

# GENESEE STAFF COUNCIL

## Meeting Agenda: May 5, 2023

**Zoom Link:** <https://rochester.zoom.us/j/91232708100>

**9:00 – 9:15 AM – Welcome, Housekeeping, Announcements**

- Group Norms
- Approval of April meeting minutes
- Updates from Co-Chairs

**9:15 – 9:50 AM – Vote on two items:**

1. SMD/SON Expansion proposal
2. Co-Chair Election Scenarios

**9:50 – 10:00 AM – Break**

**10:00 – 10:30 AM – Disability Resources Discussion with Lynnett Van Slyke and Jennifer Proseco**

**10:30 – 10:45 AM – Debrief**

**10:45 – 11:15 AM – DEIA priority setting activity**

**11:15 – 11:45 AM – Committee updates and open discussion**

**11:45 – Noon – Wrap-Up**

- Matters arising
- Summary, wrap up, and takeaways
- Good news

**Attendees:** Co-Chair Jon Powers, Co-Chair Amanda Sharpe, Melinda Adelman, Brandi Bangle, Kristi Brock, Jane Bryant, Angela Buchiere, Anthony Campbell, Karen Cera, Kris Condello, Dave Cota-Buckhout, Diane Crane, Jenny Hamson, Amy Kadrie, Heidi Mergenthaler, Darrin Meszler, Harish Nayak, Bailey Nixon, Michael Occhino, Brenda Pitoni, Tacarah Reyes, Marc Seigfred, Sarah Siddiqui, Anthony Siragusa, Molly Snyder, Rebecca Walters, Dan Watts, Joe Williams

**Guests:** Lynnett Val Slyke, Jen Proseco

*Jon Powers welcomed the group, reviewed the group norms, and shared the day's agenda.*

*Harish Nayak:* The April meeting minutes were posted in Teams for review. The April minutes have been approved by vote of the present Council members.

### **Co-Chair Updates**

*Jon Powers:* Cathy Caiazza is leaving the University for a new position. So we are looking for a new Parliamentarian and have talked with someone about potentially filling that role. We will submit that person as our nominee for Parliamentarian if they agree.

*Amanda Sharpe:* Jon and I are following up with Kathy Gallucci to find an HR person to replace Terra. The Co-Chairs have also been invited to present at the upcoming University of Rochester Board of Trustees meeting. And our Outreach Committee did a wonderful job on the historical tour event in April, we received very positive feedback and are looking forward to the horticulture tour in June.

### **SMD/SON Expansion Proposal**

Jon Powers presented the Expansion Proposal for a Council vote. *Summary of proposal: The GSC will expand the number of reps from 30 to 45 effective during the standard 2023 election cycle, and the expansion will include eligible staff within SMD and SON. The additional districts will be incorporated into our current Council structure, and an ad hoc evaluation committee will be charged with researching and recommending possible Council operational and organizational changes.*

*Kristi Brock:* I'm still concerned about whether Eastman Institute for Oral Health (EIOH) is included or not.

*Jon Powers:* We have been trying to get clarity on why they are not included. As written, this does not include them. Based on conversations with Kathy and Sarah, from an admin standpoint they are not included in this next step.

**Vote Results:** 22 in favor, two opposed, one abstained. The motion carries and the Council will move forward with the SMD/SON Expansion as outlined in the Expansion Proposal.

### **Proposed Bylaws Changes**

#### **Bylaws proposal #1**

Jon Powers presented a proposal to add to section B. Officers i. Co-Chairs: "*h. Shall have served on the Council for at least one year prior to being elected.*"

*Marc Seigfred:* Would we still plan on having the Co-Chair elected at the first meeting after orientation?

*Jon Powers:* Yes, the Co-Chair would still be selected at the October meeting.

*Melinda Adelman:* How did you arrive at one year? That seems to exclude people who come in mid-year elections.

*Jon Powers:* This is just one year of experience, it does not have to be the year immediately prior. Personally, I feel that half a year on the Council might not give someone a full picture of how the Council works.

Per recommendations of present Council members, Jon Powers edited the proposed addition to read

*“Shall have served on the Council for at least one year, at any time, prior to being elected.”*

*There was discussion about whether this rule excludes new SMD/SON members. That was not the intention, the one-year rule is intended to ensure that Council members have enough experience, context, and knowledge of Council operations before assuming a leadership role.*

**Vote Results:** 25 in favor, one opposed. The motion carries and this change will be made to the bylaws.

### Bylaws proposal #2

Jon Powers presented a proposal to change Section II. Membership. A. v. to *“Members who are elected council Co-Chair shall serve their first year as both a Co-chair and a district representative. In their second year, they shall serve solely as a Co-Chair, but may choose to remain as an ex officio member of their original district through the end of their Co-Chair term. They shall remain a voting member of the Council.”*

*Marc Seigfred:* Why would a sitting Co-Chair not be able to run again if they wanted to continue as a district representative? Is this intended to prevent them from running for another term while sitting as Co-Chair?

*Amanda Sharpe:* That is not the intention, this was proposed based on the workload of the Co-Chair role, to free them up to take on more leadership duties while allowing someone else to take the district seat to represent constituents.

*Marc Seigfred:* I’m concerned that the Co-Chair could potentially be unable to run again as a Council member, for example in one-member districts if there is no opening to run.

*Melinda Adelman:* I’m concerned about the Co-Chair remaining a voting member on the Council if they’re no longer a district representative.

*Jon Powers:* I think it was just a matter of, if we indicate they are not a voting member, it will cascade into a few other bylaws changes where we would have to clarify “voting members” v “members.” And the Co-Chair could vote in case of breaking tied votes.

*The Council has determined that this proposal will be tabled for further discussion.*

### Bylaws proposal #3

Jon Powers presented a proposal to add to Section II. Membership A. v. *“a. Should a Co-Chair term shorten or lengthen a representative’s district term, the remainder of the term shall be treated as a vacated seat, as outlined in II. A. iv.”*

*The Council has determined that this proposal will be tabled for further discussion.*

### **Presentation from Lynnett Van Slyke and Jen Proseco**

*Lynnett Van Slyke:* I serve as the Associate Vice Provost for Disability Compliance, and I’m responsible for the institution’s responsibility and commitment to providing reasonable accommodations for our students, faculty, staff, and guests of the university.

*Jen Proseco:* I’m the Director of the Office of Disability Resources, and I work under Lynnett. Our office works with students on accommodation requests, but we do a number of different things as well for and in collaboration with faculty and staff. Additionally, we provide consultation and workshops as needed on accessibility and universal design.

*Amanda Sharpe:* What does the accommodations process look like for an employee?

*Lynnett Van Slyke:* The Americans with Disabilities Act is the primary legislation that requires the university to provide reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities. So the university is required to engage in an interactive dialogue with any employee who make it known that they believe they have a medical condition that would qualify as a disability that necessitates reasonable accommodations. We primarily use our HR business partners as our first point of contact with an employee who may need an accommodation. At that point, the HR business partner may reach out to me, and we'll send the individual a set of forms that we ask them to fill out with their medical provider. The HR business partner can provide the accommodation if it's a simple request (Ex. a phone with amplification for an employee who uses hearing aids). For more complex requests, the HR business partner would reach out to me (Ex. remote work requests).

*Jane Bryant:* If you receive a lot of similar accommodation requests, is there any effort to integrate that access more broadly?

*Lynnett Van Slyke:* The only accommodation I can think of that has benefitted many staff is a hybrid work schedule. With that said, IOEI is taking initiative on integrating disability culture within the institution.

*Jon Powers:* My understanding is that whether it's a student or a staff accommodation request, that it's the department's responsibility as far as the financial component. Is that correct, and if so, are there funds available at a university level to assist?

*Lynnett Van Slyke:* You are correct, the department is required to cover the cost. That said, we don't have a "central fund" to cover the cost of accommodations, but there is some ADA money within facilities that's earmarked for upgrading and retro-fitting buildings, pathways, and signage. But any significant funding requests will move up the chain for consideration and will be granted as necessary.

*Kristi Brock:* How are employees informed that that is the process to request an accommodation? Are there guidelines to assure that these requests are documented? How are managers informed/trained on this process?

*Lynnett Van Slyke:* We rely on managers communicating with their HR business partners.

*Rebecca Walters:* We do a lot of training with our business partners to make sure they're equipped to partner with managers, and we also speak at different manager forums about how to follow this process, and we partner closely with Lynnett on that.

*Kristi Brock:* What about the requests that don't make it to HR business partners?

*Rebecca Walters:* That's a valid point, and we do need to bulk up our manager training on this topic.

*Amanda Sharpe:* We've identified an opportunity where the GSC can be helpful in communicating this to our constituents.

*Lynnett Van Slyke:* Please share with your colleagues, both in management and not, that if someone is requesting something unusual and that person ties the request to any sort of medical or mental health conditions, they should call me and I would be more than happy to walk them through the process. At the end of the day, reasonable accommodations do allow us to include individuals with disabilities and diversify our workforce.

*Jen Proseco:* Do please spread the word that "accessibility is everyone's responsibility," and there is no

wrong reason to call our office. We often work with individuals who don't have the necessary "documentation" they might think they need to start these conversations, but we want to have these conversations regardless to figure out what's possible.

## **Debrief**

*Jane Bryant:* It's good to hear that the Office of Equity and Inclusion seems to be having some sort of stuff in the works with disability related topics. The GSC can work with them more directly on how to build up staff representation.

*Joe Williams:* In dining services, no one knows who to contact about these accommodation requests. For a long time we didn't have an HR business partner available to us. Now I can go back and spread the word about who to contact for these requests. They might also be a great resource for our welcome back event.

*Bailey Nixon:* I really appreciated this presentation. One thing is that they often give us information on what students need, but they don't always realize we're also here to advocate for our staff member constituents.

*Dave Cota-Buckhout:* There's an issue of visibility, and how these resources are advertised. The University needs to do a better job of letting people know these services are available.

*Jon Powers:* There's a lack of supervisor and manager training overall.

*Jane Bryant:* It would be great if the GSC could move it beyond compliance.

*Amanda Sharpe:* Brandi will put Lynnett and Jen's contact info in Teams. Also, it would be helpful for districts to communicate out where to find HR business partner info to help in these types of situations.

## **DEIA Activity**

*Jane Bryant:* I think defining our terms is important. We should establish what diversity, equity, and inclusion means for our group. This is a starting point to begin to define what our priorities are, and what we want our DEI to mean to us and others. We should also name some actions that might make sense for us to take with our mission and responsibilities in mind. The end goal is to have a statement about our DEI priorities, a list of goals that includes delegations of responsibilities, a structure to regularly establish our goals, and a structure to achieve our goals.

*Jane led the GSC in an activity focused on DEI utilizing padlet to gather everyone's ideas. She will put the link in Teams so we can brainstorm and collaborate further.*

## **GSC Committee Updates**

*Bailey Nixon:* I am the Chair of the Outreach & Engagement Committee. The recent campus historical tour sold out; we had about 17 attendees. We had some additional guests join us at the reception. This was the first event in our outreach series. We have our horticulture tour coming up, and we can accommodate more people (~55) on that tour. Kristi has been the point person for coordinating that with Jon McIntyre.

*Melinda Adelman:* For Outreach & Engagement: I would love to see events to welcome new employees since we all know orientation/onboarding is not the greatest. Maybe regular lunches or coffee hours so that new staff can meet their GSC reps and learn about current initiatives, give them an opportunity

to ask questions they don't otherwise know where to direct, build their network, etc.

*Dave Cota-Buckhout:* The Professional Development Committee met last Friday. Michelle Lewis and Lisa from URMC attended. We discussed performance evaluations during this meeting, and how this will connect with the new URHR system, and everything related to CPM. We're still gathering feedback related to the performance eval process.

*Kris Condello:* Future of Work committee meets once a month, and we are re-defining what our committee means. Parking, onboarding, CPM, Workday, and One University are a few topics our committee has explored. We've been using SMART Goals to organize our conversations, and identifying who we might need to connect with. We're still getting our footing but starting to gain some traction. My ask to the Council is what are topics we should explore? Please share any feedback in Teams.

*Melinda Adelman:* Maybe as the grant Jen mentioned about universal design gets up and running, we could explore how to incorporate this to make the future of work more accessible.

*Jon Powers:* If anyone is serving on any external committees and wants to share an update, send the Co-Chairs and Brandi an email to request some time on our next meeting agenda.

### **Wrap-Up**

*Amanda Sharpe:* IOEI reached out to us about their Meliora values committee. No one from the GSC has expressed an interest in serving so far. We will ask for more specifics regarding topics and time commitment and will share that in Teams. We also need to form an orientation committee. We will have the orientation at the Advancement Center. Who do we want to have as a guest? If you have interest in helping with orientation let us know.

*Jon Powers:* Now that the expansion vote has passed, we need to form an Expansion Evaluation Committee to complete an operational evaluation and provide findings to the Council in February 2024. If you are interested in serving on this committee, send a brief statement of interest to Jon and Amanda. The committee will involve the new members from SMD/SON once they join.

*Harish Nayak:* I was invited to join the group that looked at software vendors to conduct an engagement survey for all staff. This will happen sometime in early 2025. We looked at Press Ganey, Qualtrics, Peakon (from Workday). Our committee finished the vendor presentations and offered our feedback to HR, who will discuss with senior leadership.

*Good news:* Angela Buchiere and Michael Occhino defended their PhDs. Bailey Nixon completed her MBA.