Murray State University Staff Congress  
Draft Minutes for February 19, 2014  
304 North Applied Science Building

PRESENT: James Barnett, Terri Benton, Shanna Burgess, Jessica Evans, Debbie Griffin, Marion Hale, Orville Herndon, Dana Howard, Laura Lohr-Dziekonski, Ann Matheny, Margie Miller, Evan O’Neal, Chuck Plummer, Debbie Plummer, Brian Purcell, Sheri Riddle, Tressa Ross, Stephanie Totty, Daniel Williams, Lisa Willis, Gina Winchester, and John Young.

Guests: Jackie Dudley, Interim Vice President, Finance and Administrative Services; Dr. Renee Fister, Faculty Regent; Dr. Tim Miller, Interim University President; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice-President, Student Affairs; and Phil Schooley, Staff Regent.

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President John Young called the meeting to order.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:

Dr. Robertson, Vice-President for Student Affairs: Dr. Robertson listed upcoming campus events in March. He encouraged staff to complete the Residential Colleges Survey and the Campus Climate Survey.

Jackie Dudley, Interim Vice President, Finance and Administrative Services: No report. She answered questions.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley said the next Board or Regents meeting is scheduled for March 11-12. He presorted on the Presidential search.

Faculty Regent Report: Dr. Renee Fister thanked Staff Congress members for their representation of staff. She noted that in working with the President and Vice-Presidents concerning the budget, she wants to save as many jobs as possible. She reminded staff that the SACS team will be on campus next week. Dr. Fister answered questions.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MEETING MINUTES: James Barnett made a motion to approve the January minutes as presented. Orville Herndon seconded, and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY TREASURER’S REPORT: Treasurer Sheri Riddle presented the January Treasurer’s Report. Laura Lohr-Dziekonski made a motion to approve the January Treasurer’s Report as presented. Jessica Evans seconded, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: John Young said the Executive Committee will meet with Dr. Miller after today’s Staff Congress meeting. He asked Congress members to inform the Executive Committee of any items they would like the committee to discuss with Dr. Miller.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon reported on the January meeting of the Credentials and Elections Committee. He presented the Staff Congress Election calendar and a sample of the candidacy intent post card which was emailed to Congress members yesterday. The post cards will cost less than full sheets of paper which have been used in the past. John Young asked if there was any discussion. There was none. The election calendar and candidacy intent post card were approved.

Staff Recognition Committee: Tressa Ross spoke about updates need to the Staff Excellence Awards nomination form. She will contact the appropriate department to have the updates made. She asked if the awards will continue to be funded. Jackie Dudley, Phil Schooley, and John Young answered that the funding will continue.

Staff Special Events Committee: No report.

Communications Committee: Laura Lohr-Dziekonski said a Staff Congress newsletter will go out in March. It will include information about the upcoming Staff Congress election and a reminder to nominate staff for the Staff Excellence Award.

Working Conditions Committee: No report.

Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee: Debbie Plummer said that no one has applied for the text book scholarship for the spring semester. She reported on the fundraiser. Discussion followed concerning how to promote the scholarship.
Dr. Tim Miller, Interim President: Dr. Miller joined the meeting. He reported on his recent visits to Frankfort and Hopkinsville. Dr. Miller complimented the work of the Building Service Technicians and Facilities Management staff and said that students and parents are also complimentary of their work. He discussed the budget and enrollment and answered questions.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: No report.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:
Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Stephanie Totty reported on the January 17 and February 14 meetings of the University-wide Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. Topics being addressed by the committee include adding extended family dependent (partner) undergraduate tuition waivers to the tuition waiver usage policy. Also being addressed by the committee are childcare, the possibility of extending health services to adult dependents 18 and older and spouses, and smoke-free campus. Due to budget factors, the topic of providing health care services for staff and adult dependents was tabled until the next calendar year. Stephanie said she presented to that committee the Staff Congress recommendation concerning military leave. The recommendation was then forwarded to the university administration which resulted in further discussion by the University-wide Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. The committee also discussed whether or not votes taken during on-line meetings may violate the open meetings law.

The military leave recommendation was then discussed at today’s Staff Congress meeting. The consensus was for the Staff Regent to present Staff Congress’ recommendation to the Board of Regents.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: No report.

Naming Campus Facilities Committee: No report.

Judicial Board: No report.

Sick Leave Appeals Committee: No report.

International Studies Advisory Committee: No report.

MSU 100: Sheri Riddle reported on the February 17 meeting of the MSU 100 committee.

Dual Career Task Force: Debbie Plummer explained the purpose of the committee and reported on its February meeting.

AD HOC COMMITTEE:

Budget ad hoc committee: No report.

Campus Appearance and Improvements: No report.

By Laws Update—Textbook Scholarship: No report.

OLD BUSINESS:
Stephanie Totty said that at a previous meeting, Staff Congress had tabled discussion of whether or not to recommend that undergraduate tuition waiver be made available to partners of eligible employees. She asked if the Congress would like to make a recommendation on this topic. Parliamentarian Marion Hale responded that this will have to be placed on the agenda of a future Staff Congress meeting for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:
Orville Herndon referred to Board of Regents’ policy regarding university governance and open meetings. He suggested that affected groups contact the University Legal Services Office regarding holding forums on-line and voting during on-line meetings.

Discussion followed regarding Margie Miller’s suggestion to write a letter from Staff Congress to the Kentucky legislature concerning the budget. Stephanie Totty made a motion that Staff Congress write a letter to the Kentucky legislature in support of rescinding the 2.5% appropriation reduction. Sheri Riddle seconded. John Young asked for discussion. Discussion followed.
Orville Herndon recommended that the Congress Executive Officers write the letter so that it can be sent to the legislature in time to be considered before the closing of the legislative session.

Dr. Miller said the Faculty Senate has sent a letter to the CPE regarding the tuition increase. He will forward the letter to John Young. Phil Schooley asked if Staff Congress should also send a letter to the CPE. Dr. Miller said the CPE will be on our campus for its April meeting during which it will set tuition rates. Stephanie Totty called for the question. The motion carried.

John Young reminded members that the March Staff Congress meeting is scheduled for March 26 rather than for the usual third Wednesday of the month due to Spring Break.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Dana Howard made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:18 p.m.