

# CIRES Members Council Meeting

Minutes

July 29, 2021

12:05-1:46 PM MT via Google Meet

Y/N	CIRES Section	CMC Member	Role
Y	CSL	Joe Katich	Chair
Y	CSL	Yelena Pichugina	Track Committee Rep
Y	East Campus	Molly Hardman	
Y	East Campus	Mistia Zuckerman	
Y	GML	Jon Kofler	Backup Exec / Fellows Rep
Y	GML	Gaby Pétron	OPA Chair
N	GSL	Eric James	Membership Chair
Y	GSL	Man Zhang	
N	Main Campus	Ryan Cassotto	Mentorship Program Chair
Y	Main Campus / IT	Meg Tilton	Rendezvous Vice Chair
N	Main Campus/HR/Adm	Jimena Ugaz	
Y	NCEI	Aaron Sweeney	Secretary
Y	NCEI	Sam Califf	
Y	PSL	Janice Bytheway	Mentorship Vice Chair
N	PSL	Antonietta Capotondi	Fellows Rep
N	SEEC	Dawn Umpleby	Rendezvous Chair
N	SWPC	Hazel Bain	
Y/N	CIRES Section	Liaison	Role
Y	Admin	Lucia Harrop	Administrative Liaison
	CIRES Section	Guests	
	PSL	Chesley Mccoll	

12:05 PM Meeting called to order.

## Reports:

### 1. Secretary (Aaron)

- a. Nothing to report. I am still investigating the status and custody of the CMC Bylaws document (and our Members' Guide) in our shared Google Drive.

## 2. **Membership** (Eric J.--unfortunately unable to attend the July meeting but the below items are up to date)

- a. Joe has been officially voted in as Chair of CMC!
- b. We are still in need of a Vice Chair!
- c. We also need volunteers for the Executive Council and Fellows Committees Representatives.
- d. CMC webpage has been updated with some changes based on recent turnover.
- e. Potential new CMC members: Chesley McColl (PSL), Theresa Kucinski (CSL)
- f. Dawn leaving CMC end of July, need replacement for Rendezvous co-chair
- g. Discussion: Sam Califf is a new CMC Rep from NCEI.

## 3. **Mentorship Program** (Ryan / Janice)

- a. Committee meeting Jul 26 - Set probable dates for year 3
  - September 7-19 Mentor Sign up
  - September 20- October 1 Mentee sign up
  - October 4 Kickoff event
- b. Targeting Braided Rivers Career Building seminar focusing on the program Sept 9 during Mentor registration
- c. Working on list of website changes and updates to send to CIRES IT

## 4. **Rendezvous** (Dawn/Meg)

- a. We plan to report on survey results at the next CMC meeting. We need a Rendezvous Co-Chair given Dawn's departure from CMC.

## 5. **Outstanding Performance Awards (OPA)** (Gaby)

- a. Make a policy saying a nomination is final after its submission explicit for future years (no adding people)
- b. Meg has a list of IT improvements for future OPA cycles that will be tackled after Rendezvous.
- c. More guidance on what can help make a strong nomination: avoid jargon, write for non-expert in the particular field, etc.
- d. Write report with main issues and key information for next OPAC chair and for OPA secretary
- e. Discussion: Members of CIRES Admin have been nominated and received OPA awards in the past. However, during this current OPA cycle, there has been resistance from senior management to nominate or provide support letters. In the past, HR Directors and Associate Director for Science have written support letters. Chair and Vice-Chair to discuss with Assoc. Dir. Science. **(Carry Forward to August meeting)**

## 6. Diversity and Inclusion

- a. Susan Sullivan is working on a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Plan for CIRES and this has been circulated with CMC Reps and CIRES Diversity and Inclusion Community of Practice for feedback. It will be shared with all of CIRES in the near future.

## 7. CIRES Career Track Committee (Yelena)

- a. Previously the Committee decided on 4 sub-tracks within the AS and RS tracks:
  - Science; Engineering / Applications; Management; Computer Science
- b. Discussion: Would be good to have broad input from CIRES employees. Could be accomplished via a survey. Would be good for CMC Reps to have two weeks to review and share materials with their constituents and provide feedback.
- c. Notes: The next step is to circulate more widely with CIRES employees and survey for comments.
- d. Discussion: The next meeting of the Career Track Committee is Aug. 6.

## 8. Chair's Update (Joe)

- a. Meeting with Associate Director for Science (Christine)
  - Met with Christine
  - Talked to Christine about [EcoPass](#) renewal. Potential for subsidy in place of ecopass (a la NOAA...extend to all CIRES?)
  - Talk to Christine about lack of raises - mention that this is the primary thing that CMC members are hearing about right now.
- b. Discussion:
  - There was some discussion among CMC Reps of the CIRES DEI Strategic Plan.
  - Christine is not aware of a subsidy in lieu of the EcoPass. This is not an option for CIRES (i.e. CO State) employees. The NOAA transportation subsidy only applies to federal employees who work in the Boulder area.
  - At the June CMC Meeting, we discussed composing a letter of concern to be addressed to CIRES Admin. However, the CU Board of Regents makes the decision on whether (and how much) to set aside a pool for merit increases. That decision is guided by enrollment numbers and the university's budget (per campus). The CU Board of Regents has moved the start date of any potential merit increase from Oct. 1, 2021, to Jan. 1, 2022. The Regents are waiting for enrollment numbers in mid- to late-September before making a decision on the merit pool. Christine does not think a letter of concern from the CMC will have influence, and Waleed is already fighting this fight. It would be good to have a statement from CIRES HR on the process of merit increases, including the role of the CU Regents. In the past 20 years, previous to the pandemic, there has only been one year that CIRES didn't have a merit pool. Note that the [CIRES Online](#)

[Feedback Catalog](#) has responses to questions about merit increases asked thus far.

- Action: (Chair) Ask CIRES HR for a statement clarifying the merit increase process (where money comes from, deciders of pool existence and size, what it depends on (CO State budget?), etc., beyond the evaluation of employee performance and campus enrollment).
- Motion (Joe): Table the idea of a letter of concern from CMC until October CU Regents decision. This motion was seconded by Gaby. (We have 10 out of 17 CMC Reps present, which is enough for a vote (>50% present).) All in favor, none opposed.
- Decision: Table the idea of a letter of concern from CMC until October CU Regents decision.

## Open Issues:

### 1. Addressing the lack of raises

- a. On the impact to spending down funds before the end of the current Cooperative Agreement:
  - "...with the CIRES Cooperative Agreement renewal coming up, these salary increase deferrals could actually have an impact on how groups spend down their funding at the end of the current CA term, since some funding sources may end up underspent with no way to increase spending due to these budget decisions. Is CIRES taking any steps to help mitigate this possibility?"
  - Aaron: At the June 8 CIRES Town Hall, it was reported that the current Cooperative Agreement end date is Aug. 31, 2022 and that CIRES is planning on requesting a 12-month no-cost extension next summer. I am in the process of seeking additional comment from my constituents.

### 2. What CIRES Admin can do to improve work environment at home

- a. Concern brought forward to Aaron:
  - "I'm sure you know about some of the challenges people at NCEI are having getting access to some really important IT equipment within NCEI, which is another morale hit among our team. Could we ask CIRES to do more to help our employees get access to the resources they need to create better work environments at home?"
  - Aaron: I am in the process of seeking clarification on the access issue with my constituents.
  - (Aaron) As of July 29, I haven't gotten clarification on this question.

### 3. Topic brought up by someone in CIRES/GSL Eric J

- a. Several CIRES employees have transitioned to Feds. Some CIRES scientists are supervisors for 6 supervisees, which is a lot of work: logistical and/or advisory. Can Feds supervise CIRES employees?
- b. Bring this back up at next month meeting with Lucia

- c. Meg: New CIRES track will acknowledge this type of supervisory work more.
- d. Jimena: Main advice can be in hand of science advisor
- e. Gaby: Case also of CIRES employees not having an active science advisor/mentor, only logistical CIRES supervisor.
- f. Discussion: CIRES work supervisor must be a CIRES employee. At DSRC, the science advisor can either be a federal (usual case) or a CIRES employee. The question was raised as to whether there is adequate mentorship from the CIRES supervisor and/or science advisor. The CIRES work supervisor can solicit input from the supervisee on what's working/what's not working, but there is no formal mechanism for this. Another question was raised as to how to provide feedback to the federal science advisor from a CIRES employee. CIRES doesn't have influence on federal science advisors. Two NOAA groups at DSRC have interpreted rules to mean no feedback should be given by federal science advisors to CIRES employees regarding performance.

## New Issues

1. No new issues.

## Closing remarks:

- Chair will try to move the next meeting to mid-month in September.
- Action: Chair will speak to Membership Chair about Chesley stepping in as a CMC Rep from PSL.

1:46 PM *Meeting adjourned.*

---

## Actions:

- (Chair) Ask CIRES HR for a statement clarifying the merit increase process (where money comes from, deciders of pool existence and size, what it depends on (CO State budget?), etc., beyond the evaluation of employee performance and campus enrollment).
- (Chair) Speak to Membership Chair about Chesley stepping in as CMC Rep from PSL.
- (All CMC) Four officer vacancies! Please consider serving as CMC Vice Chair, Rendezvous Co-Chair, Executive Council Rep, or Fellows Council Rep. Contact Eric James if interested.