

## HEALTH, WELLNESS AND INSURANCE MINUTES March 7, 2005

Present: Mary Alice Newman, Barbara Garay, Cindy Puffer, Karen Wasson, Becca Ferguson, Gaylyn Finn, Pat Kelly, John Stewart, Richard Peper, and Emily Monago

Absent: Terri Schaller, Deb Bennett, Julie Barnes, Gardner Umbarger, and Steve Jex

Becca called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m. Because of the initial group size, the adoption of the minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

Becca started with the next point of the agenda which was the discussion surrounding domestic partner benefits and HWI's stand on the issue. Becca asked about the domestic partner benefits definition that was passed at Administrative Staff Council. Rich Peper gave some additional information on the topic. He said that Ohio University, Miami University, and Kent State University passed domestic partner benefits definitions regardless of sex. At BGSU, the Administrative Staff Council passed the definition by two votes. Becca asked for questions concerning the definition. Mary Alice thought that the definition should be clearer as to what type of benefits domestic partners are eligible as well as dependents. Pat will resend the survey results from September 2004. One idea that came up is that someone filling for a domestic partner benefit would have 30 days to file an affidavit. John felt that if BGSU is treating everyone equally that maybe BGSU should not require an affidavit, because he does not have to file an affidavit if he were to get married, divorced, etc. He asked if BGSU follows up on divorce cases. The answer is yes. Mary Alice felt that some notification would be fine. When marriages or divorces occur, written documentation is present. An affidavit would be the written document for domestic partners. John disagrees, saying that affidavits are different than a marriage license, for example. Pat is to check with Ohio University, Miami University, and Kent State University to see what these institutions require. Becca said the affidavit would trigger paper in Human Resources. She thinks OSU has an affidavit on their website.

The group then agreed that an affidavit is necessary. In looking at this issue across campus, Faculty Senate passed the measure, Administrative Staff Council passed a definition (which some on HWI feel need more clarification). It was stated that Classified Staff Council's main issue is that BGSU currently does not offer benefits for part-time employees. Mainly because of this, Classified Staff Council is not inclined to favor domestic partner benefits.

The group asked, what is cost effective? Becca said that HR would draft a potential definition based on those from Administrative Staff Council and Faculty Senate. Gaylyn

said that this would help to pull out points that need to be clarified. Becca said that once HWI agree on a definition, then she can take it to the upper administration.

The group started discussing the fact that Ohio does not recognize same sex unions that were formed in other states. Emily stated that two exist when discussing this topic, one is a cost/benefits issue and the other is a diversity issue.

Becca said that HR would download and send the affidavit on Ohio State University's website for household dependent-sponsored dependent. She did state that there was a hidden cost-the benefit is totally paid for by the employee.

Mary Alice asked about including other University's definitions into our own. Rich asked if we offer the same benefits as the other institutions. Becca said that those questions were for the HWI committee to discuss and decide. Also, Becca mentioned that HR would research the City of Toledo as well.

Becca mentioned that she and Gaylyn are presenting to the BGSU Board of Trustees a history of BGSU benefits from the mid 1980s to the present. Also, Becca said that a state wide push exists to have all Universities in Ohio come together for health insurance. The group started to talk about BGSU's plan versus local plans. Gaylyn brought up Rossford's plan and said that he would get more information. Health, Wellness, and Insurance collectively will review and consider all information that members are able to research and bring to the group.

The minutes from last meeting will be reviewed by the committee at the next meeting. The meeting ended at 4:15 PM. The next meeting will be:

**Monday, April 4, 2005 at 3:00 PM in CPOB, Room #1**

Respectfully submitted,

***Patrick D. Kelly***

Patrick D. Kelly, Acting Secretary