PROFESSIONAL COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – March 6, 2013

ATTENDEES:  Nora Smith
            Donna Negaard
            Jeanne Wilkinson
            Carolyn Plumb
            Betsey Pitts
            Chancey Ringer
            Jeff Littlefield
            Liz Grant
            Patricia Lane

ABSENT:  Julie Tatarka

GUESTS:  Dewitt Latimer, CIO
         Dennis Defa, CHRO
         Susan Alt, HR
         Jonathan Hilmer, Chemistry

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am in Reid 415.

Dewitt Latimer, CIO from Information Technology (IT) and Dennis Defa, CHRO from Human Resources (HR) along with Susan Alt, Employee & Labor Relations Manager, spoke to the group about the “MSU Employee Confidentiality and Data Protection Agreement” that all employees will be required to sign in the near future. MSU already has a policy in force regarding confidentiality and data protection. This agreement will be more of an implementation of the standards of practice regarding the policy.

HR and IT are launching an education and awareness campaign about the stewardship of protecting sensitive data on campus being a responsibility of all employees. Dennis noted that there have been four data breaches since he has been on campus and all were preventable. The issues is not just with social security numbers, student generated identification numbers and credit card information. It also applies to sensitive information regarding job searches, scholarships, research projects and many other things. Enforcement of the policy through this agreement will include disciplinary action as serious as termination.

Training for all departments will be provided through IT. Also, individual and departmental checklists will be available to help departments monitor the protection of their data. Personal computers such as laptops and tablets are also included in this requirement. Secure servers for protecting files are available to departments through IT. In the future, audits will include checking the security of all departments at MSU regarding sensitive data.

The signing of the confidentiality agreement could be implemented through the web as our current conflict of interest and consulting agreements are on MYINFO for each employee as an annual update. Key university councils will be contacted regarding this new directive and University Council will be responsible for authorizing its implementation.

The Montana University System has an insurance policy against incidents and a forensic team investigates all the incidents. However, these incidents affect the reputation of the university. In
closing Dennis mentioned that there has been an ongoing issue with our MUS benefits program using employees’ social security numbers as identification numbers as well as birthdates, which are both extremely sensitive data. He highly recommended employees contact their representatives to encourage a process for changing this practice.

Professional council will send a copy of the proposed agreement to all professional employees on our list serve to initiate an awareness of this new directive.

Minutes from the February 20, 2013 PC meeting were approved. They have been submitted for posting on the PC web site.

Betsey Pitts reported on the upcoming Professional Employees Social. Sixty-five people have RSVP’d. The event will be held this afternoon, March 6, in the Leigh Lounge of the SUB from 4 to 6 pm. Hors d’oeuvres, beer and wine will be served. The meeting will be informal, but there will be many opportunities for PEs to share their suggestions and observations during this time.

Nora Smith reported information from Planning Council provided by Adam Edelman. College level strategic plans are currently being received by the council and department level plans are due by June 1. The council is attempting to improve their communications about this process and the importance of each area developing their own unique plan to align with that of the university. He indicated that some units feel growth is being forced upon them at the expense of quality. The council is looking for ways to address this concern. Terry Leist, Chair of Planning Council, commented that the Budget Council is aiming to scrutinize the current Strategic Investment Proposals for their relativeness to MSU’s Strategic Plan.

Jeanne Wilkinson reported from Budget Council that the Strategic Investment Proposals have been selected and $1.2M has been approved for these initiatives. She stated that the process of selecting the successful proposals had a lot of integrity and that it was well-organized and really focused. She suggested that whoever replaces her on the council for next year be financially savvy in order to be an effective representative for PC. Information about the proposals can be found on the Budget Council web page at: http://www.montana.edu/budgetcouncil/.

Patricia Lane updated the group on the University Facilities Planning Board meetings:

    Plans are progressing for acquiring approval from President Cruzado and the Board of Regents for parking improvements on campus in the South Field House, South Hedges and Kagy lots as well as the North and South Gatton lots.

    The Creative Arts Complex (Cheever Hall, Haynes Hall and Howard Hall) will be getting seismic upgrades to the interior and exterior of the buildings to bring them up to code. This will necessitate removing the bridge between Haynes and Cheever and installing an elevator in Cheever Hall among other enhancements.
MSU is now a member of “Tree Campus USA,” an organization that promotes effective management of campus trees, connectivity with the surrounding community and engagement of students. The goal is to establish and maintain a tree care plan. The only other Tree Campus USA in Montana is Carroll College.

Plaques are slated to be installed at each piece of MSU art on campus that does not have a plaque and more Tobacco Free MSU signs are going to be placed around campus. Also, crosswalk signage is scheduled to be standardized on 11th Street and Grant Street in an effort to make drivers more aware of pedestrians.

A TEAL (Technology-Enhanced Active Learning) classroom is now in use in Gaines 143. There was an open house for staff to see the new classroom last week. There is another classroom currently being converted in Wilson Hall.

A brief presentation was made on the proposed renovation of Romney Gym to be a student-centered facility. It’s possible there will be no classrooms, but there will be a lot of student success oriented offices as well as places for student organizations to meet. The gym will not be eliminated. The building will be brought up to code and will have elevators, new windows and a more open concept. It is anticipated that most of the renovation costs will be funded by the state. Renovations are projected to begin in May 2014.

A “Camera Obscura” display will be installed on campus between Romney and Gaines Hall on March 20th. It will be moved later to the south side of the SUB. This is a project sponsored jointly by the School of Art and the School of Architecture as part of the President’s Fine Art Series.

As there was no time for further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Lane, PC Secretary