unit's mission. Following this evaluation, the program area in which a RIF is proposed will be defined in writing along with a definition of the position classes to be considered for RIF. When this definition document is approved thru administrative channels, a retention credit list is prepared for all affected employees. Retention credits are based upon the length of service and the performance appraisals for the past three years. (Further information on retention credits can be found in the Personnel Manual). Employees within the defined position classes have "bumping rights" over employees with a lesser number of retention credits, all within the defined position classes.

Rights after RIF

Employees whose positions have been RIF'ed have the right of recall within one year, at which time all longevity credits and sick leave would be restored.

Rights relative to a switch in funding from State to Grant funds

The funding of a position can be switched from State funds to Grant funds without the employees approval. One responsibility of the departmental administrator is to determine the most efficient and effective way of using his/her unit's personnel and funds. The employee would continue to be considered a permanent employee with no change in benefits, but the position would be contingent on funding.

Rights concerning reassignment within department, college or University

Employees can be reassigned within their department, college or the University without their knowledge/approval although it would be an unusual situation for the employee not to be aware of the reassignment. Management has the right to organize or reorganize.

Rights of Staff members who work for Faculty members who leave the University
In the case described, every attempt is made to reassign the affected employee, but there are no guarantees.

I hope that the above information answers your questions. The responses were made based upon current Personnel policies and interpretations. Should you have further concerns or questions in the area of RIF, or for that matter any other area, the Commission would be glad to hear from you.

Sincerely,