

Strategic Planning Committee  
Community Relations Working Group

June 9, 2014 Meeting Minutes  
Hammond 314 @ 10:30am

Committee Attendees: Elizabeth Walsh, Chair; Jessica Augat, Nicholas Capasso, Robert Carr, Daniel LaFond, Jannette McMenemy, Renée Scapparone, Joshua Spero. Absentees: Christopher Hendry, Megan Pierce

Guests: William Cummings, Jane Fiske, Lisa Moison, Julie Primeau, Paul Weizer

Meeting called to order at 10:30am

Minutes of the May 30, 2014 meeting were reviewed; motion to accept by Joshua Spero and seconded by Renée Scapparone; unanimously approved.

Discussions:

- The group agreed to wait to identify/define “community” following our several more summer meeting discussions, as the group further discusses the relationships with the community.
- Discussions began around the relationships that were identified by the consultant (for the Strategic Plan) and discussed during the May 30<sup>th</sup> meeting:
  - Relationship between FSU and the Residential Community: perception; successes to leverage; failures/trouble spots/tensions
  - Relationship between FSU and the Business Community: part-time student employment; internships; foster relations between FSU and local merchants
  - Relationship between FSU and the Public Sector: political (Mayor & City Councilors; Police Dept., Fire Dept., Courts, Health Care Industry)

The group was reminded that we need recognize past and current relations between FSU and the community as future relations are developed between FSU and the community.

- Recommendation was made and accepted to add discussions involving the Relationship between FSU and not-for-profit organizations.
- Also, recommendation made and accepted to add Schools to the discussions regarding the Relationship between FSU and the Public Sector; to include area high schools and MWCC.
- Suggestion made not to add too many more areas for discussions (involving the relationships) since the group must submit priorities (2-3 objectives) to the SPC by November 14, 2014.

- Lengthy discussion evolved regarding suggestion that FSU have an office to handle internships for all departments. This has been previously reviewed by the university and an attempt to coordinate these logistics was addressed by the Center for Civic Engagement.

Although internships for students take place throughout the region and even nationally, more focus should be given to local internships; this may foster relations for students and faculty with the community. Should coordinate efforts and relationship contacts made by Career Services.

Also noted, at a recent Conference for Online Educators, the CEO of Blackboard that recommended that students that are taking online classes that require a practicum or service learning should be able to connect (online) this experience to their Blackboard transcript.

- Comments were made that in order to address the concerns of the community, for example, the Fitchburg Mayor's goal to make this a "college town", requires FSU students and faculty to be actively involved on a regular and ongoing basis.

Recommendation was made to construct an ongoing lists of persons and agencies that could present and participate at future meetings. No discussion this meeting as to where this list will appear, however at the May 30<sup>th</sup> Working Group meeting a suggestion was made to have a Blackboard site to maintain this list.

To date, suggested [possible] ad hoc participants include:

- Clark University
- UMass Lowell
- Worcester State University
- Mayors (Fitchburg, Leominster, Gardner)
- Ward Councilors
- Local Church leaders (i.e. Tom Hughes)
- Tim Sappington, North Central Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board
- Twin Cities Community Development Corporation (CDC)

At a minimum, the work of these groups should be reviewed. REDI (Joshua Spero) also has information on the other universities' work.

- The group discussed the need to gain a better understanding of the community's perception and expectations of FSU. The suggestion to develop concentric circles as the group conducts the research beginning with Fitchburg's Ward 4 (where FSU is located), then focus on downtown, the entire city of Fitchburg, and then into the area that includes Leominster, Gardner, and [perhaps] the Montachusett region.

***ACTION ITEMS:***

- Elizabeth Walsh will invite Jay Bry and Michael Kushmerek (Fitchburg Ward 4 Councilor) to attend next meeting.
- All committee members and guests are asked to come to next meeting with questions that should be part of the survey on perception; survey to be further developed during next committee meeting.
- Paul Weizer will send notes on the Clark University Community Economic Development Plan to Elizabeth Walsh (committee chair) to review with committee at a future meeting.

*Next Meeting:* Monday, June 23, 2014 @ 10:30am in Hammond 314

Meeting adjournment at 11:35am

Respectfully submitted by,  
Renée Scapparone