

Staff Advisory Committee Meeting
September 4, 2007
11:30am - 1:30pm – Dining Rooms 8&9

Present: Gillian Bell, Chad Cavanaugh, Ruth Crane (Chair), Christine DeCesare, Pam DeSimone, Heather Dominey, Tracy Frisone, Melanie Gaudet, Roberta Gordon, Walter Hunter, Angel Hilliard, Lori Jargo, Bettye Johnson, Karen Leonard, Maritza Marti, Kate Richardson, Lisa Sheehan, Lea Snyder, Steve Tompkins

Absent: Ivone Aubin, Jeff Fitton, Chris O'Neil, Stephanie Terrizzi, Courtney Wuethrich, Cynthia Yearwood

Guests: (SAC Alumni) Ann Rockwell Roe, Michelle Ross, Jill Rossi

Announcements

Ruth thanked Bert, Steve and Ruth for volunteering on Sunday, August 27th for the BEARS program.

Guest: Beth Gentry

Ruth Crane introduced Beth Gentry, Director of Business and Financial Services. Beth began by giving an overview of the new UPass program with RIPTA. Brown is the first school to offer a program like this for faculty and staff. Beth's office is looking at every possible transportation alternative and is working closely with RIPTA to offer options to the Brown community. UPass will be a less expensive and green way to travel to Brown.

The communication plan for UPass began with a press release that was sent to 2 dozen media outlets; currently working with the Providence Journal on an article about the new program. A Morning Mail was also sent to all faculty, staff and students. For those who don't have Morning Mail, flyers were distributed and hung in departments. UPass was also advertised on Brown's homepage and there were ads in both the Brown Daily Herald and Campus Connect. UPass was tested with existing bus riders before it was introduced to the community.

safeRide is another service for which Beth is responsible. There have been new maps posted to the transportation website because changes have been made to both the DOWNCITY and RISD shuttle routes. The Transportation Office is looking at ways to tie shuttle stops to existing RIPTA routes. They are also looking at better ways to get to the hospital district and will be investigating more user-friendly vans.

Beth reviewed the College Hill Parking Task Force committee work. They are currently working on version 4 of their report. The large committee is made up of constituents from Brown, RISD, Moses Brown, Wheeler, city officials, neighborhood associations and others. The plan is to roll out a report that can be transferable to other parts of the city, not only on College Hill, so there will be consistent practices throughout Providence. The committee is looking at parking in a comprehensive way to consider needs of all constituencies (i.e., signage, long term parking, lighting, short term parking).

Beth also reviewed the status of parking on campus. The current construction projects are causing several lots to go offline. The Transportation Office is reviewing the possibility of moving students off campus to create more spaces on campus for faculty and staff. They are currently working with Campus Life to determine the parking options for

students and this should be firmed up by the end of the semester. Parking is also working on data cleanup with the existing system and will eventually implement a new system to manage parking.

Beth briefly commented on the Zip Car program on campus. Currently Brown has 3 Zip Cars and is considering purchasing another. RIPTA would like Brown to lower the age to 18 (from 21) and the 2 parties are discussing liability issues surrounding this option.

There were several questions for Beth from SAC members. Gillian informed Beth that the Eagle Street Shaw's Supermarket (listed in the new Brown flyer) is now closed. Gillian also questioned why the carpooling discussion board was not used. Beth mentioned that she would like a more comprehensive transportation discussion board that encompasses everything.

Lori asked about incentives for people who would like to bring scooters or motorcycles to work. Would Brown consider a special parking area for them during the summer months? Beth mentioned that they have not looked into this. Other SAC members suggested looking at those staff who are on an academic year schedule (9-10 months) and have parking for 12 months to free up spaces for this group. This issue may be one for the new transportation message board to solve; Brown could consider having 3 rates for parking (9 months, 10 months, 12 months) or consider subletting spaces.

Kate asked if the RIPTA ferry is included in the UPass program and it is not. She also urged RIPTA to inform all their drivers about the new program (some were unaware of it this morning).

Christine asked whether the Parking Task Force is looking at painting lines on the streets to ensure maximum use of space for parallel parking. Beth said they are considering that.

Lea mentioned that Jewelry District staff who only drive their cars to work a few times a year do not have any options for parking other than the Richmond Street garage or on street parking. Beth will look into whether or not the Richmond Street garage will allow users to leave during the day and will also investigate whether a ZipCar would be useful in either the Davol Square lot or Richmond Street garage.

Melanie brought up 4 issues: (1) the Park and Ride lot schedule should be reviewed (the last bus leaving Kennedy Plaza is 5:15pm). She also mentioned that (2) ZipCars are very prevalent in the Washington DC area, (3) she hasn't seen much preference given to carpoolers in terms of lot choice even though Brown states that in their policy. Beth said she will be reviewing all policies for consistency. (4) Melanie also questioned whether or not the new parking system will have a user interface so people could see where they are on the waiting list, for example. Beth said she is not certain the new system will do that.

Lori asked whether one's auto insurance covers the use of the ZipCar; Beth will look into this and get back to the group.

Tracy questioned whether class B stickers could be purchased for staff in her department; she knows of several staff who would be willing to buy these types of stickers. Gillian recommended that Tracy write a letter to the city. Beth mentioned that Providence recently hired a new person who is in charge of looking at Providence parking in a more comprehensive and consolidated way.

Bert questioned the use of satellite parking lots. Beth said they are looking at these lots for students, in an effort to move their cars off campus.

Angel questioned underground parking in new buildings that are in the planning stages; while Beth mentioned that she was not aware of any plans, Chad said Facilities reviews this option each time a building is built, but it is usually too cost prohibitive to consider.

Betty asked why the parking garage at 222 Richmond Street is not full; Beth mentioned that when tenants sign their lease, it includes a certain number of spaces. The Transportation Office is looking into this now.

When the questions concluded, Ruth asked Beth how SAC could help the Transportation Office. She mentioned a SAC PR campaign and the SAC survey tool; Beth said the RIPTA contract includes a follow up survey for staff but would consider a SAC survey too. Ruth also offered SAC's help in promoting the new program (department contest to ride the bus, bus buddy day, etc.). Beth is working closely with Tim McCormick of RIPTA to market the program. Beth feels it is important to remove the intimidation factor from riding the bus.

A SAC alum at the meeting mentioned that RIPTA has a schedule specifically for the tunnel, "Wayland Square/Thayer Street." She also suggested that RIPTA consider a stop at the Providence Place Mall for Brown students.

A SAC member suggested a Brown Bag lunch for the community on how to ride the bus. Make sure there are regular bus riders there who can help new users. RIPTA was a guest at New Student Orientation and will also be at the Benefits Fair on November 2nd. The RIPTA info line is very good for schedule questions as well.

Subcommittee Reports

Outreach & Communications – Steve Tompkins

O&C will be focusing on a recruitment video for SAC which might include a voiceover from President Simmons and comments about the SAC experience from Gillian Bell. O&C will work with Media Services to produce the video (in the form of a podcast on SAC's website); Media Services estimated it would take 8 hours to complete the project at a cost of approximately \$500.

Ruth asked SAC members if this was a good use of SAC funds and also mentioned that there is \$1500 remaining in the fund from the President's office allocation. There was some discussion that this video would not be as direct as reaching out to staff in a more personal way. Bert mentioned that SAC recruiting has been difficult over the past 2 classes, and this video would be a worthwhile effort. Gillian added that the video would be a helpful tool in clarifying misconceptions about joining SAC. Melanie questioned whether this video would make a difference in swaying a staff member to apply to SAC but added that the video might be a good use of the surplus funds since the President indicated she expected SAC to approach her with special projects such as this. Lea felt that a video would help sway her if she were applying; also, it could be made in a generic way and used more than just once. Kate felt that SAC could use the money to create a new event that would have more of a direct impact; Ruth urged the events committee to come up with some ideas for a new event to reach out to staff.

Ruth asked members for an informal show of hands; 13 approved spending money to create a SAC recruitment video. Ruth mentioned that funding for this initiative (vs. funding a specific event) will be discussed at the next meeting. O&C will meet following today's meeting to discuss this further and do some preliminary work on the script.

Events – Lori Jargo

The Ice Cream Social will be held on Thursday, September 20th in the Petteruti Lounge. This social will replace the SAC meeting originally scheduled for September 18th; Angel will cancel the food for this meeting and Events will take care of ordering the ice cream.

The Family and Friends football game will be held on September 29th: Events is working on securing raffle prizes.

The Benefits Fair will be held on Friday November 2nd in Sayles Hall.

Staff Participation Subcommittee – Melanie Gaudet

Melanie welcomed Pam DeSimone again as the new chair of SPS. The Computing Advisory Board (CAB) has requested SPS's help in filling a vacancy on the CAB. **They have asked SPS to do a broad search inclusive of all staff, keeping in mind that the person SPS chooses should be tech savvy. Melanie will draft a morning mail later for publishing on Thursday.**

Advisor's Report

There was no advisor's report.

Staff Concerns

Staff concerns were not discussed at this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 1:12pm.