

**College of the Marshall Islands**  
**Friday, February 25<sup>th</sup>: 11:10 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**Faculty Senate – Minutes of Discussion**

**Chair:** Alvin Page – FS President

**Deputy Chair:** Rosalinda Sumaoang – FS Vice President

**Minute Taker:** Alexander Velasquez – FS Secretary and Treasurer

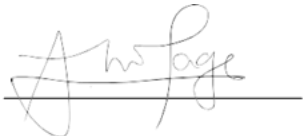
**Quorum:** 23 required, 34 in attendance.

1. The meeting was called to order.
  - i. **Quorum was reached at 11:16 AM.**
2. The College Mission Statement was read.
3. Review of the Minutes from February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  - i. Minutes were approved and seconded with one abstention.
4. Special/Urgent Business
  - i. Faculty Retreat Details
    1. Update: There will be no +1 for the upcoming faculty retreat because the retreat is *only* for the purposes of team building amongst faculty.
    2. The remaining details will be emailed, as the committee doesn't want to wait two weeks for the next Faculty Senate for the details to be shared.
5. New Business
  - i. Faculty Senate Thoughts and Feedback on Housing and STD (Short-Term Disability) Policies
    1. Housing
      - a. Below is a brief summary of the report:
        - i. Most faculty live between the bridge and Rita.
        - ii. Almost everyone pays extra for amenities.
        - iii. Most faculty are satisfied with the housing that they have, although it is becoming difficult to find housing for \$750, especially for those with families.
        - iv. Most faculty are in favor of raising the rent amount to \$900 - \$1000 for a single contract.
        - v. Most faculty are in favor of raising the rent to \$1200 for two people under a full-time contract sharing an accommodation.
        - vi. The survey is still open for responses, and there is no date yet for when the survey will be closed.
      - b. Related Housing Concerns
        - i. Faculty should also consider inflation, as it has not been counted towards housing for a long time.
          1. Housing was cheaper years ago in Majuro, but when the policy was made, \$750 was the ceiling (among the higher or highest levels of rent for single occupancy).
            - a. To increase the housing allowance, we need the official data.
              - i. The official data and numbers can be gathered from Marshall Islands Development Bank (MIDB).
          - ii. The price of food and groceries is also increasing.
            1. Faculty also need to provide the data for this from MIDB.
          - iii. Also, landlords want to increase rent, and other potential tenants are willing to pay much more for the housing that CMI is willing to pay for.
            1. A survey should be done on the average rent costs in Majuro confirming the rise in the cost of rent.


- iv. There is also the cost of incidental expenses that should be taken into account.
  - 1. For Example: Having NTA Internet at Home – Some time ago, the internet didn't consume most of our daily activities here for work, and that's an extra cost/burden on faculty due to online learning/distance learning responsibilities, especially now with the worldwide COVID pandemic and the possibility that COVID could reach the Marshall Islands.
- v. However, the only benefit is that the current housing allowance *is* untaxed.
- c. The summary of the report should be written along with an official interpretation of the data so that faculty has a clear stance on the data and for the data not to be interpreted differently.
  - i. This will be shared with, and presented by, the faculty representatives on the Human Resources Committee.
- d. The current housing policy was clarified during the meeting:
  - i. The College will pay the Employee's rent directly to the Employee's landlord, if eligible to a maximum of \$750.00/month for a single renter, and to a maximum of \$1000.00/month for two people sharing an accommodation when both people are under full-time contract with the College or up to \$500 when the spouse/partner is working for another organization and also receiving a housing benefit.
    - 1. Clarification: So if a CMI employee is already enjoying his/her spouse's housing benefit (if the spouse works for another organization), the said employee has a \$500 benefit. This benefit cannot be cashed out or used for utilities etc. It is solely for "housing".
      - a. Thus, what they can do in this case is upgrade to a residence worth \$1,250 where the \$500 CMI housing benefit can be used.
- 2. STD (Short-Term Disability)
  - a. Faculty should look at this, as it will be taken from the Human Resources Committee to the board in next month's meeting.
  - b. STD *must* be determined by a government approved medical physician.
  - c. When you are in STD, you are still on full pay for 90 days. After 90 days, you can apply for LTD (Long-Term Disability).
    - i. If possible, with physician's approval, an employee may be expected to perform the duties of a modified position description for 11 months – after which there will be an evaluation to determine the employee's ability to fulfill the functions of the position.
    - ii. The employee must intend to return to work following the period of disability.
      - 1. A Fitness for Duty Form must be completed by the physician and received by Human Resources prior to the employee returning to work.
- ii. Faculty Concern About Time Off
  - 1. As it currently stands, CMI faculty enjoy roughly three weeks off during Christmas vacation and just over two months off during the summer. Compared to almost all other colleges and universities (especially those in North America), CMI's semesters tend to start earlier and stretch longer, and requiring faculty to report to campus as early as they do for each semester seems unnecessary. Faculty should view benefits

as more than salary and housing; for if we want to be competitive and acquire new faculty, we should try to acquire benefits such as more time off.

- a. Some faculty feel that the current schedule only leads to burnout for both faculty and students.
  - b. In addition, the shortage of time off at CMI could adversely affect faculty recruitment and retention.
2. Dr. Darren Dillman is part of the committee to create a yearly Faculty Satisfaction Survey (FSS) at the end of every academic year to be analyzed and passed onto EC at the beginning of the year.
  - a. However, the committee is still trying to decide what questions to ask.
  - b. The committee has no definitive timeline for the survey's completion.
    - i. The committee will push for questions to be finalized by end of March and for the survey to be sent out by early April.
- iii. Extra Credit Workload Pay Raise
  1. One faculty brought up the concern that the extra credit workload payment has been raised from \$650 to \$750 for Masters but for PhDs its only \$750-\$800.
    - a. So the concern was the following: Why was the pay raise was not the same amount for both categories?
      - i. Because of time constraints, this issue was not fully addressed.
        1. This will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.
6. Enrollment Management Committee
  - i. There have been reports of students selling marijuana on campus.
    1. Suggestion: When students arrive to campus, there should be a way to screen their backpacks.
      - a. Question: What should faculty do about this?
        - i. Some faculty said that, as faculty, we are not responsible for what is in the backpacks of students, even if they do have illegal substances such as marijuana.
          1. The Reasoning: This goes beyond our job description in that we have multiple responsibilities as faculty, but looking out for drugs in backpacks is not one of them.
        - ii. It's also unclear as to how faculty can screen students for illegal substances.
        - iii. Other faculty said that the students are adults, and what they decide to do is their own business.
        - iv. What most faculty seemed to come to an agreement on is that this is something that faculty talk to their students about.
          1. Otherwise, this seemed to be more of a security related issue than a faculty related issue.
7. **All other items were tabled for the next meeting at 12:00 PM.**
  - i. **The meeting was adjourned.**



Alvin Page  
Faculty Senate President



Alexander Velasquez  
Faculty Senate Secretary/Treasurer