MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

Staff Congress

Minutes for May 21, 2025—Approved by Staff Congress June 18, 2025
Wells Hall, Room 118, and Zoom

Present: Duane Dycus, Jodi Hanneman, Abby Hensley, Orville Herndon, Dayna Hutchinson, B.J. Johnson, Trish Lofton, David Looney, Jeremy McKeel, Audrey Neal, Tressa Ross, David Shelton, Mary Steely, Rachel Stewart, Kristen Swisher, Justin Thomas, Joshua Tillson, Jenni Todd, Karami Underwood, Brian Williams, Lisa Willis, Casey Workman

Absent: Dedrick Brooks, Tami Dandeneau, Gerry Harris, Joshua Hutson, Matthew Jones, Amanda Mansfield, Kim Newbern

Guests: Hannah Durbin, Staff Congress Member-Elect; Camela Ramey; Dr. David Wilson, Staff Regent

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

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS PRESENT:
Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson said the next Board of Regents meeting is scheduled for June 6. He will email the meeting link to staff. He reported on the spring commencement ceremonies. Students will be on-campus throughout the summer to participate in the Governor's Scholars Program, the Commonwealth Honors Academy, and Upward Bound events. Incoming Murray State President Dr. Ron Patterson will be on campus July 1. The Murray State men's baseball team won the Missouri Valley Conference title.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Tressa Ross made a motion to approve the April 2025 Meeting Minutes as presented. B.J. Johnson seconded. President Neal called for the vote. The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Tressa Ross presented the April 2025 Treasurer's Report. The payment to the Professional Development Fund Scholarship recipient will be reflected on the next Treasurer's Report. President Neal said that Staff Congress will purchase refreshments for the Staff Success Week sessions. Trish Lofton made a motion to approve the April 2025 Treasurer's Report. Justin Thomas seconded. President Neal asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, she called for the question. The motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:
Executive Committee: President Neal said the Executive Officers have compiled questions that staff have submitted for Staff Congress to ask incoming Murray State President Dr. Ron Patterson. During the Staff Congress listening sessions held on May 14, staff discussed concerns regarding compensation. Staff Congress officers will present those concerns to Dr. Patterson. Other topics the officers will discuss with the incoming University President include pay grades, on-going compensation study reviews, cost-of-living increases, a four-day summer work week, and parking. The officers will also discuss the background and structure of Staff Congress, the goals and objectives of Staff Congress, how the group would like Dr. Patterson to be involved with Staff Congress, and that Staff Congress would like to have a role in shared governance. The Executive Officers will meet with Dr. Patterson on June 3, over Zoom. An update from the meeting with Dr. Patterson will be shared with Staff Congress.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon reported that the Credentials and Elections Committee has been contacting write-in candidates from the Staff Congress Election held in April 2025, to ask if those candidates will accept appointment to Staff Congress.

Mr. Herndon made a motion to appoint the following staff to complete the remainder of vacant terms on Staff Congress: Jenni Todd, term to expire June 30, 2026; Abby Hensley, term to expire June 30, 2027; Karami Underwood and Brian Williams, terms to expire June 30, 2025. Ms. Underwood and Mr. Williams will then serve terms as elected write-in candidates from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028. Trish Lofton seconded the motion. President Neal asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, she called for the vote. The motion carried.

Mr. Herndon said the committee is waiting for a response from two write-in candidates to indicate whether or not they will accept appointment to Staff Congress.

Mr. Herndon said election of Staff Congress officers for the 2025-2026 year will be held at the June 2025 Staff Congress meeting. He read the requirements to run for those positions. Staff Congress members who would like to run for Staff Congress President, Vice President, or Treasurer may contact him in order to appear on the printed ballot. Nominations for officer positions will also be accepted at the June meeting.

Discussion followed concerning whether or not to mail postcards as a means of notifying staff of the Staff Congress Election held in April each year. Discussion of ways to notify staff of the election included having Staff Congress members email Staff Congress Election information to their constituents using the email lists that have been assigned to Staff Congress members. Staff who do not use a computer or email as part of their job responsibilities may benefit from notification by postcard.

Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee: Tressa Ross reported that the Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee continues to receive nominations for the Racer Spirit Award. She distributed Racer Spirit Award certificates to Staff Congress members to present to award recipients. The committee plans to contact individuals who submitted nominations for the Racer Spirit Award to ask if they will consider nominating the Racer Spirit Award recipients for the Staff Excellence Award.

Upcoming staff events being planned include the Staff Appreciation Breakfast and the Watermelon Social. At those events, Staff Congress will have information and nomination forms available for the Racer Spirit Award, information about the Staff Textbook Scholarship and the Professional Development Fund, and information about Staff Congress, including links to Staff Congress social media.

Staff Congress discussed promoting the Textbook Scholarship and the Professional Development Fund Scholarship at staff events and how to provide opportunities for employees to donate to the scholarships.

Communications Committee: Jeremy McKeel reported that its meeting in May, the Communications Committee discussed on-going Staff Congress communication efforts and feedback from staff concerning communication from Staff Congress. The committee has been posting on Staff Congress social media photos of presentations of the Racer Spirit Award certificates.

President Neal asked Staff Congress members to continue to send to her or to Mr. McKeel pictures of Racer Spirit Awards being presented to award recipients.

Working Conditions Committee: B.J. Johnson said the Working Conditions Committee is gathering information regarding four-day summer work-week schedules at peer universities. Information gathered to date indicates that at some universities, staff work the full 37.5 hours in four days. At other universities, staff work a reduced number of hours per week by working four days instead of five and, as a result, receive less pay for the week than those who work the full 37.5 hours per week.

President Neal said that Murray State staff have requested the option of a four-day work week for the summer.

Staff Survey Committee: President Neal presented the Staff Survey Committee report on behalf of Dedrick Brooks who was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting. The Staff Survey Committee is reviewing the responses and

comments received on the 2024-2025 Survey. The committee will meet later in May to prepare a report and recommendations based on the survey. The report will be submitted to the Staff Congress Executive Officers. The report will be discussed with Staff Congress members at the retreat to prepare goals and objectives for the 2025-2026 year.

Discussion about the Staff Survey included the need to compile longitudinal data from previous Staff Surveys. Also discussed was ensuring that staff who do not use a computer in their daily work have a way to complete the Staff Survey.

Textbook Scholarship Committee: No report.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: Trish Lofton reported that the committee will discuss Staff Survey comments and recommendations for the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee when the Staff Survey Committee has completed the 2024-2025 Staff Survey Report. The Staff Congress Listening Sessions held earlier in May will also provide feedback and guidance for the committee's work in the 2025-2026 year.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee: President Neal presented the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee report on behalf of Amanda Mansfield who was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting. Ms. Neal listed the sessions available at the Staff Success Week scheduled for May 27-30. She thanked the committee members for organizing the sessions for Staff Success Week. An evaluation form will be available for staff who attend Success Week to provide feedback.

The committee met on May 15, to discuss the information and recommendation from Jordan Smith, Assistant Vice President for Public Affairs, regarding Kentucky House Bill 4. The recommendation was to change the name of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. The committee members propose that the committee's name be changed to the Community Involvement and Access Committee. Justin Thomas made a motion to change the name of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to the Community Involvement and Access Committee. Duane Dycus seconded the motion. President Neal asked if there was any discussion. There was none. She called for the vote. The motion carried.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Orville Herndon provided a summary of information discussed at the May 2 meeting of the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. Employee health insurance costs will increase in 2026, as part of the plan to distribute the increase in cost-sharing across three years. The increase for 2026 will be the third year of the three-year plan to adjust the cost-sharing between the university and employees to 80/20.

The committee will meet in August. If the committee receives information regarding the 2026 health plan, the information will be discussed at the August meeting. Staff may contact the committee with input concerning insurance.

Discussion followed about requesting a session during Staff Success Week or an information sheet about Hinge Health and Omada for staff who are unable to attend the Lunch and Learn or Health Fair sessions about those programs.

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 that at the April 28 Budget Advisory Committee meeting, the committee heard a preview of the budget presentation that was given at the April 30 Budget Town Hall.

Shared Governance Committee: President Neal said the Shared Governance Committee no longer exists. She will speak with the Staff Congress Executive Committee concerning revising the list of university-wide committees for the 2025-2056 year.

Parking Advisory Committee: Duane Dycus reported on the spring meeting of the Parking Advisory Committee. Parking lot construction between Calloway Avenue and Ryan Avenue is expected to begin soon. The parking lot south of the Nash House will be put on the agenda to be paved. Barricades at the Stewart Stadium parking lots will continue to be placed at the lots the night before a game. When the barricades were not placed at the lots the night before a game, numerous vehicles were parked in those lots overnight. Staff then attempted to contact the owners of the vehicles or had the vehicles towed from the lots. The committee discussed communication issues, the Parking Services website, and the new software.

Also discussed was the possibility of the Murray Transit Authority providing transportation for students at Racer Nation Orientation and also informing students during the school year that the Murray Transit Authority service is available. The charging stations for electric vehicles are in place but are not yet activated.

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Parking Benefit Committee: Duane Dycus said the Parking Advisory Committee was receptive to the information presented concerning an improvement to the years-of-service parking fee. Mr. Dycus suggests that Staff Congress pursue a joint proposal with Faculty Senate. The Parking Benefit Committee will prepare a statement regarding an adjustment to the years-of-service parking fee. The committee will work with Faculty Senate to develop a joint proposal regarding the years-of-service parking fee that would then be presented to Staff Congress for a vote. If approved by Staff Congress and Faculty Senate, a proposed change to the years-of-service parking fee would be presented to university administration. The suggestions at this time are to lower the number of years of service to receive free parking to 15 years, or to lower the parking fee by 50 percent for staff employed for 10 years.

Staff Congress discussed the possibility of a sliding parking fee scale based on pay, in the same way that Wellness Center membership fees are based on pay. The Parking Benefit Committee will pursue an improvement in the years-of-service requirement for reduced or free parking and will also gather information about the possibility of a sliding scale for parking fees.

Business List Revision Committee: No report.

Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee: No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: David Looney asked for a copy of the Staff Congress goals that the Staff Congress Executive Officers will discuss with Dr. Patterson.

Staff Congress President Audrey Neal replied that the goals were discussed at the Staff Congress retreat in July 2024, and are available on the Staff Congress website. The goals were developed from the Staff Survey Report. The document will be re-sent to Staff Congress members to ensure that members appointed after the July 2024 retreat have a copy of the document.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

INFORMATION ITEMS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Orville Herndon made a motion to adjourn. Jeremy McKeel seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.