Notes from the MUSSA Video-Conference, 10/28/14

Present:

- MSU Billings – Julie Nicolaas and Sheri Steiner
- MSU Bozeman – Dave Court, Diane Dorgan, Joan Ford
- Great Falls College MSU – John Frisbee
- Helena College UM – Mary Ann George and Ryan Loomis
- UM Missoula – Maggie Linder, Maria Mangold, Judy Wellert
- Not represented: MSU Northern (Havre), Montana Tech (Butte), UM Western (Dillon)

MUSSA Chair Mary Ann George called the meeting to order at noon. The notes from the 7/22/2014 video conference were approved. After each person introduced themselves, each association reported on their recent activities.

Billings – “Spooktacular,” a Halloween costume/theme contest; planning for professional development including a guest speaker from Kalispell sponsored by the Vice-Chancellor’s office

Missoula – Recently included a presentation by the local MPEA representative at a Staff Senate meeting including discussion of union communication methods; formed an ad hoc Professional Development Committee; through a raffle, raised over $1200 for Staff Senate scholarships

Bozeman – As a governing body, Staff Senate is considering writing a letter of support for the proposed House Bill 5 Long-Range Building Appropriation, supporting, in particular, the Romney Hall renovation. Romney is obsolete and in need of a complete renovation. The renovation will address the building’s power, computer gateway, and handicap-accessibility deficiencies and will update these issues to meet today’s building codes and use demands. The $50 million dollar donation to build the Norm Asbjornson Innovation Center (NAIC) is creating a lot of conversation. The proposed building site is where the paid parking lot is located at the corner of 7th and Grant. Parking solutions, including a parking garage, are being discussed since the NAIC project will displace approximately 400 parking spaces at the heart of campus.

Helena – Working on bylaws and structure for the association; professional development; Human Resources provided information on compensation categories; Ryan?

Mary Ann will try to instigate activity for Staff Senates in Butte and Dillon.* In both UM and MSU, the Staff Senate falls under the Administration and Finance office. In Billings, the Vice Chancellor acts as the administrator for Staff Senate.

The response to Mary Ann and Maria’s letter to the Chancellor and Board of Regents did not offer specific guidance for MUSSA goals. Excerpts from the response letter from Paul Tuss (Chair, BoR) and Clayton Christian (Commissioner): “it is good to learn about the progress and
pursuit of best practices in that area [student advising],” “All staff members play a vital role in these Strategic Plan goals of the board: (1.) access to affordability of education; (2.) workforce and economic development, and; (3.) institutional and system efficiency and effectiveness.” “We think the specifics and details are probably best addressed at the campus level in collaboration with program leaders who pursue and address student success from different angles, depending on the program.” (See letter attached.) Dave suggested we set our own goals for MUSSA and report on those back to the BoR.**

Maria reported that, due to a regional National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) conference to be held in March in Coeur d’Alene, it is likely that the state conference in Missoula will be postponed until summer. Dates will be established at a November 4 meeting of the NACADA board.

Maria reported that approximately a dozen UM Staff Senators attended a meeting with Commissioner Clayton Christian recently. Issues discussed included support for advising, competition between campuses, Study Montana, grants, and OCHE’s priorities.

Mary Ann reported that Bill Van Horn, former MUSSA representative from MSU Bozeman and current MPEA Chapter President, is pursuing two issues on behalf of classified staff. MPEA Bozeman is recommending that OCHE perform a third-party salary study. MPEA Bozeman hopes other campuses will embrace this concept and push OCHE to perform this study as well. The second issue, a seat at the table on a new Montana University System (MUS) Labor Management Committee promised by OCHE during the 2013 bargaining, has been delayed due to personnel turnover at OCHE. The MUS Compensation Committee deals more with professional salaries and not classified staff, thus the formation of the MUS Labor Management Committee.

Maggie reported that there was good attendance at the MPEA member meeting on campus. Concerns were raised regarding the union’s inability to keep track of addresses of members. MSU Staff Senate will continue to support the proposal that a third party review the MUS staff compensation levels.

The meeting was adjourned at 1 p.m.

**Requested Action Items:**
*Mary Ann will instigate activity for staff associations in Butte and Dillon

**Each staff association (Senate) is asked to set its own goals for MUSSA, and we will compile those to report the goals to the BoR.
By the January MUSSA meeting, MUSSA reps are asked to report on what **Professional Development** opportunities are offered on their campus and how that Professional Development is funded. Maggie asked us to include whether there is funding by departments for off-campus Professional Development (conferences, classes, workshops, etc.) Should we develop a template for reporting this information?

For the March MUSSA meeting, to emphasize to the BoR the diversity of staff roles and the diversity between staff associations, each MUSSA organization is asked to furnish Judy a report detailing who the staff are on their campus that are represented by the campus’ Staff Senate.

Judy will send Mary Ann the summary of the UM Staff Satisfaction survey.