MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

Staff Congress

Minutes for July 16, 2025—Approved by Staff Congress August 20, 2025
Wells Hall, Room 118, and Zoom

Present: Ken Ashlock, Dedrick Brooks, Hannah Durbin, Duane Dycus, Gerry Harris, Abby Hensley, Orville Herndon, BJ Johnson, Trish Lofton, David Looney, Carlos Lopez, Jeremy McKeel, Audrey Neal, Kim Newbern, Tressa Ross, David Shelton, Mary Steely, Rachel Stewart, Justin Thomas, Joshua Tillson, Jenni Todd, Karami Underwood, Brian Williams, Lisa Willis, Casey Workman

Absent: Jodi Hanneman, Dayna Hutchinson, Joshua Hutson, Samantha Matuszak, Kristen Swisher

Guests: Courtney Hixon, Director, Human Resources; Camela Ramey; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President of Student Affairs; Dr. David Wilson, Staff Regent; Dr. Gary ZeRuth, Faculty Regent

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Audrey Neal called the meeting to order.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS PRESENT:
Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President of Student Affairs: Dr. Don Robertson gave an update on enrollment numbers and recapture efforts for the fall 2025 semester. The next Racer Nation Orientation will be held on August 5. He thanked staff for their work and for greeting students on campus. He encouraged staff to participate in Great Beginnings. Students will begin arriving on campus in early August for the fall semester. Family Weekend is scheduled for September 5-7.

Courtney Hixon, Director, Human Resources: Courtney Hixon said that Kroger pharmacies will be in-network for Murray State health insurance beginning August 4. She listed dates for upcoming Wellness Events. The lunch walking group will meet on July 23 and 30. The Watermelon Social for staff is scheduled for July 23, at the Waterfield Library Breezeway. Staff may attend anytime between 12:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. For the August 6 Lunch and Learn session, the topic will be retirement. At the September 11 session, wellness resources will be discussed.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson said the Board of Regents will hold a special meeting on July 18, at 8:30 a.m. The agenda for the meeting includes the swearing-in of the new Student Regent and Faculty Regent. A Secretary and Vice Chair will be elected. When new regents are sworn-in, the Board must vote on the Secretary and Vice Chair. Also on the agenda is the search process for a Senior Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services. At the Board of Regents Retreat scheduled for August 28, the Staff Congress Executive Officers will present the results of the 2024-2025 Staff Survey. The Board of Regents will meet on August 29. He encouraged staff to help students and their families with move-in during Great Beginnings in August. Staff may contact him with questions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Tressa Ross made a motion to approve the June 2025 Meeting Minutes as presented. Dedrick Brooks seconded. President Neal asked if there was any discussion. There was none. She called for the vote and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT: Abby Hensley made a motion to approve the June 2025 Treasurer's Report. Trish Lofton seconded. President Neal asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, she called for the vote. The motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:
Executive Committee: President Neal said the Executive Committee did not meet in July due to camp schedules and staff vacations.

Ms. Neal said that, in the future, Staff Congress may want to consider using the July meeting as the Staff Congress Retreat instead of scheduling the retreat on a separate date. The Executive Committee is in the process of completing Staff Congress committee assignments using the responses Staff Congress members indicated on the Committee Preference Form. Representatives who are appointed to the Staff Congress Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee will also be appointed to the University-Wide Insurance and Benefits Committee. The Executive Committee plans to have the committee assignments completed for presentation at the Staff Congress Retreat.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon made a motion to appoint Ken Ashlock to complete the remainder of a vacant Staff Congress position that expires June 30, 2027. Dedrick Brooks seconded the motion. President Neal called for the vote. The motion carried.

Mr. Herndon asked Staff Congress members to introduce themselves.

Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee: Tressa Ross reported that the Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee is working with the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services to plan the Staff Breakfast. The committee hopes to schedule the breakfast on a date when Dr. Patterson will be able to attend.

President Neal suggested the committee ask if the Staff Breakfast can be scheduled in conjunction with a back-to-school event. Ms. Neal noted that Dr. Patterson has held back-to-school events at other universities and may be considering holding a similar event at Murray State.

President Neal requested that the committee ask the Human Resources office if Staff Congress can provide information about the Racer Spirit Award and Staff Recognition Award at the Staff Watermelon Social.

Communications Committee: Jeremy McKeel reported that headshots of Staff Congress Members were taken before today's Staff Congress meeting. He provided Staff Congress members with a link to submit a brief biography that the Communications Committee will post, with the headshots, on Staff Congress social media to introduce Congress members to the university community.

President Neal added that Staff Congress members can recognize staff accomplishments by sending the information to the Communications Committee to post on Staff Congress social media. Mr. McKeel provided a link for submitting staff accomplishments for social media posts.

Working Conditions Committee: BJ Johnson reported that the Working Conditions Committee is continuing to compile information from peer universities on the topic of four-day summer work-week schedules. The committee tentatively plans to present the information at next month's Staff Congress meeting.

President Neal said she will follow-up with Human Resources Director Courtney Hixon concerning the proposed revisions to the callback policy.

Staff Survey Committee: No report.

Textbook Scholarship Committee: President Neal gave the Textbook Scholarship Committee report on behalf of Chair Joshua Hutson who was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting. The committee will be promoting the fall application deadline for the Textbook Scholarship and the Professional Development Fund Scholarship, as well as promoting scholarship donation requests through the Office of Development.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: Trish Lofton said the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee will follow-up on the proposed revision to the callback policy that was submitted to university administration.

Community Involvement and Access Committee: President Neal reported that the Community Involvement and Access Committee is planning the next Staff Success Week. The 2024-2025 committee chair accepted off-campus employment. A new chair will be appointed for the 2025-2026 year.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Orville Herndon said the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet at the end of August. The committee will discuss 2026 insurance information if the information is available at that time. Persons with feedback concerning the 2025 insurance may forward comments to Mr. Herndon to share with the committee.

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.

Budget Advisory Committee: President Neal said the Budget Advisory Committee will share budget information as it is received.

Shared Governance Committee: President Neal said that although the Shared Governance Committee is not listed as an official committee in the Board of Regents Policy Manual, she anticipates that shared governance-type meetings will be held in the future.

Parking Advisory Committee: No report.

A question was asked about the parking lots between Calloway Avenue and Ryan Avenue west of 16th Street.

Duane Dycus replied that at the spring meeting of the Parking Advisory Committee, the committee was told that the lots will be combined into one lot.

Discussion followed regarding access to parking spaces that are currently available for use but are blocked by incorrect parking of personal vehicles of construction staff, with individual vehicles occupying multiple spaces or are backed into parking spaces. Staff also noted seeing vehicles parked in fire lanes.

Mr. Dycus replied he will relay the concerns to the Parking Advisory Committee. In addition, Staff Congress President Neal will draft a statement regarding the parking concerns discussed at today's meeting. She will send the statement to Staff Congress members for feedback, then forward the statement to the Parking Office to address concerns prior to the start of the fall semester and before the fall meeting of the Parking Advisory Committee, which will be held later in the semester.

Staff also discussed the possibility of receiving warnings for parking violations that may have been made as a mistake and not an intentional violation. For example, staff who obtained a new license plate may have forgotten to update the information for the parking permit. Staff noted that when driving a new vehicle onto campus, and planning to update the vehicle parking permit upon arriving at work at MSU, some staff have received a ticket within approximately two hours of arriving on campus before having the time to update the parking information due to other responsibilities when arriving at work.

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Business List Revision Committee: President Neal will update the access to the Business Discount List in Google Docs so that Business List Revision Committee Chair Jodi Hanneman can continue to update the list.

Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee: Orville Herndon said the Staff Regent Bylaws Committee is waiting for information from peer universities to use in the discussion of proposed revisions to the Bylaws concerning the Staff Regent.

President Neal recommended the committee use the information received to date from other peer universities and proceed with the development of proposed Bylaw revisions.

Mr. Herndon recommended that the Bylaws revision include moving the election of Staff Congress Officers from June to May.

President Neal added that holding the election of Staff Congress Officers in May would allow more Staff Congress representatives to vote in the election. Some Staff Congress members are unable to attend the June Staff Congress meeting due to other responsibilities, such as Racer Nation Orientations. Some members hold ten-month positions, August through May, and do not work during June and July. If the officer election is moved to May, the terms of office for Staff Congress officers would remain as is, July through June.

Parking Benefit Committee: Duane Dycus reported that new faculty appointments have been made to the Parking Advisory Committee. He will contact the new committee members to discuss the development of the joint statement on the parking benefit that was discussed at the June Staff Congress meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Vote to Accept the Recommendations from the 2024-2025 Survey: President Neal asked for a motion to accept the Recommendations from the 2024-2025 Staff Survey that were emailed to Staff Congress prior to today's Staff Congress meeting.

Trish Lofton made a motion to accept the recommendations from the 2024-2025 Staff Survey. Justin Thomas seconded the motion. President Neal asked if there was any discussion.

The question was asked if the Congress is voting to accept the Staff Survey Results.

President Neal replied that the vote is to accept the recommendations from the Staff Survey. She asked if there were any further questions. Hearing none, she called for the question. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Justin Thomas asked if Staff Congress should vote to move the approval of the Staff Congress 2025-2026 Committees from July, as stated in the Staff Congress Bylaws, to August.

Tressa Ross made a motion to vote in August on the approval of the 2025-2026 Staff Congress Committees and appointments to university-wide committees. BJ Johnson seconded the motion. President Neal asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, she called for the vote. The motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

Dedrick Brooks said that Governor's Scholars Program students are on-campus. Governor Andy Beshear spoke to Murray State GSP students.

ADJOURNMENT: Trish Lofton made a motion to adjourn. Justin Thomas seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.