



## Staff Congress

### Draft Minutes for November 16, 2022 On-line Meeting via Zoom

**Present:** Marty Anderson, Russell Dunn, Duane Dycus, Angela Guyton, Marion Hale, Kimberly Hanberry, Jodi Hanneman, Orville Herndon, Sondra Kreger, Trish Lofton, Jeremy McKeel, Audrey Neal, Matt Purdy, Kendrick Quisenberry, Angela Richerson, Brett Shather, Matthew Todd, Brian Truskey, Dr. J. David Wilson.

**Absent:** Christian Barnes, Dedrick Brooks, Dr. S.G. Carthell, Kevin Crawford, Parker Griffith, Sara Hardaway, Matt Jones, Kim Newbern, Tressa Ross.

**Guests:** Dr. Jessica Evans, Staff Regent; Dr. Melony Shemberger, Faculty Regent; Jennifer Thompson.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Staff Congress President Trish Lofton called the meeting to order.

**Staff Regent Report:** Staff Regent Dr. Jessica Evans reported on the November 15 meeting of the Faculty and Staff Leadership Council. The council consists of Executive Officers from Staff Congress and Faculty Senate. The council met with university President Dr. Robert Jackson, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services Jackie Dudley, Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Don Robertson, and Associate Provost Dr. Bob Pervine. Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Tim Todd was out of the office.

At the Faculty and Staff Leadership Council meeting, Dr. Jackson said a salary and benefits analysis is being conducted by Human Resources and the office of the Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services. The study will compare salaries and benefits of MSU employees to the salaries and benefits of benchmark universities. Dr. Evans noted that Staff Congress and Faculty Senate have presented to university administration the concerns of staff and faculty regarding salaries and benefits, which has helped bring awareness to the concerns.

Earlier this year, staff contacted Dr. Evans regarding concerns with Procurement Office policies and procedures. As a result, Dr. Evans sent a memo regarding the concerns to the university Vice Presidents and university President Dr. Bob Jackson. At the Faculty and Staff Leadership meeting, Dr. Evans asked Ms. Dudley about the status of the concerns presented in the memo. Ms. Dudley replied that state laws and policies guide the operations of the Procurement Office and employees may call the Procurement Office directly or Ms. Dudley with questions and concerns.

Nominations for the Staff Excellence Awards closed on September 30. Dr. Evans asked Ms. Dudley the status of the award selections. Ms. Dudley replied that the awards committee is in the process of being convened. After a remaining opening on the committee has been filled, the committee will meet to review nominations and select award recipients.

The next Board of Regents meeting is scheduled for December 2. The agenda has not yet been released. When she receives the agenda, Regent Evans will forward it to Staff Congress members. At this time, no proposal or recommendation regarding the P3 housing development is scheduled to be presented at the Board of Regents meeting in December.

Staff Congress President Trish Lofton thanked Dr. Evans for the Staff Regent Report and added that she receives many comments on the information in the Staff Regent Reports.

**Faculty Regent Report:** Faculty Regent Dr. Melony Shemberger said that faculty and students are finishing course work for the fall semester. Commencement is scheduled for December 10.

President Lofton thanked Dr. Shemberger for attending Staff Congress meetings and supporting staff, as well as keeping the group informed of the activities in the faculty area.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Jodi Hanneman made a motion to approve the October 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Audrey Neal seconded, and the motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT:** Treasurer Jodi Hanneman listed the balances of the following accounts: Staff Congress Foundation Account = \$ 61.06; Textbook Scholarship = \$ 417.78; Professional Development Fund = \$673.18.

President Lofton thanked Jodi Hanneman and the Scholarship Committee for organizing the rebate nights to raise funds for the textbook scholarship and professional development fund.

Brian Truskey made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Jeremy McKeel seconded, and the motion carried.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Executive Committee:** President Lofton said that on November 4, the Staff Congress officers and Staff Regent held a listening session for staff, via Zoom and in-person. Staff presented questions about insurance issues and the cleaning of buildings. Associate Director of Human Resources Haley Stedelin attended the listening session and answered questions about insurance. Those in attendance at the listening session discussed ideas of how to communicate with SSC regarding the cleaning of buildings. Discussion included having the building coordinators meet with the SSC director. Ms. Stedelin said that supervisor training is expected to begin in the spring 2023 semester. Staff from Breathitt Veterinary Center attended the listening session as well.

At the November 4 meeting of the Staff Congress Executive Officers, the officers discussed the feedback received at the listening session. Some of the executive officers and Staff Regent held listening sessions at the regional campuses on November 10. Staff at the regional campuses have requested that the Business Discount List include discounts at businesses where the extended campuses are located. They also requested access to a local gym just as staff at the Murray campus have access to the MSU Wellness Center. Ms. Lofton said she discussed the regional campuses' request with Human Resources Director Courtney Hixon. Ms. Hixon said she will request that the financial advisors from Voya conduct in-person or Zoom meetings with employees at the extended campus sites. Ms. Hixon will also try to determine why the mini-health fairs at the regional campus sites were discontinued. President Lofton said the executive officers and Staff Regent plan to schedule a listening session for Breathitt staff, probably after the beginning of the next calendar year. At the listening sessions, staff discussed salary concerns and the need for student workers. Offices at the regional campuses can hire only MSU students but the pool of MSU students is small.

Audrey Neal asked if the regional campus offices can hire Racer Academy students. Ms. Lofton said she will ask Dan Lavit, Director of the Center for Adult and Regional Education, although Racer Academy students may have limited availability due to attending high school during the regional campuses' office hours.

Jodi Hanneman said that when she has sought to hire students at some of the regional campuses, she was informed that student workers could not be hired. President Lofton said she will inquire about what Ms. Hanneman was told regarding hiring student workers. Staff Regent Dr. Evans recommended that Human Resources be contacted as well to provide information on student worker hiring policies regarding hiring Racer Academy students on campus because they are minors.

Marty Anderson added that Carmen Pavilion could not hire his daughter as a student worker because she is enrolled in Racer Academy. Ms. Lofton said she will discuss these concerns with Human Resources Director Courtney Hixon.

Other concerns presented at the listening sessions included the need for a flexible work policy.

**Credentials and Elections Committee:** Orville Herndon said that prior to today's Staff Congress meeting, he sent a poll to Staff Congress members which would allow them to indicate their preferences for Staff Congress employee representation categories. He explained the current representation categories and the number of Staff Congress members. The four constituency groups are Secretary/Clerical, General/Facilities Management, Executive/Managerial/Professional, and At-Large. The number of staff has been reduced from over 1,000, when Staff Congress was formed, to approximately 623. When researching information regarding Staff Congress constituent categories, Mr. Herndon found that the 2009 changes to Staff Congress representation were somehow not presented to the Board of Regents or were not included in the Board Policy Manual. Board of Regents Secretary Jill Hunt is examining information to determine if the 2009 changes were on the Board of Regents agenda but were not recorded. Mr. Herndon has also received questions regarding how staff at regional campuses can be represented on Staff Congress. He added that when changes such as Staff Congress constituency groups are changed, the presentation to the Board of Regents is possibly a vote of recognition, rather than a vote of approval; however, the Staff Regent or Faculty Regent can clarify if that is the case. He asked if the Staff Congress President wanted to continue the discussion about constituency group formation in today's New Business.

President Lofton said the discussion could continue in New Business. She said she put in the Zoom chat the link to the poll Mr. Herndon sent regarding preferences for Staff Congress representation groups.

**Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee:** Matt Purdy said the children's Christmas party, which is being co-hosted with the Residential College Association, is scheduled for December 3, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in the Alexander Hall lobby. He discussed the preparations for the party. The postcard for the event will be sent to Racer Nation to be included in the November 18 edition of Racer Nation. Staff Congress volunteers are needed to help with the party in 30-minute increments. He posted a link to register for a time slot to volunteer. He discussed the preparations in-progress for the Staff Recognition/Holiday Reception scheduled for December 13, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. The reception will have a come-and-go format. He will send a separate link for volunteers to assist with the reception.

**Communications Committee:** Jeremy McKeel reported that the Communications Committee is developing a Staff Congress information sheet to be given to new employees. The committee is working with the Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee to develop a calendar for Staff Congress social media to assist with promotion of events. Staff Congress now has an Instagram account in addition to the Staff Congress Facebook page.

President Lofton added that other Staff Congress committees can send to the Communications Committee items to be posted on Staff Congress social media.

**Working Conditions Committee:** No report.

**Staff Survey Committee:** Brett Shather reported that the Staff Survey has been transferred to the Qualtrix survey program. The Staff Survey Committee is working with Information Systems to have the survey emailed to staff the week of November 21. The survey is being distributed during the fall semester, rather than the spring semester, in order to allow the survey results to be available during the current academic year. This will allow the Staff Survey Committee to compile and present the results to Staff Congress during the current year. The results can then be presented to the Board of Regents. The Staff Survey Committee has reviewed last year's survey and compiled the results. Audrey Neal led the subcommittee that reviewed last year's survey results.

Audrey Neal reported that the results of the most recent Staff Survey indicate concerns that staff have voiced on previous surveys. Many of the recommendations the Staff Survey Committee made based on the recent Staff Survey results were to continue the work that Staff Congress began last year based on the prior year's survey results. She said that more ideas for addressing staff concerns are welcome.

President Lofton asked if any new concerns were presented by staff in the survey.

Ms. Neal said that the most recent survey results indicate a significant number of employees experiencing workplace bullying and feeling uncomfortable with either supervisors or other employees in the workplace. Some staff commented in the survey that they are unwilling to speak about other workplace issues because of fear of retaliation.

President Lofton said the comments will be shared with Courtney Hixon, Director of Human Resources. Some of the concerns may be addressed by the upcoming supervisor training. The Staff Congress Working Conditions Committee may try to develop some recommendations to address the issues. Ms. Lofton added that, as Staff Congress President, she has been contacted by staff with similar concerns.

**Textbook Scholarship Committee:** Jodi Hanneman said the committee had been discussing hosting a talent show as a fundraiser for the Textbook Scholarship and Professional Development Fund, but due to ongoing construction in various buildings, the committee has postponed having a talent show. The committee is looking for other fundraising ideas and would like to raise sufficient funds to be able to offer more than two scholarships.

Christian Barnes in the Office of Development is going to draft a letter to be sent to staff to inform them of the availability of payroll deduction to contribute to the Textbook Scholarship and the Professional Development Fund.

**Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee:** Marty Anderson reported that the committee is reviewing the call-back policies of benchmark universities. Some of those policies include the federal laws and Kentucky statutes that address call-backs. The committee requests that employees familiar with the call-back policies for exempt staff email that information to Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee members. After reviewing the policies of other universities, the committee plans to draft proposed changes to the MSU call-back policy to present to Staff Congress.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee:** No report.

**UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:**

**Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee:** Orville Herndon said the next meeting of the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee is scheduled for January 23, at 8:30 a.m. At that meeting, the committee will begin working on the 2024 health insurance plan. The committee has been discussing some of the issues the Staff Congress Working Conditions Committee is discussing, such as work-life balance. The Faculty and Staff Insurance Committee, the Office of Finance and Administrative Services, Human Resources, the President's Office, and the Board of Regents are discussing alternatives for the health insurance stop-loss coverage. The cost to the university of its current stop-loss coverage through Anthem has increased.

**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:** Trish Lofton said the Budget Advisory Committee will meet on November 29.

**Shared Governance Committee:** No report.

**Parking Advisory Committee:** Duane Dycus reported that at its meeting on October 25, the Parking Advisory Committee discussed citations being given to commuters who attend Greek events; parking at College Courts; overnight parking in the Curris Center parking lot; and construction vehicles blocking parking at the Curris Center. To avoid ticketing commuters attending Greek events, the Parking Office informed the Greek organizations to notify the Parking Office in advance of events. Regarding overnight parking in the Curris Center parking lot, Racer Patrol and the University Police have increased their monitoring of the Curris Center lot for parking violations.

President Lofton said that at the listening sessions, staff at some of the extended campus sites said that students pay \$3 per credit hour for parking while faculty and staff pay the full \$200 parking fee.

Jodi Hanneman said that her department hosts students from the Paducah campus. Although those students have registered for an MSU parking permit at the Paducah campus, they are required to register at the Murray campus Parking Office when they visit the Murray campus.

Kim Hanberry said that a student worker in her office has purchased an MSU parking permit for \$200 to park at the Paducah campus where she attends classes. The student was required to purchase an additional \$200 MSU parking permit to park on the Murray campus as a student worker.

Dr. David Wilson said that the parking lots at the stadium and at the CFSB Center are blocked at 10:00 p.m. the night before the day of basketball games. The small parking lot that is left unblocked is shared with students using the Wellness Center and does not have enough spaces for students and staff who work in offices in the stadium. All visitor spaces have been permanently removed from the side of the stadium with the offices. In addition, no parking spaces are designated for parents who visit the Housing Office which is located in the stadium.

President Lofton said the Parking Advisory Committee can discuss these items at its meeting in the spring semester. She added that the parking spaces that are blocked at the stadium and at the CFSB Center for basketball games are sold as part of season ticket packages. Discussion followed that both the Parking Office and the Athletics Department are selling some of the same parking spots.

**AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

**Business List Revision Committee:** President Lofton asked that the Business List Revision Committee contact businesses and gyms close to the regional campuses to ask if they would offer employee discounts for MSU employees at the regional campuses.

Jodi Hanneman added that she would also like to ask off-campus gyms in Murray if they will offer a discount to MSU employees. Due to wait times to use equipment at the Wellness Center, some employees may want to use off-campus gyms.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Staff Congress Representation: Orville Herndon discussed the results of the Google form he sent Staff Congress members which asked them to indicate their preferences for the Staff Congress representation method. Discussion followed and included the current representation method and representation of extended campuses.

Sondra Kreger, the Staff Congress representative from Breathitt Veterinary Center commented that BVC staff have informed her that they would like to continue to have a BVC representative on Staff Congress.

President Lofton asked if Staff Congress would like to move forward by having the Credentials and Elections Committee present a recommendation for vote by Staff Congress at the December meeting.

Marion Hale said that she and possibly others will be taking some vacation time after finals and before Christmas Break. She would like to have a written proposal to review before it is presented for a vote at the January Staff Congress meeting. Others in the meeting added that they would like to have a written proposal to review prior to voting on it.

Orville Herndon said the Credentials and Elections Committee will prepare a written proposal for a Staff Congress Representation method to present to Staff Congress in December. Staff Congress can vote on the proposal at the January meeting. If approved by Staff Congress, the proposal could be presented to the Board of Regents at its February meeting to allow any proposed representation method to be in effect for the April 2023 Staff Congress Election.

Staff Regent Dr. Jessica Evans asked if a change to the Staff Congress Representation model would require two readings by the Board of Regents, or only one reading. If it would require two readings, a proposed representation model change would need to be presented before the February Board of Regents meeting in order to receive two readings prior to the April 2023 Staff Congress Election.

President Lofton asked if Staff Congress members would like to have a draft proposal presented for vote at the January meeting. The group consensus was to vote on a proposal at the January Staff Congress meeting.

Staff Congress meeting location: President Lofton said that she has been asked by some staff about offering an in-person meeting option for Staff Congress meetings. She asked Staff Congress members to email her with their preferences about having in-person meetings and a hybrid meeting option for Staff Congress meetings.

**Information Items:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT:** Marty Anderson made a motion to adjourn. David Wilson seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.