Murray State University Staff Congress
Draft Minutes for April 18, 2012
304 North Applied Science Building

PRESENT: Cathy Bazar, Shanna Burgess, Christian Cruce, Tami Dandeneau, Laura Lohr Dziekonski, Liz Fain, Orville Herndon, Wade Herndon, Lana Jennings, Margie Miller, Jerry O’Bryan, Kerry Pinkston, Chuck Plummer, Debbie Plummer, Sheri Riddle, Tressa Ross, Billy R. Russell, Rebecca Wilder, Lisa Willis, Dwaine Willoughby, Gina Winchester, Janeen Winters, and John Young. Guests: Sharon A. Crouch, Science Engineering and Technology; Dr. Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff; Jamie Mantooth, Director of Student Retention; Mary Armstrong Mays, Benefits Manager, Human Resources; Olivia Medovich, MSU News; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice-President for Student Affairs; Phil Schooley, Staff Regent; Marion Taylor, JMC Student; and Allen Ward, Athletic Director.

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Gina Winchester called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:

Allen Ward, Athletic Director: Allen Ward said the Racer basketball team’s successful season was due in part to the support of staff, faculty, students, and the community. He noted that 23 games were televised, seven of them nationally. Mr. Ward complimented CF SB Center Director Shelley Todd for her management of the facility. He provided an update on the naming and construction of campus sports facilities. He expressed appreciation to the City of Murray for its partnership with the University, allowing the women’s softball team to use a softball field for games.

Debbie Plummer thanked Allen for the football and basketball tickets for faculty and staff appreciation games. Mr. Ward said the Faculty and Staff Appreciation games will continue. He answered questions, welcomed emails, and distributed Racer baseball caps to those in attendance.

Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President for Student Affairs: Dr. Robertson reminded staff of upcoming events, including early Summer Orientation. Today’s All-Campus Sing will be streamed online. Last year, it was viewed internationally by over 3,000 people. He complimented staff on welcoming students visiting campus.

Dr. Robertson introduced MSU’s new Director of Student Retention Jamie Mantooth from Auburn University.

Jamie Mantooth, Director of Student Retention: Jamie Mantooth said he has been on campus for one week and is meeting with various university departments. He thanked the campus community for the welcome he has received. Staff can email him at jmantooth1@murraystate.edu. His office is temporarily located in Ordway Hall, with the next location to be determined.

Dr. Robertson said Jamie has much experience working with faculty and staff to maintain student retention. Jamie answered questions from Congress members.

Mary Armstrong Mays, Benefits Manager, Human Resources: Mary Armstrong Mays distributed a financial planning workshop flyer everyone should have received in the mail. She elaborated on the sessions to be offered and encouraged staff to attend at least one session. She answered questions about the workshop.

Mary said the Family Health Night scheduled for April 24 was cancelled due to insufficient reservations from employees. Discussion followed regarding how to increase participation for a future family health event. Ideas included partnering with the Children’s Christmas Party or with an athletic event.

Dr. Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff: Dr. Jacobs welcomed Jamie Mantooth and said he is looking forward to working with him. The Board of Regents will have a special-called meeting on April 27 to discuss the budget. Staff may contact him with questions. He asked staff to encourage students to return next semester and to be aware of students experiencing high levels of stress during the remaining weeks of this semester. He complimented the resource departments for their response to the recent student tragedy.

Josh answered questions about budget proposals and the budget assessment teams to be formed. Gina noted that she has a list of names Staff Congress members have sent her to be considered for inclusion on the assessment teams. Additional names may be sent to Gina to forward to university administration.

Gina added that she has asked Catherine Sivills, Assistant Vice-President for Communications to address Staff Congress concerning campus-wide communications.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley reported on the proposed tuition increases and student enrollment projections as well as proposed merit pay to be discussed by the Board of Regents at the April 27 meeting. The board will have its regular quarterly meeting on June 1. He and Congress President Gina Winchester met with Dr. Dunn and Tom Denton, Vice-President of
Finance and Administrative Services to request the amount of the Staff Excellence Awards be increased to match the amount of the Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards.

**APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES:** Lana Jennings and Cathy Bazar said their names should be included in the attendance list for the March meeting. John Young made a motion to approve the March minutes as corrected. Laura Lohr Dziekonski seconded, and the motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MARCH TREASURER’S REPORT:** Laura Lohr Dziekonski presented the March Treasurer’s Report. Debbie Plummer made a motion to approve the March Treasurer’s Report as presented. Christian Cruce seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Executive Committee:** Gina Winchester said the budget was the main topic of discussion at the April 5 Faculty and Staff Leadership Committee meeting with Dr. Dunn. The committee will meet again on May 17.

The Executive Committee suggests that Staff Congress hold a meet-and-greet gathering after the Staff Congress Election to allow staff to meet the newly elected or re-elected Staff Congress members and the re-elected Staff Regent. Discussion followed regarding possible dates, times, and other details for the event. The event will be announced on the Staff Congress Election sample ballot.

As agreed at the March Congress meeting, the Executive Committee contacted those Staff Congress members who have missed three consecutive meetings to encourage them to attend the monthly meetings.

**Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee:** No report. Gina Winchester said Committee Chair Stephanie Totty is out-of-town.

**Credentials and Elections Committee:** Orville Herndon said that because he is running for re-election, Tressa Ross will be accepting Staff Congress Election Candidacy Intent Form submissions. He suggested the Congress provide help using computers, while maintaining voter privacy, at the Faculty Hall voting station. Members not currently running for re-election may contact Tressa to volunteer to assist at the Faculty Hall voting station. Orville added that some staff have asked to vote via a paper ballot.

**Staff Recognition Committee:** No report.

**Staff Special Events Committee:** No report. Gina Winchester asked if Staff Congress needs to budget for Children’s Christmas Party items on sale now. Committee Chair Janeen Winters said the supplies have been depleted. She will send Gina an estimate of anticipated party expenses based on the amount spent for the previous two children’s Christmas parties.

**Communications Committee:** Laura Lohr Dziekonski said the deadline to submit items for the next Staff Congress newsletter is May 2. Discussion followed regarding items to include in the newsletter.

**Working Conditions Committee:** Jerry O’Bryan distributed a draft version of a form for staff to use to submit concerns to Staff Congress. Discussion followed. Congress members suggested testing the form as well as developing a procedure for addressing any concerns that may be submitted using the form.

**Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee:** No report.

**AD-HOC COMMITTEES**

**Staff Congress Handbook Review Committee:** Christian Cruce thanked the Staff Congress Handbook Review Committee members for their work and distributed copies of the proposed revised Staff Handbook. She explained that links are being listed in the handbook for some items rather than including the text of those policies which are printed in other university manuals. This will allow users to link to the most current versions of policies which are subject to revision. The committee is not recommending changes to any policies but rather is presenting an updated layout of the Staff Handbook.

Cathy Bazar asked who will keep the handbook updated and how often it will be updated. Christian answered that the handbook will be posted on the Staff Congress website. Tami Dandeneau suggested the handbook review be assigned to the Staff Congress Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee rather than an ad hoc committee. Orville Herndon added that the review can be conducted yearly or every two years. Gina Winchester suggested that the review be conducted yearly by the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee.
Christian Cruce made a motion to present the revised Staff Handbook to the Board of Regents for approval. Debbie Plummer seconded. Discussion followed regarding the links in the handbook. The policies in the links have not been created by Staff Congress, but rather already exist in the Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook. Orville Herndon noted that any link corrections can be emailed to him.

Orville Herndon moved to amend the motion to allow the Staff Congress Handbook Review Committee to correct any grammatical errors or links and present any major changes to the revised handbook at the next Staff Congress meeting. Debbie Plummer seconded the amendment. A hand vote was taken on the amendment: 16 yea's and 0 opposed. A hand vote was taken on the motion: 15 yea's and 0 opposed. One person had to leave between the votes. Any corrections to the handbook may be sent to Orville.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:
Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Sheri Riddle reported that at its April 13 meeting, the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee discussed the priority rankings of topics to be addressed by the committee. Topics include cost of insurance premiums based on income, greater incentives for use of generic medications, inclusion of dental and vision programs with medical plans. Sheri added that 45% of employees surveyed completed the questionnaire distributed on behalf of the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. She listed the topics employees ranked as highest concern: on-campus childcare, flexible online work, aligning breaks with the K-12 schools. The committee cannot guarantee what the results will be, but will certainly explore the topics. She asked staff to inform the committee members of any concerns and comments.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: No report. Sheri Riddle said the committee will meet in May.

Naming Campus Facilities: No report.

Judicial Board: No report.

Sick Leave Appeals Committee: No report.

International Studies Advisory Committee: John Young reported on the April 11 meeting of the International Studies Advisory Committee. Staff Congress made a presentation at that meeting. Also discussed was the use of scholarships by domestic students studying abroad. The committee will gather additional information for further analysis. The committee's next meetings are scheduled for September 12 and November 14.

OLD BUSINESS:
Staff Congress Banner: Laura Lohr Dziekonski presented a photo of the Staff Congress banner layout for input from Staff Congress. She said the purchase of the banner may have to be delayed until the next fiscal year. Gina Winchester thanked Laura for her work on the banner.

NEW BUSINESS:
Chuck Plummer suggested campus information be posted on electronic signs. Sheri Riddle replied that Racer Vision currently posts information for the university community. Debbie Plummer suggested a sign be placed outside the CFSB Center with notices of upcoming and current events occurring in the Center. Gina Winchester will forward the request to Shelley Todd, Director of the CFSB Center.

Phil Schooley asked staff to remind students that they may wait until they return to campus for the fall semester to purchase sticker stickers for their vehicles.

ADJOURNMENT: John Young made a motion to adjourn. Chuck Plummer seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 p.m.