University Senate Budget Committee Meeting

August 29, 2019 at 1:30

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Unil Perera.

Present were: Jaye Atkinson, Perry Binder, David Cheshier, Dai Dajun, Solomon Fesseha, Mark Flowers, Sujay Galen, Marolyn Lucy Gentles, Xiaochun He, Julie Kerlin, Nancy Kropf, Joanne Lee-Joynner, Tony Lemieux, Suazette Mooring, Eddy Nahmia, Joe Patterson, Bruce Pilling, Jerry Rackliffe, Rose Sevcik, Andrey Shilnikov, Jeff Steely, Carla Tanguay, Baozhong Wang
Web ex participants were: Daniel Crimmins, Kris Niedringhaus, Ann Mallard, Scott Jacques
Guests: Chief Joseph Spillane

Planned on the agenda was the approval of the April 25, 2019 minutes, update on ORP/TRS report, announcements of upcoming speakers, Dr. Rackliffe speaking on next year’s budget and any old/new business.

Dr. Unil Perera spoke about the ORP vs. TRS issue. GSU has 3,547 TRS vs. 1,900 ORP members and asked Dr. Jerry Rackliffe to speak further about the differences.

Dr. Jerry Rackliffe stated that the retirement issue is discussed with the Board of Regents each year. Our most important issue is retaining the great faculty/staff that we have in place. The BOR seemed receptive this year to the pitch made to them. However, the state auditor reviewed the rules and was concerned about the 9.24% for ORP (it was 14.27% at one time) and found more was being given to TRS. The law states that the differential you are supposed to pay should go into TRS. For all faculty and staff that chose to leave TRS and move into ORP that would make TRS less strong. The conversion from TRS to ORP happened in 1990-91 and some did choose the option. In 2001, all the prior differential money was given to TRS, not the employee. By 2001, all the prior adjustment needed to be made was back into TRS and was fully funded. Therefore, we did make differential payment for almost 10 years. Once funded we stopped and did not have to make any more payments.

When the recession hit in 2008-2009, TRS inverts again and is not 100% funded. It was 78% funded and in theory by the previous law we had to fund it fully again. The BOR says it has to do with the recession and the mandated law stated that is was to be taken care of by 2001. GSU was concerned about getting an invoice for $17M. For FY19 however we did not have to fund the difference. To date the decision made is that those who were hired in the early 1990s, the difference may have to be made up but those who started working later are putting less of a burden on the system and we would not have to pay the difference, so it is still to be determined. The difference in cost would be $17M vs. less than $1M.

The budget hearing will be held again next year, and it will be readdressed. The senate budget committee should not only look at the financial numbers but make the case of looking at numbers of faculty retention. It cannot just be about equity. One previous member (Joann Maria Lee Joyner) of the ORP/TRS subcommittee and two members (David Cheshier and Jaye Atkinson who are also members of the Senate Faculty Affairs) volunteered to be the members of the new ORP/TRS committee. If additional members would like to participate, please contact any of those three or the senate budget chair.
Chief Spillane spoke briefly and stated he will make a presentation on September 19 going into detail about what the police department does and does not spend their budget money on. Some of the systems he, Jerry and IIT are working on, such as camera systems, etc. that have deteriorated and need to be updated. A question was raised about mental health issues being addressed, and he will speak on that in his presentation. Scooters are an issue on campus and the Georgia State police department are waiting on the City of Atlanta police department rules to be enforced.

Dr. Rackliffe spoke of the budget and what was requested to be funded for FY20 and what was actually funded. A total of 13 items were requested for $9.131M. The total allocated was $12.42M. Another four items for a total of $4.53M were also requested.

Considerations for strategic priorities as requested by Senate Research and Budget and allocated by President Becker:

- Merit pool: $3.8M requested and allocated
- Next Gen: $1.69M requested, $1.552M allocated
- Police: $500K requested, $340,850 allocated
- COAS unmet demand: $500K requested, $675K allocated
- Occupational therapy: $441K requested, $270K allocated
- Summer tuition sharing: $250K requested, $259,613K allocated
- Faculty promotion pool: $250K requested, $243,052K allocated
- Infrastructure: $500K requested, $545,500K allocated (includes $235K research)

Zero money allocated:

- Research initiation grants: $200K requested, $0 allocated
- Dissertation grants: $50K requested, $0 allocated
- Summer faculty research: $300K requested, $0 allocated
- Graduate student healthcare: $300-500K requested, $0 allocated

Money not factored into original budget consideration by Senate Research and Budget:

- Cybersecurity: $0 requested, $945,000K allocated
- Gender salary study plan/adj $0 requested, $372,000K allocated
- Computer science: $0 requested, $270,000K allocated
- Research commitments: $0 requested, $2,947,500K allocated

Regarding financial commitments going forward, they must be presented for approval to the Vice President of their area, which will then be forwarded to Provost Hensel and to President Becker for final approval to avoid unknown commitments in the future. Dr. Perera mentioned that one member should be elected for the MRRF committee from the Senate Budget membership during the September 19th meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30

Respectfully submitted by Julie Lawson.