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Board of Trustees Personnel and Employee Relations Committee September 27, 1977

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UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

September 27, 1977
Machias, Maine

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DATE: 11/29/77

CLERK: _____

PERSONNEL & EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

PRESENT: Chairman Francis Brown and Thomas Monaghan. Other Trustees: Bernard Carpenter. Staff: William Sullivan, Samuel D'Amico, Paul Frinsko, Sumner Bernstein. Others present for part of the meeting: Richard Eustis, Russell Smith, Howard Neville, Timothy Brooks, Donald Beattie, Becky Fisher, Daniel O'Leary, Sandra Bovard, Alayne Willard, Chairman of Classified Employees Liaison Council and other Council spokespersons; Trustees Susan Kominsky and Elizabeth Russell; Robert Binswanger, Mary Ann Haas; press.

Chairman Brown convened the meeting. On motion made and seconded, the minutes of the Personnel and Employee Relations Committee meeting of July 19, 1977 were approved as circulated.

Classified Employee Handbook Revision. Mr. D'Amico reported that revision of the Classified Employees Handbook is underway, to incorporate the policy adopted by the Board at the July meeting which provides for an increase of at least five percent for classified employees on promotion to jobs with higher classification.

Professional Employees Liaison Council. Mr. D'Amico announced that the PELC, which has been reactivated to provide representation for professional employees, is drafting a constitution and information copies were distributed to members of the Committee.

Criteria for Merit Increases. Mr. Sullivan distributed copies of a statistical profile of professional merit increases along with an outline of criteria used by the Campuses for personnel evaluation. The material documented the differential distribution of merit increases mandated by Board action at the July meeting. Mr. Brown noted that grievance processes were available at all Campuses which could be utilized by any employees who felt they had not been treated fairly.

Appointment of Police Officers. The Committee reviewed and agreed to report favorably on recommendations for appointment of four police officers at the Orono Campus.

Biweekly Pay Schedule. Mr. Brown welcomed spokespersons from the Classified Employees Liaison Council who had been granted permission to appear before the Committee to record their opposition to an upcoming change in the classified employee pay schedules from the current weekly or monthly basis to a uniform biweekly basis. Mrs. Alayne Willard, Chairman, outlined employee objections to the new schedule and requested that the changeover be delayed until after the first of the year to provide time for employees to be fully informed about the new system and time for them to plan and budget for the transition period. She reported

that she had met with Vice Chancellor Sullivan to discuss the matter and that the original schedule had been modified to eliminate some of the objections. She thought, however, that inadequate notice had been given which would create hardships for employees, particularly in the lower wage classifications, and that these hardships could be alleviated somewhat by delaying the change in schedule until after the holiday season when tax refunds could ease the transition period. Mrs. Jackie Irving, Vice Chairwoman of the CELC, reported that the Administration cited the State's biweekly schedule as one reason for the University changeover to a new system, and she objected to schedule comparability with the State since the University's classified employees have not achieved equity with State classified wage scales. Mrs. Irving said that State employees had received a week's bonus pay when their biweekly system was initiated. Mrs. Willard inquired about the status of a protest from University police and security union members which claimed that matters affecting employee pay could not be changed without negotiation. Mr. Sullivan acknowledged that the issue had been raised but said there would be no public comment at this time.

Mr. Sullivan reported that discussions with the CELC about the biweekly schedule were begun a year ago and the Council made it clear it did not like the change. He indicated that the primary reason for the changeover was the savings to be achieved by processing payrolls less often. He acknowledged that the State had made the transition to the biweekly system by advancing the first biweekly pay, but State employees then waited 19 days for their next check. Mr. Sullivan briefed the Committee on the details of the University plan, noting that the Administration has agreed to an alternate way of making the conversion which should resolve many of the objections. Mr. Monaghan inquired about the rationale for immediate rather than delayed implementation and Mr. Sullivan explained that some employees preferred to have the transition out of the way as soon as possible and there appears to be no advantage to a delay. He said that provisions have been made to advance a week's pay to employees now paid monthly who choose that option and while the conversion will create a need for employees to revise household budgets, delaying the conversion would not eliminate that problem. Mr. Carpenter pointed out that a transition occurring in January when employees are faced with Christmas bills and increased heating costs might be more detrimental. After further discussion between the Committee members and the Council spokespersons, the Committee agreed to recommend that the new system be implemented and that the Administration take whatever steps are necessary to alleviate any problems. Chairman Brown indicated that in reporting the recommendation, which he supported, he would also report that the Committee had received a strong protest and a request for postponement from the Classified Employees Liaison Council.

Student Appointments to Board Committees. Mr. Brown acknowledged the presence of representatives from the University of Maine Organization of Student Governments who had been granted permission to present their views on a proposed policy statement for appointment of students to Trustee Committees. Mr. Monaghan inquired whether the Board needed to concern itself with the manner in which students select their representatives. Mr. Brown and Mrs. Kominsky indicated that the Trustees should determine that there is a reasonable procedure for fair representation across the system. Mrs. Kominsky said she would be opposed to either the Board or the Chancellor's Office having veto power over student nominations and Dr. Russell was concerned for

for commuter-student representation.

Chairman Brown invited the UMOSG representatives to discuss their concerns. Becky Fisher, Chairman of UMOSG and representative to the Finance Committee, reported that the proposed policy statement had been placed on the agenda without prior consultation with student representatives and she objected to a proposed limitation of no more than two years service for student committee members. She pointed out that it takes time for student appointees to become familiar with the Board's governance process and that it is also difficult to find students who will devote the time necessary for service on the committees. Daniel O'Leary recorded student's objections to a provision which would allow the Chancellor's Office to veto student nominations and expressed concern for the implications of system-wide representation and emphasis on students' qualifications for Committee membership. Mr. O'Leary distributed copies of a policy statement developed by the students and proposed consideration of this statement as an alternative acceptable to the students.

Jamie Eves, Michael McGovern, Sandra Bovard and Professor Teachout each spoke to the issues in support of the students' position. When all who wished to speak had been heard, Dr. Binswanger suggested, and the Committee concurred, that the staff should meet with the UMOSG group and work out a statement which would be presented for Committee review at a later date. The Committee also concurred with Mrs. Kominsky's request that the revised statement be reviewed by both the Student Affairs Committee and P & ER.

Collective bargaining. On motion of Mr. Brown which was seconded, it was

VOTED: to adjourn to executive session for consultation with legal counsel on collective bargaining matters.

Upon completion of the executive session, the regular meeting was reconvened and on motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

JoAnne R. Magill

JoAnne R. Magill
Clerk of the Board