



## Staff Congress

Draft Minutes for October 21, 2020  
On-line Meeting via Zoom

**Present:** Charley Allen-Dunn, Marty Anderson, Laura Buchanan, Dr. S.G. Carthell, Duane Dycus, Dr. Jessica Evans, Parker Griffith, Ladonna Hamontree, Orville Herndon, Matthew Jones, Sondra Kreger, Trish Lofton, Jeremy McKeel, Jerry O'Bryan, Evan O'Neal, Debbie Plummer, Lindsey Powers, Brian Purcell, Kendrick Quisenberry, Brian Truskey, Tim Williams, Dr. J. David Wilson, and Staff Regent Phil Schooley.

**Guests:** Joyce Gordon, Director of Human Resources; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President, Student Affairs; Paige Rogers, College of Education and Human Services; Dr. Melony Shemberger, Faculty Regent; and Dr. Tim Todd, Vice President of Academic Affairs.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Staff Congress President Dr. David Wilson called the meeting to order.

**Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President of Student Affairs:** Dr. Don Robertson explained the schedule for flu shot availability and covid-19 testing at Health Services. The Office of Student Affairs is now focusing on registration for spring semester classes. Students are encouraged to register for the holiday and winter terms. Campus tours are being given to prospective students and their families. He asked employees to welcome the students and their families to campus. Feedback indicates students and their families appreciate being welcomed by campus employees. Dr. Robertson reported on enrollment numbers including freshman, transfer students, and graduate students. He thanked staff for their efforts in recruiting and retaining students.

**Joyce Gordon, Director of Human Resources:** Joyce Gordon reported that the flu shot clinic for faculty and staff was successful. The number of people receiving the flu shot at the clinic was approximately twice as many as the number of people who usually receive the shot at the employee health fairs. She reported on open enrollment. This year, employees will receive a confirmation email after they have completed enrollment. Employees with questions about open enrollment can contact Human Resources.

**Faculty Regent Report:** Dr. Melony Shemberger reported on the October 9 virtual meeting of faculty leadership from Kentucky universities. Topics discussed at the meeting included the pandemic and shared governance at the universities. Faculty at Murray State are working to finish fall semester classes which end on November 20. They are advising students for the spring semester and working on research.

Dr. David Wilson said he will see if a statewide organization for university staff exists. He said that he participates in the online meetings of housing directors of Kentucky universities. The group meets every two weeks.

**Staff Regent Report:** Staff Regent Phil Schooley said the Board of Regents' next meeting is scheduled for December 4. He said he joins Dr. Robertson in commending staff for their efforts recruiting students. Mr. Schooley said that as one of the judges for the Murray State Homecoming King and Queen, he interviewed the candidates. When asked why they chose to attend MSU, some said that when they visited the university before enrolling, the friendliness of the employees was a factor in their decision to attend MSU.

**Dr. Tim Todd, Vice President of Academic Affairs:** Dr. Tim Todd discussed the draft revision of the university's strategic plan. The revised strategic plan will be more simplified than the previous version. The mission statement has been reduced from approximately a full page to one sentence. The revised plan will be presented to the Board of Regents at its December meeting.

Orville Herndon asked if any effort is being made by the state to put more funding into higher education. Dr. Todd replied that he does not know and that the pandemic has changed funding. Dr. Todd noted that salaries should be addressed as part of the strategic plan. Employees may contact him with additional questions.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Trish Lofton made a motion to approve the September 2020 Minutes as presented. Jessica Evans seconded, and the motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT:** Marty Anderson made a motion to approve the September 2020 Treasurer's Report as presented. Trish Lofton seconded, and the motion carried.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Executive Committee:** Dr. David Wilson said that at its October meeting, the Executive Committee discussed Staff Excellence Awards and Years of Service recognition. He will meet with the Staff Congress Special Events Committee and Staff Congress Recognition Committee to develop plans for the staff recognition event. The university administration is planning a virtual event. Charley Allen, the Chair of the Staff Congress Communications Committee will attend the next Executive Committee meeting to present communication ideas discussed by the Staff Congress Communications Committee. Dr. Wilson said that at the Faculty and Staff Leadership meeting with

Dr. Jackson, the university's response to the pandemic was discussed. Information is available on the Racer Restart web page. Dr. Wilson welcomes input and questions for the Executive Officers. Due to the pandemic, the Special Events Committee is discussing alternative plans for the Children's Christmas Party. One idea is to have a drive-through decorated with Christmas inflatables and give goody bags to the children.

**Credentials and Elections Committee:** Co-Chair Orville Herndon made a motion to appoint Laura Buchanan to serve the remainder of the term on Staff Congress vacated by John Young who retired from the university. The term expires June 30, 2021. Marty Anderson seconded, and the motion carried. The committee has been discussing the Staff Regent Election to be held in the spring of 2021. Comments and suggestions can be sent to Mr. Herndon.

**Staff Recognition Committee:** Chair Jeremy McKeel thanked Dr. Jessica Evans for recognizing staff by sending them cards and mints using her personal funds.

**Staff Special Events Committee:** Chair Trish Lofton reported that the committee is discussing having virtual visits with Santa in the Curris Center, with families scheduling Zoom appointments from another room in the Curris Center or from home. December 5 is the potential date for the event.

**Communications Committee:** No report.

**Working Conditions Committee:** Chair Jerry O'Bryan said the committee met. He thanked the members for their work. Staff Congress President Dr. David Wilson will forward the committee's information to Staff Congress members.

**Staff Congress Foundation Textbook Scholarship Committee:** Chair Tim Williams introduced the fall textbook scholarship recipient Paige Rogers who works in the College of Education and Human Services. She thanked Staff Congress for the scholarship. The other recipient, Barbara Like, who works in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting.

Dr. David Wilson thanked the Textbook Scholarship Committee members for their work.

**Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee:** No report.

#### **UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:**

**Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee:** Committee Chair Orville Herndon emailed Staff Congress members the handouts presented by Human Resources at the recent meeting of the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. The handouts discuss health insurance expenses for university employees. He thanked Jackie Dudley and Dr. Bob Jackson for their efforts in having the university absorb the increase in the cost of health insurance for employees. The committee is also discussing the Funeral Leave Policy. Dr. Jessica Evans added that the committee has recommended that the policy be updated from the current three days of leave to five days of leave and the definition of family members be updated.

Dr. David Wilson thanked the committee for its work with the Funeral Leave Policy.

**Naming Campus Facilities Committee:** Committee member Tim Williams reported on the committee's discussions via email. The Racer Room in Stewart Stadium will be named the Dennis Jackson Racer Room. Mr. Jackson is a former MSU athlete and 1966 and 1971 alumnus.

**Judicial Board:** No report.

**Sick Leave Appeals Committee:** No report.

**International Studies Advisory Committee:** Committee member Dr. S.G. Carthell said the committee did not meet in October. The committee's next meeting is scheduled for November 11.

**Budget Advisory Committee:** No report.

**Shared Governance Committee:** No report.

**Parking Advisory Committee:** Committee member Duane Dycus reported on the committee's meeting held on September 21. The committee discussed parking comments submitted by staff on the Staff Survey. The committee discussed the possibilities and difficulties of income-based parking fees. The topic was tabled until the next meeting. The committee has received a request from SGA to change some of the visitor parking in the Curris Center lot to red and blue zones due to an increase in citations for non-visitors parking in visitor

spaces. One point in the discussion is that the visitor spaces are needed for recruitment events. A temporary solution might be developed during the pandemic, and a more permanent solution created in the future.

**Staff Survey Review Committee:** Staff Congress President Dr. David Wilson said the committee will discuss updates to survey questions and when to send the survey to staff.

**Intercollegiate Council:** No report.

**AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

**Bylaws Revision Committee:** No report.

**Staff Handbook Committee:** No report.

**Diversity Committee:** Staff Congress President Dr. David Wilson said the focus of the committee's first meeting was to define the committee's focus. Dr. S.G. Carthell added that the meeting was productive.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None.

The next Staff Congress meeting is scheduled for November 18, at 1:30 p.m., online.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Orville Herndon made a motion to adjourn. Tim Williams seconded, and the motion carried.