

Murray State University Staff Congress
Final Minutes for February 11, 2009
Curris Center: Barkley Room
Updated March 4, 2009

PRESENT: Vicki D. Anderson, Cathy Bazar, Terri Benton, Michael Busby, Kim Griffo, Marion Hale, Orville Herndon, Lana Jennings, Tresa Jones, Shelia Lamb, Aleeah McGinnis, Norma Sue Miller, Debbie Plummer, Sheri Riddle, Phil Schooley, Mark Shearer, Becky Wilder, and Lisa Willis. Guests: Jim Carter, Vice President for Institutional Advancement; Tom Denton, Vice President of Finance & Administration; Randy Dunn, President; Carmen Garland, Special Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs; Tom Hoffacker, Director, Human Resources; Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff; Kara Mantooth, SGA President; Jay Morgan, Faculty Regent; and Gina Winchester, Staff Regent.

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Phil Schooley called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. The meeting was streamed live over the internet.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:

MSU President Randy Dunn thanked Staff Congress members and all other staff for work done during the ice storm recovery. Some staff helped students even though they themselves did not have power at home. Dr. Dunn noted that Glen Edwards was instrumental in working to ensure food was available for students. Many other staff members came to campus from some distance to provide food for students.

Staff Congress President Phil Schooley asked Dr. Dunn to address the role of the upcoming Staff Congress elections and the role of Staff Congress as a vital constituency group. Dr. Dunn responded that large organizations such as MSU require groups such as Staff Congress to help the organization operate well. Dr. Dunn prefers that the groups affected by administrative decisions be involved in making those decisions. He wants to work with Staff Congress and appreciates that the group suggests initiatives that are important to staff.

Dr. Dunn thanked Gina Winchester for her work as Staff Regent. He hopes that, as Gina ends her term in that position, others will see the importance of stepping up to run for Staff Regent.

The university is working on the budget for the next fiscal year. Dr. Dunn presented information on the current discussions regarding the budget. Although he cannot promise pay raises, he said that the university has to continue making progress on salaries.

Staff Congress President Phil Schooley asked if anyone had questions. He asked Dr. Dunn to discuss the savings achieved over the additional closure days for Christmas Break. Dr. Dunn thanked Josh Jacobs for spreading the request to power down before leaving for break. He also thanked staff for cooperating in the turning off and unplugging of equipment. The savings achieved during the additional days of closure are estimated to be between \$25,000 and \$28,000, which is approximately half the annual salary of an assistant professor.

Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff: No report.

Don Robertson, Vice President for Student Affairs: Out-of-town.

Ms. Carmen Garland, Special Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs, thanked staff for helping during the aftermath of the ice storm.

Mr. Jim Carter, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, thanked Staff Regent Gina Winchester for naming him and Dr. Robertson the honorary heads of Lovett Auditorium Residential College. He thanked TSM for streaming through WKMS Governor Beshear's address on campus. Mr. Carter also thanked WKMS and those who maintain the university website for providing information during the January ice storm recovery. He has heard positive comments from parents regarding the university website.

Mr. Carter said that a long overdue branding and imaging update project has begun. Faculty, staff, and students will be part of focus groups regarding the branding and imaging. Having an updated image will assist with recruiting efforts.

On Thursday, February 12, newly admitted students will be on campus to register for summer O.

Tom Hoffacker, Director of Human Resources, will give his report in conjunction with Michael Busby later in today's meeting.

Dr. Jay Morgan, Faculty Regent, thanked Staff Congress President Phil Schooley for inviting him to speak at today's Staff Congress meeting. He thanked Staff Regent Gina Winchester for her work on behalf of staff and for working with the faculty. On April 1, at 1:00, in the Curris Center Barkley Room, representatives from KTRS will present a seminar on middle and late career retirement. This will especially be of interest to employees with 10-15 years of employment remaining. He asked that staff inform co-workers of the presentation date. Persons interested in attending the seminar should register with Phil Schooley.

Dr. Morgan said that he and the Staff and Student Regents met to discuss the possibility of having a two-day fall break and beginning the fall semester one day earlier. The Faculty Senate will vote on this proposal at its next meeting. In addition to providing a mid-semester break from academics in the fall, proponents of the proposal hope to encourage the Murray and Calloway school systems to align their fall breaks with the MSU fall break. This alignment would allow for family time.

Ms. Kara Mantooth, SGA President, thanked staff for their responses to the students during the aftermath of the ice storm. She thanked Staff Congress President Phil Schooley for the invitation to speak at today's Staff Congress meeting.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES: Debbie Plummer noted that the Staff Congress office is located on the third floor of Ordway Hall (specifically room 302), not the fourth floor as reported at the January meeting (in the fourth paragraph of the Executive Committee Report, under Standing Committee Reports on page 1).

Lana Jennings noted that under New Business, paragraph three, sentence 1, the word "the" should be deleted after "Josh Jacobs said" to read "Josh Jacobs said as part...."

Marion Hale made a motion to approve the January minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. The motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Debbie Plummer presented the December Treasurer's Report. She answered questions regarding the report. Marion Hale made a motion to approve the December Treasurer's Report as presented. The motion was seconded. The motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee Report:

Staff Congress President Phil Schooley said that furniture has been ordered for the Staff Congress office in Ordway Hall. After the furniture arrives, committees may hold meetings there and/or store items there, including items such as candy for the Children's Christmas Party.

Personnel Policies/Benefits Committee:

Sick Leave Policy: Michael Busby reported that the committee is still working on adding "grandparents" to the sick leave policy. He explained that various employee manuals exist for various types of employees. The committee is working to have standard wording and definitions so that staff policies align with wording in the Board of Regents handbooks and the other employee handbooks.

Office Skills Test: Tom Hoffacker, Director of Human Resources, will present information on the office skills test after Michael's reports.

Interim Policy: Michael said that a proposal regarding the Interim Policy has not been presented to the Board of Regents. He suggested that Staff Congress draft a proposed policy which would then be addressed by the Faculty Senate for consistency.

Discretionary Day: Michael reported that a discretionary day is still under consideration.

He welcomed questions during the meeting as well as later via email and phone. Phil Schooley said questions may also be directed to him.

Tom Hoffacker, Director of Human Resources:

Regarding Sick Leave and the definition of family: Tom Hoffacker said having varying definitions of terms in various parts of a manual is common.

Discretionary Day: He noted that because the ongoing discussion and proposal regarding an additional day for fall break will have an effect on the issue of a having a discretionary day, Staff Congress may want wait until the fall break issue is resolved before pursuing a discussion and possible proposal regarding a discretionary day.

Office Skills Test: Beginning February 12, applicants for positions which require a keyboarding test will be able to visit the Human Resources offices between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m., on Friday, to take the keyboarding test in a kiosk. The test is a web based program. Previously, applicants could take the test only at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesdays. Human Resources plans to make the web based keyboarding test available at the extended campuses. The department will be adding more types of tests. Human Resources is asking sister institutions about their typing test thresholds. Questions and discussion followed.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon announced Bill Brien has resigned from Staff Congress. He discussed the timeline for the Staff Regent Election. A website with information and Staff Regent Candidacy Intent Forms will be made available. Staff Regent Candidates' responses to questionnaires will be made available online after the filing deadline. This ensures that all candidate responses will be available at the same time, instead of being posted as they are received. Orville asked for input as to what Staff Congress members would like to see on the Staff Regent Election website. Two Staff Regent Candidate forums are scheduled: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Orville said he welcomes questions and comments by phone and email.

Staff Recognition Committee: Sheri Riddle reported that the Staff Recognition Luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, August 6. She has asked Coldwater Barbeque to reserve the date, but welcomes suggestions from staff interested in recommending a different caterer.

She asked Michael Busby to draw names from each category of the Staff Recognition Award nominations received during the quarter ending in December 2008. The following are the winners: Office Category-- Amber Roach, Regional Stewardship Office; General Category-- Robin Doss, Breathitt Veterinary Center; and Executive Category-- Shawn Smead, Office of Recruitment.

Sheri said that many nomination forms received are not listing specific deeds that are above and beyond the usual job requirements. She suggested that the Staff Recognition Award Committee meet to discuss how to address this concern. She also welcomed comments and suggestions from staff.

Staff Special Events Committee:

Staff Congress President Phil Schooley said that Human Resources has posted on its website the list of businesses which offer discounts to university employees. Cathy Bazar noted that she updates the list when she receives any changes. Please email staff.congress@murraystate.edu with any additions or deletions to the discount list.

Staff Congress still has some unclaimed pictures of children with Santa taken at the Children's Christmas Party. Staff are encouraged to email staff.congress@murraystate.edu if they think any of the unclaimed photos might belong to them.

Because Christian Cruce was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting, she gave the rebate meal information to Cathy. The next rebate meal is scheduled for April 16, 4:00-9:00 p.m., at Backyard Burgers. All staff are welcome to attend. Diners must tell the cashier that they want to contribute to the rebate. Because the group trip to the Nashville Predators hockey game was well attended, Christian is working to arrange a similar event.

Sheri Riddle noted that a staff member emailed her that AT&T customers may receive a \$25 courtesy credit due to the power outage that occurred during the ice storm. The phone number is on the AT&T website.

Communications Committee: Lana Jennings suggested that the next newsletter be published closer to the dates of the Staff Regent Election and Staff Congress Election in order to promote those events. She will notify Staff Congress members of the next newsletter deadline either by email or by announcement at the next Staff Congress meeting.

Working Conditions Committee: No report.

AD-HOC COMMITTEES:

Salary and Benefits Equity Research Committee: No report.

Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee: Kim Griffo reported on the scholarship fund status. A donation box was placed by the attendance sign-in sheet for today's Staff Congress meeting.

Staff Recognition Award Changes: No report.

Staff Congress Bylaws Review Committee: Orville Herndon elaborated on the proposed changes to Article IX: Other Appointments. He welcomed questions at this time and after the meeting by phone and email. Staff Congress membership composition will be addressed at upcoming Staff Congress meetings.

Staff Handbook Review Committee: Michael Busby reported that the Staff Handbook was last revised in 2001. The committee met on January 21 and February 4, to begin going through the handbook. The Faculty Handbook was revised in 2007. Because the Faculty Handbook is well organized, the Staff Handbook Review Committee is using it as a model for its revisions. The committee welcomes suggestions and comments on the handbook.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: No report. The committee will meet Friday, February 13, at 1:30 p.m., in Wilson Hall.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: Michael Busby said the council met on January 15. The members are considering the composition of the council itself, including the number of council members, as well as cross-campus and minority representation. Term limits also being discussed. The council meets quarterly. The next meeting date has not yet been determined. Interested persons may contact Michael Busby or Allen Ward, Athletic Department Director.

Naming Campus Facilities Committee: No report.

Judicial Board: No report.

Sick Leave Appeals Committee: No report.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Gina Winchester reported on the Board of Regents meeting held on February 6. At the meeting, Gina voted against providing Board of Regents members with tuition waivers because Kentucky statute states that appointed regents cannot receive any compensation. The Tuition Task Force did not have a report. The task force met February 10, but Gina was unable to attend the meeting due to delivering supplies to neighboring counties affected by the ice storm. The next regular Board of Regents meeting is scheduled for May 29. A special meeting to set tuition and fees will be called.

She thanked staff members for their help with students after the ice storm. She requested that staff be made aware of any university employees affected by the storm and needing assistance, including those at extended campuses. The names of persons with needs can be kept anonymous.

Gina noted that she did not take lightly the decision not to run for re-election as Staff Regent. She will work diligently with the newly elected Staff Regent to help that person transition into the position.

Phil Schooley thanked Gina for her work as Staff Regent. He thanked staff for assistance given after the ice storm.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

Adjournment: Orville Herndon made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.