MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

Staff Congress

Draft Minutes for October 21, 2026
Wells Hall, Room 118, and Zoom

Present: Johnny Anthony, Ken Ashlock, Dedrick Brooks, Duane Dycus, Hannah Garner, Gerry Harris, Abby Hensley, Orville Herndon, Kelsey Johnson, Robert Koehler, Trish Lofton, Carlos Lopez, Julianne McClain, Angie McCord, Jeremy McKeel, Audrey Neal, Tressa Ross, Jillian Smith, Taylor Snell, Mary Steely, Brandon Story, Kristen Swisher, Justin Thomas, Karami Underwood, Brian Williams, Casey Workman

Absent: Emily Asher, Brandon Johnson, David Looney, Amy Sanders

Guests: Dr. Michael Bordieri, Faculty Senate President; Wendy Cain, Assistant Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services; Dr. Ron K. Patterson, University President; Camela Ramey; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President of Student Affairs; Joe Tucker; Dr. Paul Twigg, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs; Dr. David Wilson, Staff Regent

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Jeremy McKeel called the meeting to order.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS PRESENT:
Dr. Ron K. Patterson, University President: Dr. Ron Patterson complimented and thanked faculty, staff, and students for Homecoming events. He provided updates on the appointment of an interim director of Procurement and the appointment of an interim Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services. Dr. Patterson provided updates on the search for an Associate Director of Human Resources and an Associate Vice President of Facilities Management. He discussed the ongoing assessment of Human Resources policies and processes, and onboarding and exiting procedures for faculty and staff. The assessment is being conducted by external consultant David Russell.

Dr. Paul Twigg, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs: Dr. Paul Twigg complimented staff for Homecoming preparations and for their work to open Jackson Hall. Dr. Twigg reported on the status of plans to work with the Gardner Institute as part of improving processes for student success.

Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President of Student Affairs: Dr. Don Robertson was complimentary of Homecoming events. He reported on the fall career fairs and fall 2026 enrollment. The annual First-Generation Student Celebration is scheduled for November 4.

Wendy Cain, Assistant Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services: Wendy Cain listed dates for the employee Health Fair and open enrollment. She discussed beta testing for electronic invoices and for uploading receipts for P-cards. Ms. Cain explained a new card to be added to the finance tab in myGate to allow for inter-account code reclassification of P-card purchases within a department's account codes.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson said the Board of Regents will meet on October 30. He reminded staff that flu shots will be available at the Health Fair. Dr. Wilson thanked staff for organizing Homecoming events.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Approval of September 16, 2026 Meeting Minutes: Orville Herndon noted a correction in the report from the Credentials and Elections Committee in the September 16, 2026 Meeting Minutes. The second sentence states, "He said the filing period for the Staff Regent Election has traditionally been held beginning the Monday after spring break." The sentence should be corrected as follows. "The Staff Regent Election process begins before spring break."

Orville Herndon made a motion to approve the September 16, 2026 Meeting Minutes as amended. The motion was seconded. President McKeel asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT:

Approval of October 2026 Treasurer's Report: Trish Lofton made a motion to approve the October 2026 Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded. President McKeel asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: President McKeel said the Executive Committee discussed dates for upcoming events.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon reported that Meagan Brawner is no longer working at Murray State. Mr. Herndon made a motion to appoint Angie McCord to complete the remainder of Ms. Brawner's term on Staff Congress. The term ends June 30, 2029. Audrey Neal seconded the motion. President McKeel asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion carried.

Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee: Trish Lofton said the December Staff Recognition Reception will be held December 16. The presentation for years of service will include recognition for five and ten years of service. The Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee would like to work with the Pony Express to take hot chocolate or coffee to staff at locations across campus in the fall or winter.

Communications Committee: Jillian Smith reported that the Communications Committee has recently posted items on Staff Congress social media. She plans to post a video summary of today's Staff Congress meeting.

Working Conditions Committee: No report.

Staff Survey Committee: Dedrick Brooks said the Staff Survey Committee will meet on October 28, to begin preparing the upcoming Staff Survey.

Textbook Scholarship Committee: Abby Hensley reported that the Textbook Scholarship Committee awarded a scholarship of $50 each to two individuals, which brought the balance of the Textbook Scholarship fund to 96 cents. A rebate night is scheduled for October 27, 4:00-9:00 p.m., at Burrito Shack, to raise funds for the scholarship. Thirty individuals will need to sign the sheet at Burrito Shack during the rebate night in order for a portion of sales to be designated for the scholarship account.

The Kay R. Hays Staff Professional Development Fund has a different selection committee. Ms. Hensley will contact the selection committee to schedule a meeting.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: No report.

Community Involvement and Access Committee: Audrey Neal reported on the Fall into Wellness activities planned for the week of October 19. A survey was sent to persons who registered for Fall into Wellness sessions to request feedback on the sessions. The committee will begin planning the spring Staff Success Week.

Tressa Ross complimented the committee members for the Fall into Wellness events.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Trish Lofton said the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet on November 6, on Zoom. The committee will finalize the formation of subcommittees to discuss the responses to the Insurance and Benefits Survey sent to employees in June.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: No report.

Naming Campus Facilities Committee: Dedrick Brooks reported that the Naming Campus Facilities Committee discussed a naming proposal. The details cannot be reported at this time.

Judicial Board: No report.

Budget Advisory Committee: Jeremy McKeel said the Budget Advisory Committee will meet on October 28.

Parking Advisory Committee: Duane Dycus said he has received requests that the signs for Health Services be moved to Jackson Hall.

Staff Congress member Robert Koehler, Space and Project Planner in Facilities Management, said a request has been submitted to have those signs moved. Mr. Koehler said handicap parking signs will be added to parking spaces at Alexandar Hall in response to the request for additional handicap spaces needed for persons visiting the Center for Communication Disorders. If needed, more handicap spaces can be added.

Affirmative Action Committee: No report.

Strategic Planning Committee: Abby Hensley reported on the September 16 meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee. Committee members have been asked to meet with stakeholder groups to ask for feedback.

Campus Fee Advisory Group: Audrey Neal reported that the Campus Fee Advisory Group met to discuss the current fee structure at Murray State and at peer institutions. The group began discussion concerning whether fees should be an amount for each semester or based on course load.

University Policies Workgroup: No report.

AD HOC COMMITTEES:
Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee: Orville Herndon reported that the Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee met to discuss the Kentucky Revised Statute and potential updates to the section of the Staff Congress Bylaws that addresses the Staff Regent position. He explained the potential updates considered by the committee. Mr. Herndon has emailed University Counsel Rob Miller to ask if a change to the Staff Congress Bylaws requires approval by the Board of Regents.

Discussion followed. Comments regarding the potential changes to the Bylaws concerning the Staff Regent Election can be emailed to Mr. Herndon so that a proposed revision to the Staff Regent Election process can be presented at the November Staff Congress meeting.

Extended Campus Committee: No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

INFORMATION ITEMS: Gerry Harris said a tire amnesty event is scheduled for October 22-24, at the Calloway County Fairgrounds.

ADJOURNMENT: Kristen Swisher made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

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