COMMENCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 6, 2002
12:15 to 12:55 p.m.
President’s Boardroom, 210 Burruss Hall

PRESENT: John Beach for Bill Elvey, Randy Billingsley, Bill Conger, Pat Goodrich, Ed Henneke, Michelle Jefferson, Brad Klein, Mary Ann Lewis for Janet Johnson, David McKee, Kim O’Rourke, Harry Robertshaw, Sherry Schofield-Tomshin, Bill Stringer for J. Allen, Dan Taylor.

GUESTS: Lyndell Price, David McKee, Margie Murray, Julie Kamienski, Shannon Daley, Mary Price.

ABSENT: Bill Green, Audrey Zink-Sharp, Stan Burke, Bud Brown, Reba Crawford, Grant Hill, Larry Hincker, Mitzl Vernon, Dixie Reaves, Erin Miller.

Chairman Henneke called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – January 2, 2002
Conger moved that the minutes be approved, Stringer seconded, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Announcements
It was announced by O’Rourke that the Spring Commencement Speaker would be The Honorable Mark Warner, Governor of Virginia. The Graduate School ceremony speaker will be Dr. Lucinda Roy.

Planning for Spring Commencement
Before the discussion of planning began, Dave McKee asked for the support of the Commencement Committee regarding a proposal he would be putting forward for Dr. Steger’s review. The proposal was for an expanded band tour of area high schools, including Charlottesville, West Springfield, Brook Pointe, and Robinson. It was agreed that this would be an excellent way to promote Virginia Tech. Conger moved that the committee support this plan, and with a second from Robertshaw, the proposal was approved unanimously.

Beach began the planning discussion by indicating that there would be stadium use problems for Spring Commencement. Vehicles would not be allowed on the field, and stakes could not be driven into the sod. The field does have a paved path on the sidelines for vehicle operation, and the field drains better should inclement weather be a factor. Placing chairs on the field would not be a concern, but a processional would not be possible due to the construction at the south end of the stadium. This would mean that the standard truck used for the sound system would not be allowed to drive onto the field as usual, and no scaffolding could be used. A boom truck would need to be reserved to hold the speakers for the sound system in the air. This would actually create a less offensive line of site during the ceremony, but would cost an additional $2000 that the committee has not anticipated.
As for the processional, it was determined that students would be seated on the field, but not by college or department. The actual script would be changed to ask each Dean to recognize graduates by college. Participants would need to be seated on the field by 8:30 a.m. to avoid confusion. Students would be asked to enter onto the field by way of the tunnel at the north end by Jamerson. It was suggested that students not enter the stadium by way of the stands, as this would create a sense of disarray.

The next area of discussion involved the purchase of new carpet for the floor of Cassell Coliseum. The current carpet has been used for several years and has become worn and stained. In addition, the backing has been damaged due to continued use and has required nailing, taping, and ironing to smooth onto the floor to avoid tripping. A new carpet had been reviewed and ordered, which will have a more tolerant backing. The final decision was made to purchase a Mannington carpet in the color of nuance for approximately $24,000, which had been budgeted in this year’s Commencement funds. The carpet will arrive in time for spring commencement.

The representative from the Graduate School indicated that the Alumni Association provided VT lapel pins for the fall graduates and hoped to acquire these for the spring ceremony as well.

Margie Murray provided information to the committee that would be included on the Virginia Tech homepage under the parents/family subheading. This information would remain on the website year-round, and would require minimal updates. The same information would be included in the brochure and on the commencement hotline to assist students and parents with planning throughout the year. It was requested that this information be reported in the Collegiate Times and Spectrum to help get the word out that this information is available for review.

As of February 28, the website and hotline have been updated with new information.

With the announcement that the next meeting would be held on March 13, the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.