

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee

SUNY-Downstate College of Medicine

May 6, 2024

Attendees: H. Siddiqi, M. Stewart, C. Persaud, L. Harris, S. Agrawal, J. Kubie, N. Penington, S. Marquez, F. Velcek, L. Martello-Rooney, R. Orman, C. Brown, A. Burgman

Guest: R. Barbour

Presiding Officer's Report

Research, Resource, and Budget

Dr. Martello-Rooney stated that the committee has taken on the cost-sharing issue regarding grant budgets. She met with Sharon last week and was waiting for some documents. The committee will meet to review the document and make a motion, and it will be presented at the next meeting.

Student Activities

Mr. Burgman stated that graduation is a week from Wednesday at Coney Island. Tonight is award night, and the College of Medicine award date is Thursday.

The question was asked regarding how many students did not match, and it was stated that 20 students did not match at the time. The reason is that some students are going into competitive fields. Eventually, 14 students were able to match. Earth Day was a couple of weeks ago, and it was a success. 700 people attended.

CAPQ Committee (Academic and Professional Qualifications)

It was mentioned that the committee recommended one promotion and the committee is functional.

Nominations, Elections and Ballots

Dr. Stewart stated that A. Melton-Taylor opened the call for nominations. The amendment to the bylaws will be on the ballot. Bylaws can't be approved without the vote of the entire body.

Academic Integrity and Professionalism

Dr. Penington stated that several months ago, he presented a new policy the committee was working on for evaluating unprofessional behavior. It was presented to the committee, but he was unsure if it was approved by the committee. Some criticisms were put in the document. Dr. Penington would like some information regarding approving the policy because someone contacted him because they heard about the document and wanted to bring a case. Dr. Penington stated that the policy was emailed to the members but did not recall whether it was voted on. Dr. Siddiqi suggested that the policy should be emailed again to the members, and when once it has been approved, you could forward it to the Dean's office to say this is the policy that has been approved by the Executive Committee. Dr. Stewart stated that the policy should go to the Dean's office, and they can give a date to enact it and treat it the same way as the promotion and tenure guidelines. Even though somebody did contact you, and there was no policy at the time, even if that happened today, no policy governs that behavior unless you write it into your policy how you're going to deal with looking back in time. Dr. Siddiqi stated that the policy should be included in the faculty handbook, overseen by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Imperato.

Regulatory Compliance

Dr. Brown stated that they are in the process of forming a committee.

New Business

A calendar indicating the meeting would be in person was sent to all members. However, some members thought it was to be held online. Dr. Siddiqi clarified that all meetings during his tenure will be in person. It was also noted that when Dr. Stewart assumes the role of presiding officer, he will have the discretion to decide whether the meeting will be in person or online.

Dr. Stewart stated that there was a letter from the chair detailing a plan to spend money and renovate the hospital. When he got a copy of the letter, it asked for an endorsement, as had been done for the previous letter. He wrote back that he was perfectly happy to endorse essentially the spirit of the letter but not the details. He is not just going to agree that all of the money should go back into the hospital without any regard whatsoever for the academic side of the campus, and there didn't seem to be any consideration of the academic side of the campus. Dr. Stewart wrote a short paragraph saying he would agree to an approval statement saying they support the chairs. Being engaged at every step of the way, we think this is a reasonable and good first step in terms of describing how you might do things differently, from tearing a hospital down or having to build something new and encourage people to include faculty governance, faculty and the chairs going forward. He has no idea that that letter got forwarded to the Chancellor. Last Thursday, the chancellor gave a brief 30-minute update on where we stood, and he knew about the letter. What was approved was \$300 million to spend on capital projects and \$100 million to cover the financial deficits for this year. A pledge to contribute \$100 million to cover next year's deficits. That insistence on a Commission that would review within the next 12 months what to do. Permission to think about spending money above 300 million, up to 750

million in total. So, it's unclear whether any of that would be approved, but they're allowed to at least think beyond the \$300 million approved for this current year.

There were no details about who would serve on the Commission, and that's where we stand. So that was the update from the Chancellor last Thursday. It was asked about how is making recommendations on how are going to serve on the committee; Dr. Stewart stated that as much as the SUNY values the schools, the schools are having their own challenges, an commitment to improve downstate needs to include a piece that focuses on the academic side of the house, the infrastructure, the faculty, the resources that are here and that we stress that faculty, faculty, governance and the chairs be part of all discussions about. What to do and how to do it well.

Dr. Siddiqi stated that an email from UUP stated that the commission would have 10 members. Three were to be nominated or appointed by the chancellor, one or two from the union and two or three from the community. Dr. Penington stated that the commission has one from the Senate, house of Representatives, and the Union. The bottom line is that the governor and the Chancellor control five votes, and then four votes could be more sympathetic to the Union, in fact, and the hospital side.

It was mentioned that Downstate has lost several vital departments. For example, cancer treatment and diagnosis, Radiation oncology, Vascular surgery. Dr. Stewart stated that this important has this information was included in the chair's letter. Dr. Siddiqi, whenever bad press bad, inappropriate comments are made by higher-ups in, you know, in politics or the university, it begins to impact us right away. It's not that it's going to impact us when the hospital will close.

Dr. Marquez stated that UUP President Fred Kowal declared Chancellor King could not be on the commission. This is a conflict of interest. Regarding whom has control, it is the governor who will ultimately appoint the members.

There were talks about a tunnel connecting SUNY Downstate and Kings County Hospital. Dr. Siddiqi stated that it has never materialized and thinks that administrations on both sides of the street are reluctant to have a physical connection. This may have something to do with reimbursements.