The Faculty Senate of Coastal Bend College met on October 9, 2009, in the distance learning rooms. A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order by Elden Price, president. John W. Fox gave the invocation. There were two visitors present.

The reading of the Minutes of the previous meeting was tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Price reported he had represented the senate and faculty at two of the president’s cabinet meetings. This group meets on various Fridays. Since the senate had been offered a seat with the cabinet, he said he felt we should accept it and participate. The president stated Dr. Baynum also wanted a division chair representative in the cabinet and the person selected was Ed Massey who is also a senator.

Mr. Price reported on and the senate discussed several items.

1. Travel paperwork policies are changing and the college is retiring the old “blue form” for travel and using new forms that are now on the Faculty Senate website. The old form for state sales tax exemption for hotels has also been changed to a three-page form and he stated he still did not have the new form but would get a copy so it could be made available to the faculty as soon as possible.

2. The state travel policy has also been changed including the schedule for meal reimbursement. Travelers can now use Google mileage or an actual odometer reading for mileage reimbursement. Meal reimbursement varies by city. Jeannene Jones stated that for Corpus Christi meal reimbursement is $48 a day while in Houston it is $60. No final decision has apparently been made by the college on updating its policies to comply with the state changes. Mr. Price also stated that there is a college request that no hotel be booked until an individual has obtained the best price and gotten prior travel approval for the booking. This causes problems as approval takes time and room blocks at best prices disappear. This is being referred to the Faculty Benefits Committee for further work.

3. The State of Texas is now requiring all faculty to post resumes and syllabi in a specific manner and format online including daily lesson plans in accordance with House Bill 142.. This was discussed in detail and is being referred to the Academic Freedom Committee to develop local policies and procedures. The TCCTA is fighting this bill because of the additional work required for faculty to update web pages perhaps even daily as lesson plans change.

4. Video Conferencing rooms are being upgraded if funds can be located to replace failing equipment and restore the equipment to functionality for optimal student learning
environments. Dr. Baynum has asked faculty to forego some budget expenditures they had planned for the current fiscal year and return the monies to the purchase of this new equipment. Approximately $117,000 in additional monies is needed to complete the project. Without the replacement equipment, distance instruction to some sites will soon be very difficult with equipment causing increasing class disruptions and poor student learning environments. Mr. Price stated that if there were no objections to this and money was located, it would be approved at the next Board meeting.

5. A study of overload pay is being conducted. SACS is looking and teaching loads and may be unhappy with the amount of overloads allowed with the perception that some faculty are teaching too many classes to do a good job. The question is how to allot overloads fairly and equitably and how to justify large overloads. This study is being done now by the Instructional Services Council chaired by Sarah Milnarich. According to Ms. Milnarich, this study involves three groups: (1) Faculty Senate, (2) Instructional Services Council, and (3) Division Chairs. She stated that the Compliance Council is also looking at people doing two different jobs, i.e., administrators and other employees teaching classes during their normal work week. This is seen as double-dipping to many individuals. The question is when is it too much? Faculty should look for a request from the study group for input soon.

6. Mr. Price also reported that he was representing the faculty at Board meetings and encouraged as many people as possible to attend. He stated he would be asking others to fill in for him from time to time and to report on the meetings.

7. Mr. Price also reported that a new Faculty Handbook is in development.

8. The slate of current committee chairs and members was reviewed. All committees have chairs but Academic Freedom. Note was made that Carolyn Rains was listed as a committee member and she is not eligible since only faculty, librarians, and counselors are members of the senate and she is not in any of these categories. She will be replaced by her chair with another individual. On a motion by Ann Richmond, seconded by Ed Massey, all committees were unanimously approved as presented. Mr. Price asked all committee chairs to finish out their committee lists by the next meeting so the committees could begin working.

9. Mr. Price reported that an additional step has been added to the hiring process—a referral to an Exceptions Committee followed by a Compliance Review Board after the Exceptions Committee for certain individuals. He stated that CBC would have fewer exceptions in the future as in the past the college over enforced the state GIPWE (Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education) standards and adding its own more stringent criteria. Each exception allowed must be reported to SACS and a significant number of exceptions would not look good for the college. By following GIPWE the college will have fewer exceptions to report and still be in compliance with Coordinating Board and SACS guidelines.
10. A question from Dr. Baynum regarding division chairs as Faculty Senate officers was discussed. Dr. Baynum thought it might be a conflict of interest since Division Chairs have their own group and representation at the cabinet. The Senate discussed changing the Bylaws after Ann Richmond's term as Senate President to comply with this request. This will be discussed further at future meetings and eventually referred to the Bylaws Committee.

11. Faculty evaluation begins on November 1 and Mr. Price stated he felt the system was flawed and should be redone. Those present agreed it should return to being faculty driven. The goal is to improve instruction and improve the college rather than punitive as many see the process as it now exists. Becky Simonson suggested tying evaluations to the strategic plan. Ann Richmond reminded the Senate that evaluation currently goes from the top down with no bottom up evaluation of supervisors or administrators happening for several years. Danny Burns stated that though it was too late to change the instrument and process this year it could be changed in future years. He also questioned evaluation of faculty teaching online courses and what happens to those. Additionally, there is now a state law requiring faculty evaluations to be posted on the web. The question is what is posted—evaluation question results only or also comments. This is being referred to the Evaluation of Instruction Committee.

12. Karl Clark and Ann Richmond reported they would be attending the TCCTA Fall Conference for Faculty Leaders in Austin and would report at the next meeting.

13. Dr. Baynum called for an audit of personnel files and the system of maintaining records. This was conducted by the firm that carries the college’s liability insurance. This firm found that the college is out of compliance with personnel laws with our local personnel director maintaining two sets of records on many people. One set of records was actually the “legal” personnel records; the second set of records was reported to be almost all negative documents and reports generated internally with no positive information contained like awards and accomplishments being included. Neither type of document would normally be a part of personnel records with only a few exceptions. It seems like personnel is gathering up data to use against people only and not gathering up any kind of positive data. Personnel was instructed to remove all illegal documents (the second set of files) within one month. Almost every document in the second set was found to be illegal. It was reported to the Senate that Kathlyn Patton was displeased with this and asked “how we will control the faculty” without this second set of files.

Jeanene Jones asked when faculty should check their files to be certain all illegal information has been removed. Mr. Price stated that Dr. Baynum expected illegal documents to be gone in one to two months and suggested waiting until November. Under the Texas Open Records Act employees may see their files at any time. The procedure for this is probably a written form to be developed. If faculty are denied immediate access to their records on written request, they should report this to Dr. Baynum immediately. Most faculty do not
know this second set of inappropriate and presumably illegal records are being maintained.

14. A common standard for e-mail addresses for faculty has been suggested and this is in discussion.

15. Mr. Price reported he had visited with Business Manager Ruth Cude regarding pay stubs. Apparently our current accounting system does not allow any more detail than exists now and faculty would like to see their regular pay and any supplementary pay separated on the stub to better track pay and audit personnel activities. A method of providing greater payroll detail is also being studied in the Business Office.

16. A problem with parking on the Beeville campus was discussed with students parking in handicap and faculty parking areas. This was referred to the Facilities Committee.

17. Becky Simonson discussed the scheduling of classes at “off times” causing conflicts with other classes. For example, official class times end at 12:20 with the next class period being 12:30-1:50. Some classes are scheduled 1:00-2:30 and this is causing a problem on the Alice campus with overlapping classes. This was referred to the Division Chairs for review.

18. Jerry Frazier suggested the Senate come up with a way to meet better via distance and to recognize individuals speaking. On a motion by Jerry Frasier, seconded by John Fox, the Senate voted to use a raised hand, recognized by the Senate President, for an individual to speak so there were not two people speaking at once and senator agreed to abide by this policy. This was unanimously passed. Mr. Price also asked that those working the cameras zoom in on speakers at meetings.

There being no further business, on a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned by the President.