

Student Town Hall Meeting Minutes

Tuesday February 18, 2014

Foster Hall 300 12:30pm

Attendance: Dr. Michael Shackleford, President Keith Miller, Dr. Weldon Hill, Mr. David Meadows, Mr. Hubert Harris, Chief Michael Wallace, students, and staff as listed on the attached attendance sign in sheet.

Meeting brought to order by Dr. Michael Shackleford and an introduction of President Keith Miller. President Miller discussed the great things that have happened at VSU this year and how great our student body is versus the recent negative media articles. VSU students understand the importance of giving back and have volunteered over 40,000 community service hours in the last 2 years.

Working to gather information from students on what they would like to improve their collegiate experience and continue growth at VSU.

- **Mr. David Meadows, VP of Administration & Finance**

Mr. Meadow introduced himself and assured students that VSU is on sound financial footing and that VSU has an extremely proficient and well run organization.

Food Service survey input was valuable to improve campus food service operations. Food service operation is currently up for bid for new vendor proposals. Working to provide a "farm to table" process for healthy food products on campus.

Mr. Meadows provided information regarding the new multipurpose center. Construction has begun. We will notice fencing and increased traffic.

Additional projects and renovations include: renovation to Locket Hall to provide meeting and additional classroom space. Bookstore renovation will be complete in 30 days.

Appreciate comments sent to advisors, faculty, and facilities regarding snow removal. Apologized for poor campus conditions following the first snow fall of the semester and assured those conditions will not happen again. Research has been conducted to ensure proper snow removal in the future

Staff Question: Since we are not putting any pressure on the home owners in the vicinity of the multipurpose center construction site, how will that affect the projects progress?

Mr. Meadows responded to the above staff question as follows: The construction will not be affected. There is more than enough room to build the center as well as an additional 1,500 parking spaces and 2 new intermural fields.

No further questions

- **Mr. Corey Scott**

Mr. Scott discussed the newly implemented 2nd year (sophomore) student housing requirement. 2nd year students will be required to reside in Quad A, B, C, or D. This decision was based on an analysis of the number of students that successfully reached their sophomore year. The number in the past has declined. This program seeks to increase this number and improve retention.

Student Comment: The housing meeting in my residence hall (Eggleston) was cancelled due to snow, how can I find out when it will be rescheduled and discuss my housing?

Mrs. Jackie Coker responded to the above student concern as follows: Residence Life is currently arranging a new schedule that will be communicated with student.

Mr. Scott responded to the above student concern as follows: Students should in the meantime satisfy their housing deposits.

No further questions

- **Chief Michael Wallace, Chief of Police**

Bring up to date on new information as it pertains to police and public safety.

Chief Wallace also surveyed the audience to ensure all students represented at the town hall meeting were enrolled and receiving the campus RAVE alert notifications. Encouraged students to also enroll in RAVE Guardian. Other helpful prevention methods such as "Text A Tip" are working great.

Current pressing issue regarding student safety: Nigerian Scandal, financial scammers are currently targeting students to deposit fraudulent checks. Please be alert and careful. Do not offer access to your account to anyone.

Students have also been scammed to activate cell phone service on multiple phones and later being stuck with the financial responsibility of the open cellular accounts. If it sounds too good to be true it most likely is.

Students are the leaders and face of VSU. The community is watching us. Thurs, Fri, and Sat several local businesses have express that they are being bombarded by VSU students; students are also believed to be stealing a large portion of their inventory. Wawa is no longer 24 hours on those nights. Please talk to your fellow classmates about improving these circumstances and doing our part or report the incident.

Students interfered in the snow removal staff by throwing bottles and snow balls at the workers as they attempted to make the campus safe (clearing parking lots and sidewalks). This behavior is dangerous.

In the next month the Campus Citizens police academy will begin on a volunteer basis. Sign up is open to faculty, staff, and students to get a behind the scenes look into pertinent issues that the police encounter daily. This activity also involved interactive activities for a better understanding of how and why the police operate the way they do.

Staff Question: Will the academy meet on the same night each week or will the days vary?

Chief Wallace responded to the above staff question as follows: It's generally the same day each week but the days may vary. That will be determined by the majority of the volunteers/program participants.

No further questions

- **Mrs. Peggy Davis, Director of Athletics**

Pepped up the crowd with exciting athletic related news. It's been a great year for athletics. Football 9:1 and won the Northern Division title. Volleyball team won the Northern Division title and had the best overall record in 20 years. Coach Ricks was named Coach of the Year. Women's Basketball 22:1 won the Northern Division title and ranked 13th in the nation.

VSU student athletes are graduating at a higher rate than any other institution participating in the CIAA and representing the university well.

Come out to support the student athletes, become more involved. Let the athletes know how proud of them you are.

Athletics is seeking student organization to volunteer and show community service at the GO Red campaign. Interested organizations should contact Mr. DeAndrae Neal.

No further questions

- **Dr. Weldon Hill, VP for Academic Affairs**

Dr. Hill opened by addressing student's concerns about spring break. Spring break has not been cancelled and will take place given we do not miss any more days. If we miss more class time due to inclement weather the options are to decrease the length of spring break or attend class on Saturday. The federal law requires 15 clock hours of class attendance.

The missed Tuesday course will be made up on the university reading day

Dr. Hill surveyed the student audience to gauge their preference if this circumstance did take place. Most students express that they prefer to start spring break on Tuesday and extend through the weekend versus ending spring break on a Thursday.

An additional alternate option would be to extend the semester's end. However this method is not preferable; it would be strenuous and difficult for faculty and staff to process the grades of all graduating seniors in such a short period of time.

Student Question: What will we do if it snows after spring break?

Dr. Hill responded to the above student question as follows: we will have to explore the option of Saturday classes and extending the semester.

Student Question: How would the Saturday classes work?

Dr. Hill responded to the above student question as follows: Each Saturday would be assigned to a specific class meeting day.

Dr. Hill expressed the newest Academic Affairs initiative to finish classes and final exams before Thanksgiving so that students are able to enjoy an extended holiday break and avoid making multiple travel arrangements during our now currently separate Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday observances. This will require classes to be Mon/Wed or Tues/Thurs and Friday would consist of long classes and labs. Class time would also extend 10 minutes.

Research shows that students rarely study over Thanksgiving break and dislike returning for such a short period of time between holidays.

Student Concern: online calendar is not up to date to plan when I'd like to travel home to Seattle Washington.

Dr. Hill responded to the above student question as follows: University calendar is being finalized and will be complete by next week.

Student Concern: Would like text books included in tuition versus paying comp fees. Difficult to pay for book and I am not a student that interested in sports or the other activities that comp fees cover.

Dr. Hill responded to the above student question as follows: the university is reviewing a new avenue for students to purchase electronic books for a lower cost.

Student Question: Book voucher limits don't accommodate some book purchases exceeding \$700

Mr. Henry DeBose responded to the above student concern as follows: Students can get a cost print out from the bookstore; deliver this estimate to student accounts to make an increase voucher request. The funds will be extended as long as the student has the funds available.

A Student Account representative explained that the increase request will be for books only. Student requesting the voucher increase should not purchase other expensive electronics from the bookstore with the additional funds.

No further questions

Mr. Jahliel Thurman, SGA President

SGA future initiatives presented by the SGA cabinet members include:

- Trojan Girls Rock
- Firework Show celebration from graduating seniors
- Week of events to include Motivational Mondays 4:30-6:00pm workout, Tuesday and Fridays Trojan T-shirt exchange 1-3pm, Spoken Words Wednesdays 8-10pm in Foster Hall, Soul Sundays (teaming with Campus Ministries) students can anonymously request prayer by inserting their request in a box.

- Miss VSU Orange & Blue week March 10-14th. 10th Forum discussion about Black History Month, 11th A Women's Pride forum, 12th Trojan Pride Social, 13th Movie on the lawn.
- Miss VSU will hold a community service project called #lunch bag to give bagged lunches to the homeless.
- Blood Drive 11am-3pm
- Please vote for Miss CIAA, voters can only vote once

Student Question: Will student be allowed to decorate their hats with organization paraphernalia/ or personal décor for graduation?

SGA President responded to the above student question as follows: I will refer that question to Dr. Hill, VP of Academics.

No further questions

- **Mrs. Menjiwe Martin, Director of Student Activities**

Mrs. Martin provided voting instruction information pertaining to the Home Depot Retool Your School initiative. The funds will be used to repair the fountain and build an outdoor dining facility behind Foster Hall. Please support this effort

Senior picture will begin March 11th – 14th in Foster Hall room 300. An email will be sent to students regarding details.

We are working with a new yearbook vendor, graduating seniors will have the ability to request their yearbook online and it will be sent to their home

Student Question; Which address will they send it to? Will our student email be deactivated after graduation?

Mr. Harris responded to the above student question as follows: yes student email will be deactivated, ensure mailing address in Banner is correct.

No further questions

- **Mr. Hubert Harris, Chief IT Officer**

IT team has been tracking data usage between the hours of 7pm - 3am daily to improve campus WiFi services and plans to order a bigger circuit to increase connectivity. Mr. Harris also shared the future implementation of regulating illegal downloaded movies, videos and music. This will become a Student Conduct offense referred to JA. He is also considering working with SGA to

discuss possibly establishing a university bandwidth limit for students to minimize network over loads. Increasing the network capacity may not fix connectivity issues. The university is in jeopardy of being banned from the internet as a result of illegal activity.

Redesigning and policing internet will begin next week. It is a federal crime to upload illegal materials. Everything can be tracked.

New WiFi network will be created for residence hall students only.

Student Question: Why are updates to the network done at 7pm or 8pm? This affects my homework/study time.

Mr. Harris responded to the above student question as follows: No time is a good time however it's most important to work on and resolve issues at night so that the system is operational 8:00am the next morning

Student Question: Will there be any new cell phone towers?

Mr. Harris responded to the above student question as follows: A new Verizon 4G tower near Gateway, AT&T is currently in discussion with the university. Radio station antenna will be raised to reach a larger broadcast area.

Encouraged student to sign up for the self-service password reset.

No further questions

- **Dr. Michael Shackleford, VP for Student Affairs**

Dr. Shackleford opened the floor for any general questions

Student Concern: Is it possible for the agreement between Ettrick and the university to be re-evaluated? I am a student currently living in Ettrick but would prefer to live back on campus, however it's difficult finding someone to take over my lease agreement with UAE.

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student question as follows: your current contractual agreement is with UAE. The decision is theirs and we will not relocate you to on campus housing while you have an obligation to UAE.

Student Question: Can there be someone in charge of sending out trustworthy scholarship opportunities to students? I get skeptical with certain sites and when it seems too easy.

Mr. Walter Dula (a Town Hall Visitor) responded to the above listed question as follows: We are often looking for students to claim scholarships

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student question as follows: Mr. Harris will make scholarship information available on the VSU website.

Student Question: Why were printers taken from residence halls? Is it possible to have printers available to students in the academic buildings? Laundry facility in Moore hall does not have swipe capability, why?

Mr. Hubert Harris responded to the above student question as follows: Students were supposed to have access to the printers in the academic building but we are learning that that is not the case. I will report back on a update for how we can resolve this issue.

The new one card system scheduled for deployment approx. July will be accessible with a swipe. It was more cost efficient to delay the swipe installation in more hall until the implementation of the new one card system.

Student Question: Can the library hours be extended on Fridays and weekends?

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student question as follows: I will take your question back to Dr. Weatherington, however it has been proven more cost efficient to close the library at different times on these days because there are not as many students utilizing the facility.

Student Question: Will students get a new one card with the new system?

Mr. Hubert Harris responded to the above student question as follows: Yes and the new card will allow students to use vending machines anywhere on campus, access buildings, use for book vouches, laundry facilities etc.

Student Questions: Will there be an increase in tuition this semester?

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student question as follows: Yes there will be a minimum increase

Student Question: Why don't students receive \$10 to print any longer?

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student question as follows: The source of funding to continue the printing costs did not exist.

Student Comment: We'd like more trashcans on campus

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student question as follows: I will take a look at that

No Further questions

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted but April Bennett