

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee

SUNY-Downstate College of Medicine

April 1, 2024

Attendees: H. Siddiqi, M. Stewart, C. Kamarajan, S. Rabinowitz, L. Harris, S. Agrawal, J. Kubie, C. Galanter. S. Marquez, L. Martello-Rooney, R. Orman, A. Burgman, R. Gupta

Guest: R. Barbour

Subcommittee Report

Research, Resource and Budget

Dr. Martello-Rooney stated that the committee would meet next Thursday.

Student Activities

Mr. Burgman stated that tonight is a Big Spring Fling at the Brooklyn Marriott. There should be over 300 students in attendance.

On Thursday, there will be a multicultural fair. Mr. Burgman stated that all are welcome. It will be held in the gym at 5:30 p.m. Over a dozen different cultures will be represented, and a couple of demonstrations will be on the stage.

A question was asked regarding the rebuilding of the student center. Mr. Burgman stated that there were talks about it, but they have stopped since the announcement of the hospital closure. Currently, a construction plan is going for a bid for the student center to help waterproof the buildings so it can fix the internal leaks. Once the new student center is built, FM&D will take the space. The swimming pool will never be replaced because SUNY will not pay for it. The only pools they will support are sports programs (swimming is a sports program). There are nearly a million dollars in damages, and the pipes are corroded and deteriorating. The state will not accept donations to fix anything. There has been improvement in the weight room, and the mirror will be replaced.

CEPC Committee (Education Policy and Curriculum)

Dr. Kubie stated that he has faculty members but is still seeking student members. He stated that he attended the Dean's meeting, where the match was discussed, and that students who failed step one were able to match.

Nominations, Elections and Ballots Committee

Dr. Stewart stated that there would be an election. Eight seats are currently available for the Executive Committee and four CAPQ seats. A. Melton-Taylor will email asking for nominations. Hopefully, there will be a slate to present at May's meeting.

New business

The discussion was regarding P cards.

With the P card, you can't add travel expenses. You can't buy any computer software. They have their internal policies, which makes it hard to get software renewals approved on a grant.

The RF card you can use to travel, but Downstate employees cannot.

Downstate doesn't have the authority to change those guidelines. They send documents for employees to sign regarding changes. They're forcing you to sign an attestation.

Old business

It was mentioned that the NYS budget is supposed to be approved today, and some are worried about the hospital's potential closure. At the last meeting, the interest in getting a lawyer, Arthur Schwartz, was mentioned, who was responsible for an injunction against closing Beth Israel Hospital. A meeting was held with the head of the union, Fred Kowal, and they were told that they felt they had enough political clout with the state government and asked to cease with the lawyer. They met with Mr. Schwartz, who gave them a protocol to follow, where he said that what they're doing would be illegal because they did not do several studies they're required to do before they even think about closing a hospital, such as environmental impact and health impact.

A meeting to discuss the potential closure of Downstate was attended by a diverse group, including community members, the Chancellor, and state politicians. Despite the SUNY Chancellor's insistence that Downstate was financially unsustainable and in disrepair, community members presented evidence to the contrary, dispelling the misinformation about lost funding and the hospital's condition.

State Senator Kevin Parker was there and echoed the same sentiments as the Chancellor.

Dr. Rabinowitz emphasized that the fight to save Mount Sinai is unique. In this case, the injunction is not just against closure, but also against the state, which provides funding. Dr. Siddiqi confirmed the existence of the injunction, cautioning that the state could potentially reduce our budget and inflict other forms of harm. However, the committee members reassured everyone that the Chairs are tirelessly working to spread the word about our collective efforts to save Downstate, providing us with the much-needed support and encouragement.

Dr. Gupta, speaking on behalf of the hospital's Medical Executive Committee, reaffirmed their unified support for the letter sent by the Chairs to the State legislators. This collective stance

demonstrates the hospital's unwavering commitment to its cause. The committee decided to meet next week via Zoom and may invite the Chairs.