Murray State University Staff Congress Draft Minutes for November 10, 2010

Curris Center: Stables

PRESENT: Vicki D. Anderson, S.G. Carthell, Johnathan Chancellor, Christian Cruce, Laura Dziekonski, Marion Hale, Orville Herndon, Wade Herndon, Cheryl Hicks, Lana Jennings, Margie Miller, Jerry O'Bryan, Chuck Plummer, Debbie Plummer, Sheri Riddle, Stephanie Totty, Becky Wilder, Shari Wilkins, Lisa Willis, Gina Winchester, Janeen Winters, and John Young. Guests: Mary Ann Armstrong, Human Resources; Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff; Daniel A. Lavit, Continuing Education; and Phil Schooley, Staff Regent.

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Gina Winchester called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:

Daniel Lavit of Continuing Education spoke about non-traditional students and the Integrated Studies Program, a flexible degree completion program designed for persons with 60 or more credits who want to return to college to complete a degree. He said one half million Kentuckians have some college credit but no degree. He distributed an information booklet and answered questions about the program.

Gina Winchester invited Mr. Lavit to attend the staff reception in December to provide information and answer questions staff may have about the program.

Mary Ann Armstrong of Human Resources said open enrollment for insurance ends on November 12. She answered questions. She added that Human Resources makes note of frequently asked questions about insurance in order to include that information in the next open enrollment packet or to re-write information that is already included in the packet.

Josh Jacobs thanked Mary Ann Armstrong and the Human Resources staff for the work they do to convey benefit information to employees.

Josh referred to the mind-set lecture given by the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology. He encouraged staff to visit the Beloit College website to read the list of cultural norms for this year's freshman class. This information will be helpful in relating to students.

Josh said that starting the week of November 15, the university will have the ability to send alerts and messages to the office phones and mobile devices of employees who register their phone numbers with the program. This option will later be offered to students.

Josh said the dedication for the CFSB Center will be held on November 15. He reported on the Hold thy Banner High Campaign.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley said the next Board of Regents meeting is schedule for December 10. Committees will meet in the morning, with meeting times to be announced. The regular meeting will be held in the afternoon. He reported that 575 completed staff surveys have been received. The survey will close at midnight on November 12.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES: Debbie Plummer made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Christian Cruce seconded, and the motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Laura Dziekonski presented the September and October Treasurer's Reports. Orville Herndon made a motion to approve the September and October Treasurer's Reports as presented. Christian Cruce seconded, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: Gina Winchester thanked Josh Jacobs for relaying to Staff Congress information he has been sharing with the SGA. She thanked Staff Congress members for their attendance at the monthly meetings. The Staff Congress committees are meeting and functioning.

The Executive Committee's meeting with Dr. Dunn in October was rescheduled for December. The committee will meet prior to its December appointment with the president. She reminded everyone of the next staff mixer/trivia night at Nick's in November.

<u>Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee</u>: Sheri Riddle reported that the committee met this week and talked about the interim policy which was pursued in 2007, without resolve. She said Tom Hoffacker, Director of Human Resources, emailed her

that no such policy exists at MSU or at other universities. If Staff Congress wants to pursue such a policy, the committee can prepare information for the congress to consider.

Gina Winchester asked Josh Jacobs if anything has passed through the Board of Regents regarding this issue. He said he is not aware of the Board of Regents having addressed an interim position policy. At this time, he doesn't believe employees are put in interim positions longer than needed. Discussion followed. It seems that under a past administration, the question of whether or not an interim position policy was needed arose due to the length of time a specific individual was an interim position. That issue has since been resolved. In response, Sheri Riddle said the committee will not pursue an interim position policy at this time. The committee will address the issue should someone feel the need to do so in the future.

Regarding the request to consider issuing a free parking permit to employees with 20 or more years of service with the university: Sheri reported on the number of people with 20 or more years of employment at MSU and the cost of issuing free parking permits to them. A motion is required for Staff Congress to take the request to the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. Orville Herndon made a motion that Staff Congress submit to the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee a request that a free parking permit be issued to employees with 20 or more years of service. Becky Wilder seconded. There was no discussion, and the motion passed.

Regarding changes to the definition of immediate family in the wording of the Sick Leave Policy: Sheri noted that Tom Hoffacker said adding more categories/family members is not desired. Sheri read the policy and the proposed changes. Debbie Plummer made a motion to present the proposed wording changes to the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. Laura Dziekonski seconded, and the motion carried.

Sheri added that the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet Friday, November 12.

<u>Credentials and Elections Committee</u>: Orville Herndon reported that the Credentials Committee is looking into the possibility of having online voting for Staff Congress elections. Anyone with related questions may contact him.

Staff Recognition Committee: No report

Staff Special Events Committee: Janeen Winters distributed sign-up sheets for persons to help with the December 4 Children's Christmas Party and the December 9 Staff Reception. She listed the activities for the children's party and said she will continue to collect candy for the party. She noted that Mr. Tom Denton is graciously paying for the food for the staff reception. At the reception, information about the book scholarship will be available for staff. She will send an email reminder to those who have volunteered to help at these events.

<u>Communications Committee</u>: Laura Dziekonski reported that the committee is preparing the flyers for the children's party and staff reception. For the newsletter, items need to be submitted by November 18.

<u>Working Conditions Committee</u>: Jerry O'Bryan made a motion to present to the December 2 meeting of the Executive Council and Dr. Dunn the proposal to extend employee drug testing campus-wide. Laura Dziekonski seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion carried.

<u>Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee</u>: Debbie Plummer reported that Deanna Beane, daughter of staff member Kay Hays, has been awarded the book scholarship for the fall 2010 semester. At the staff reception, staff will have the opportunity to donate to the scholarship fund.

AD-HOC COMMITTEES

Staff Congress Handbook Review Committee: Christian Cruce distributed a copy of the Table of Contents of the Staff Handbook and an Idea Sheet for staff to use to submit suggestions regarding revisions to the Staff Handbook. Gina Winchester noted that this committee has been working diligently in reviewing the Staff Handbook.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: No report. Sheri Riddle said the committee will meet November 12.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: No report. Sheri Riddle said the committee will meet November 17.

Naming Campus Facilities: No report.

Judicial Board: No report.

Sick Leave Appeals Committee: No report.

OLD BUSINESS:

Gina Winchester reminded staff of the email address available for employees to contact Staff Congress: msu.staffcongress@murraystate.edu. David McGary in Information Systems has set up a voice mail for Staff Congress at 809-4493. Staff may use this number to request information or voice concerns and requests.

Gina said a computer lab session has been arranged for Staff Congress members to register for the Healthy Life program with assistance from Amelia Dodd, Healthy Life Coordinator. Staff Congress members can use what they learn in the lab to assist coworkers in registering for Healthy Life. Other lab sessions can be arranged if needed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Christian Cruce said a staff member told her he is not comfortable with the university providing domestic partner benefits. Gina Winchester responded that the Faculty Senate has already passed the resolution requesting the university to provide domestic partner benefits. Because the resolution is now with the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee, employees with concerns about the resolution should contact that committee. Sheri Riddle, a member of the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee said the committee has formed a subcommittee to examine the topic. The subcommittee has researched the wording and requirements of the domestic partner benefits policies at other Kentucky state universities. She elaborated on some of the potential requirements for a person to be eligible for domestic partner benefits.

Orville Herndon noted that several people have contacted him with concerns about the university providing domestic partner benefits. Several of those who contacted him said they would prefer to have pay raises rather than additional benefits. Margie Miller added that she has also been contacted by staff who said they need more money to pay bills and do not want an increase in the cost of benefits. Discussion followed.

Chuck Plummer said some staff are dissatisfied with the results of the Staff Compensation Study and would like Staff Congress to pursue staff members' concerns about this. Gina Winchester added that she and Staff Regent Phil Schooley have also been contacted by staff with concerns about the results of the study. She and Phil will present to Tom Hoffacker and Dr. Dunn the comments from staff. Phil noted that staff may contact him with concerns. Gina reviewed the process of the Staff Compensation Study, including that Human Resources asked Staff Congress to pursue the study. She said implementation of the study findings is in the early stages and is an ongoing progress. Staff Congress will strive to keep the administration aware of the need to continue to implement the study results. Discussion followed.

Mary Ann Armstrong said new health insurance cards with be issued for 2011.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.