Murray State University Staff Congress Draft Minutes for May 11, 2011

Curris Center: Stables

PRESENT: Terri Benton, Johnathan Chancellor, Susanne D'Angelo, Laura Dziekonski, Marion Hale, Orville Herndon, Wade Herndon, Cheryl Hicks, Dana Howard, Lana Jennings, Margie Miller, Kerry Pinkston, Debbie Plummer, Sheri Riddle, Shari Wilkins, Lisa Willis, Dwaine Willoughby, Janeen Winters, John Young, and Staff Regent Phil Schooley. Guests: Shanna Burgess, Staff Congress member-elect; Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff; Tressa Ross, Staff Congress member-elect; and Tim Williams, Staff Congress member-elect.

CALL TO ORDER: Vice-President Sheri Riddle called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. Staff Congress President Gina Winchester was out-of-town on university business. For the benefit of newly elected Staff Congress members whose terms will begin in July, Sheri asked those in attendance to introduce themselves.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:

Josh Jacobs thanked staff for their hard work which made this past academic year so successful. He gave an overview of the agenda for the May 20 Board of Regents meeting. The afternoon portion of the meeting will be streamed live via the internet. The meeting is open to the public and public participation is allowed. Josh explained upcoming renovations to be made to some campus buildings.

Orville Herndon asked if the proposal to provide a free parking permit for staff with 20+ years of university employment would be implemented this fall. Josh answered that he has not heard of an implementation plan for a parking permit benefit. Margie Miller asked if an across-the-board pay raise looks probable. Josh said the budget being proposed to the Board of Regents includes a four percent across-the-board increase. He added that several comments have been made that staff and faculty need to be recognized with a raise.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley said the Board of Regents voted to cancel the special board meeting and to support a tuition increase in the highest amount allowed by the Council on Postsecondary Education. Phil expects the pay increase to be approved, with implementation beginning July 1. He welcomes comments and questions anytime.

APPROVAL OF APRIL MINUTES: John Young noted that in the first sentence of the Staff Regent Report, "Hudson" should be spelled "Hutson." Laura Dziekonski made a motion to approve the April Minutes as corrected. Janeen Winters seconded, and the motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Laura Dziekonski presented the April Treasurer's Report. Debbie Plummer made a motion to approve the April Treasurer's Report as presented. Lana Jennings seconded, and the motion carried. Laura distributed a card for everyone to sign for the husband of Staff Congress member Lisa Willis. He was recently injured at work.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: No report.

<u>Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee</u>: Sheri Riddle reported that the committee met on May 6 and will not meet again until August. The main topic for the May 6 meeting was the wording for the Sick Leave Bank and the tuition waiver policy. These will be further discussed at the committee's meeting in August.

<u>Credentials and Elections Committee</u>: Orville Herndon said everyone should have received the Staff Congress Election results via email. He welcomed newly elected members and congratulated re-elected members. Orville made a motion to appoint Dwaine Willoughby to fill the remainder of the position vacated by Jordan Smith who resigned to accept employment outside the university. Debbie Plummer seconded, and the motion carried.

Orville asked that comments regarding the Staff Congress election be forwarded to him. He noted that the number of votes cast for the 2011 Staff Congress election, the first year the election was held on-line, was greater than the combined number of votes cast for the 2009 and 2010 Staff Congress elections. He has received several positive comments concerning the online voting. The Credentials and Elections Committee will meet before the next Staff Congress meeting, with the date to be determined. Staff Congress members are welcome to attend the meeting and he will send an email with the committee's meeting date once it has been determined. A vacancy remains in the Facilities Management/General Category. Interested persons may contact him.

Staff Congress officer elections will be conducted at the June Staff Congress meeting, with the officers' terms to begin at the July Staff Congress meeting. Nominations submitted to Orville prior to the June meeting will be printed on a paper ballot. Nominations will also be accepted at the June meeting. Persons may contact him with questions.

<u>Staff Recognition Committee</u>: Terri Benton reported that Staff Congress President Gina Winchester met with Tom Denton and Tom Hoffacker to discuss retaining two Staff Excellence Awards to use as at-large recognitions. This may require approval from the Board of Regents. The deadline to submit Staff Excellence Award nominations has been extended to June 10. The nominations forms will be mailed this week or the first of next week. A date has not yet been determined for the Staff Recognition Luncheon.

<u>Staff Special Events Committee</u>: Janeen Winters noted that this is the time of year Staff Congress purchases door prizes for the December staff reception as well as prizes for the Children's Christmas Party.

<u>Communications Committee</u>: Laura Dziekonski asked Staff Congress members to visit the Staff Congress webpage and forward any suggestions for the webpage to the Staff Congress Secretary. The webpage can be found by typing Staff Congress in the search box of the MSU homepage. Staff Congress will mail a newsletter in the next few weeks. Items to include in newsletter should be sent to Laura or Kim.

Working Conditions Committee: No report.

<u>Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee</u>: Debbie Plummer is preparing the scholarship application guidelines document which will be posted on the Staff Congress webpage.

AD-HOC COMMITTEES

Staff Congress Handbook Review Committee: No report.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: See Personnel Policies and Benefits Report above.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: No report.

Naming Campus Facilities: No report.

Judicial Board: No report.

Sick Leave Appeals Committee: No report.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

<u>NEW BUSINESS</u>: Margie Miller said she has been asked by staff why employees cannot receive a lump sum in lieu of taking accrued vacation time when preparing to retire or leave a position. Instead, the employee must use the accrued vacation time for the remainder of employment. This effectively leaves the position vacant, as the university cannot search for a replacement while a person officially holds a position, even he is on vacation for the remainder of his employment.

Josh Jacobs responded that not all units have the ability within their accounts to buy out an employee's remaining vacation time. Vacation funds are not from general university funds but from the specific employee's department. He noted that the university cannot have two persons in the same position simultaneously; meaning the search for a new employee cannot be conducted for a filled position.

Orville Herndon asked if purchasing additional equipment would benefit the Elluminate sessions used to transmit Staff Congress meetings over the internet. Sheri Riddle listed the current equipment owned by Staff Congress for Elluminate sessions and explained that today's difficulty was caused by technical difficulties not related to Staff Congress' equipment.

ADJOURNMENT: John Young made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Debbie Plummer seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.