



MINUTES

**BUDGET OVERSIGHT COUNCIL**

**Sul Ross State University Faculty Assembly**

November 19, 2019

3:00 p.m.

Briscoe Administration Building 201

Members Present: Jim Case, Scott Ericsson, Bill Green, Francine Richter, and Joseph Velasco  
Members Not Present: Kathy Stein and Filemon Zamora  
Invited Guests Present: Christopher Clifford, VP for Budgeting & Finance  
Corina Ramirez, Director of Accounting & Finance

- I. **Call to Order.** Joseph Velasco called the meeting to order at 3:03p.m.
- II. **Introductions.** Velasco began by introducing himself to our guests. Budget Oversight Council (BOC) members and guests continued by introducing themselves. Velasco made sure prepared folders of budget related materials were available for all those present. Folders contained BOC responsibilities, relevant AAUP documents on the faculty role in budgetary matters, the meeting agenda, and the past meeting's minutes.
- III. **Discuss Responsibilities of the Budget Oversight Council.** Velasco discussed the responsibilities of the BOC.
- IV. **Discuss History of the Budget Oversight Council.** Velasco discussed recent five-year history of the BOC and its attempts to collaborate with the Sul Ross administration, specifically Cezar Valenzuela, on budgetary matters. Velasco reported that Valenzuela did offer some budget training to faculty members; however, collaboration in budgeting was non-existent. Velasco also informed Clifford and Ramirez about the customary practice of the administration providing printed copies of the current budget to BOC

members. Velasco mentioned that the most recent budget has missing “Supplemental Data” which details salary information across all Sul Ross employees. Bill Green added that effectively managing accounts has been difficult due to inaccuracies between Banner and Native Banner. Case added a summary of the BOC’s collaboration with the former CFO and VP for Finance & Operations, Cezar Valenzuela, dating back to President Vic Morgan’s administration, including ambiguities about account balances and questionable practices of transferring funds across accounts in ways that lacked transparency.

**V. Discuss Guiding Principles from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP)**

- a. Velasco presented the AAUP’S statement titled, “The Role of the Faculty in Budgetary and Salary Matters.” Velasco briefed the group on the guiding principles set forth by the AAUP which serve as a guide for universities when discerning policies and practices related faculty involvement in building budgets and collaborating on salary matters.
- b. Velasco presented the AAUP’s statement titled, “From the President: Collaborative Budgeting” by Cary Nelson with Donna Potts. Velasco briefed the group on how case studies referenced in the AAUP statement, illustrates how effective collaboration between administrators and faculty members at the U. of Illinois and the U. of Kansas helped both universities to avoid faculty resentment and increased faculty buy-in in their respective budgets and budget building processes. Velasco made the point that Sul Ross could achieve similar results by through similar practices, thereby improving the shared governance of the budgetary process.

**VI. Budget Process & Timeline.** Velasco informed Chris Clifford that that the BOC could benefit from knowing more about his budget process and timeline. Clifford informed the group that, with the recent loss of two key individuals from the budget office, Tanya

Romero and Kim Lewis, he and Ramirez are struggling to produce the FY2020 budget. Clifford reminded the group that he is still in his first year, and asked for some patience as they try to pull that budget together. Clifford assured the BOC that he would like to involve faculty more in the budget process than what has been experienced by faculty in recent years. Clifford cited his experience at Mississippi State as an example of an institution that have strong faculty involvement in the budget process, assuring the BOC that he understands the benefit of faculty involvement and that he is accustomed to such involvement.

- VII. **Discuss Opportunities for Collaboration.** Velasco informed Clifford that the BOC is open to beginning the budget process as soon as he and his team are ready. Clifford said that the construction of the FY2021 budget is also behind schedule, and indicated that he would include faculty in that process once he and Ramirez finalized the FY2020 budget.
- VIII. **Discuss Opportunities for Future Training of the Budget Oversight Council.** Velasco informed Clifford and Ramirez that the BOC is eager to learn more about their budget processes and invite any training that they could offer to better assist the BOC in effective collaboration and executing all the duties of the BOC. Clifford is agreeable to help in this capacity.
- IX. **Other Considerations or Concerns.** Velasco requested that Clifford provide paper copies of the FY2020 budget to BOC members as soon as possible. Velasco further requested that these copies include "Supplemental Data." Clifford agreed, but asked for time to finalize that budget.
- X. **Adjourn.** Velasco adjourned the meeting at 4:47pm.