



**Draft Minutes for April 19, 2023
118 Wells Hall and Zoom**

Approved as corrected by Staff Congress May 17, 2023.

Present: Marty Anderson, Christian Barnes, Dedrick Brooks, Russell Dunn, Duane Dycus, Marion Hale, Orville Herndon, Joshua Hutson, Matthew Jones, Sondra Kreger, Trish Lofton, Audrey Neal, Kim Newbern, Matt Purdy, Angela Richerson, Tressa Ross, Matthew Todd, Brian Truskey, Dr. J. David Wilson.

Absent: Dr. S.G. Carthell, Jodi Hanneman, Jeremy McKeel.

Guests: Jackie Dudley, Vice President, Finance and Administrative Services; Dr. Jessica Evans, Staff Regent; Janna French, Nurse Practitioner, Village Medical and MSU Health Services; Dr. Emily Gupton, Village Medical and Director, MSU Health Services; Courtney Hixon, Director, Human Resources; Travis Plunkett, Staff Congress Member-elect; Ian Puckett, Government and Institutional Relations; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President, Student Affairs; Dr. Melony Shemberger, Faculty Regent; Jordan Smith, Director, Government and Institutional Relations.

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

Janna French, Nurse Practitioner, Village Medical and MSU Health Services: Janna French said the MSU Health Services office is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. Health Services is open to students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors. She explained the medical services available at the facility. Insurance and self-pay are accepted. Health Services staff welcome feedback and suggestions.

Dr. Emily Gupton, Village Medical and Director, MSU Health Services: Dr. Gupton said that MSU Health Services staff are affiliated with Village Medical which is open during the evenings and weekends when MSU Health Services is closed.

Jordan Smith, Director, Government and Institutional Relations: Jordan Smith discussed some of the bills that were presented during the recent Kentucky legislative session. Senate Joint Resolution 98 will study current population and projected trends and the governance structure of higher education in Kentucky. A study will be conducted to determine if a residential four-year campus will be established in southeastern Kentucky. The study will evaluate the need for and ability to support an additional campus. The academic programs in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System will be evaluated. House Bill 200, which was passed by the Senate and the House, and signed into law by the Governor, establishes a healthcare workforce scholarship to allow more opportunities for students to enter that field. A bill which allows sports gaming passed and was signed into law by the Governor.

One of the bills that did not pass is Senate Bill 33, which would have established a Kentucky cybersecurity center at the University of Louisville. The passage of this bill would have negatively impacted the cybersecurity program at Murray State. Another bill that did not pass would have removed the gun-free zones on campus. A constitutional freedoms bill that failed to pass would have allowed anyone to come to campus at anytime to protest anything. The bill presented safety concerns for the Murray State Police, as well as for the city ~~police~~ police and county sheriff. A bill that would have frozen higher education tuition did not pass.

Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President, Student Affairs: Dr. Don Robertson reported on the two Racer Nation Orientation programs that were held during the previous weekend. During the orientations, 339 students registered for classes. He thanked staff and faculty for their work with the orientations. Feedback from students and parents was very positive. Registration for orientation sessions has increased from last year. Student applications in several locations in Kentucky and Illinois have increased from last year. All-campus Sing was held April 12 on the quad and was attended by a large crowd. The recapture campaign, which encourages students who are eligible to return next year to register for classes, is underway. The breakfast for

graduating seniors will be held on April 26, at 8:00 a.m., in the CFSB Center. He thanked staff for their help with recruitment, retention, and Racer Nation Orientations.

Courtney Hixon, Director, Human Resources: Courtney Hixon said the focus of the second quarter of Racer Wellness is musculoskeletal health. She reported on participation in the April Lunch and Learn sessions. The May 17 Lunch and Learn will be led by Dr. Alyx Shultz, from Hutson School of Agriculture, who will discuss gardening. Sessions will be offered at 11:30 a.m., and 1:00 p.m., at the Arboretum. Seating will be limited. Registration information will be sent to employees. Phase One of the Wellness Plan will end on May 31. Registration announcements for the supervisor training will be sent to supervisors in May. Sessions will be offered in-person and on Zoom. On April 14, the Advisory Committee held its first meeting regarding the compensation review.

Joshua Hutson asked about the status of the questions regarding sick leave that were asked at the March Staff Congress meeting. Ms. Hixon said she reviewed the Human Resources files to determine if employees had been able to transfer sick leave to other employees in the past. She looked at payroll and personnel records as far back as the 1980s, and was not able to find any records that show sick leave was donated from any employees to other employees. The Sick Leave Bank was established in 2001.

Ms. Hixon said the Sick Leave Bank may have been established to ensure consistency and to avoid anyone feeling pressured to transfer days to a specific employee. Orville Herndon added that he was President of Staff Congress when the Sick Leave Bank was created. During the process of establishing the Sick Leave Bank, the discussion included the desire to avoid causing anyone to feel pressure to donate sick days to a supervisor or to other employees.

Jackie Dudley, Vice President, Finance and Administrative Services: Jackie Dudley said the Town Hall meeting is scheduled for April 25, at 3:00 p.m., in Wrather Auditorium. Plans are in-progress to live stream the meeting. The proposed budget will be discussed at the Budget Advisory Committee on April 24, at 3:00 p.m.

The pedestrian bridge on Chestnut Street will be closed for renovations beginning May 15. Crosswalks will be available east of Waldrop Drive and west of Gilbert Graves Drive. Chestnut Street will be closed beginning May 29. Tentative opening dates are the end of June for the bridge and early July for Chestnut Street.

An electric outage is scheduled for some campus buildings during the week of May 20. A schedule of when buildings will be affected will be distributed. Ms. Dudley gave an update on Woods Park. The park is scheduled to be open before the start of the next school year. An update on the nursing building will be provided at the Town Hall Meeting.

Matt Purdy asked if the university has received any information about the roundabout to be constructed at five points. Ms. Dudley said the roundabout is a state project and the university has not received information about it. A question was asked about the current work being done on the lawn of Franklin Hall. Ms. Dudley said that is electric work and is a university project.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Dr. Jessica Evans said the Board of Regents will meet on June 2. The Faculty and Staff Leadership Council meeting is scheduled for April 20. Leadership from Faculty Senate and Staff Congress will meet with University President Dr. Bob Jackson and university administrators. The Staff Survey recently closed and the results have been sent to the Staff Survey Committee. More information will be presented by the Staff Survey Committee Chair later in today's Staff Congress meeting. Dr. Evans spoke with the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee Chair who said the topic of donating sick leave to other employees will be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Insurance and Benefits Committee.

Regarding the compensation study, Dr. Evans, Staff Congress President Trish Lofton, and Staff Congress member Marty Anderson are on the Compensation Review Committee. The committee is also comprised of faculty representatives, including Faculty Regent Dr. Melony Shemberger. Dr. Evans reported on the Compensation Review Committee's meeting that was held on April 14. She gave an overview of the compensation study phases. The expected completion date for the review is in August 2023.

Dr. Evans reported on the staff listening session that she and the Staff Congress Executive Officers attended at Breathitt Veterinary Center on March 29. She thanked Staff Congress member and BVC staff member Sondra Kreger for arranging the listening session. She said staff at BVC and extended campuses continue to request that health fairs be available at those locations. Human Resources Director Courtney Hixon responded that she and Staff Congress President Trish Lofton have a meeting scheduled for April 20 to discuss health fair options for BVC and extended campuses.

A listening session for staff at Hancock Biological Station is scheduled for May 22. After the listening session at Hancock, Dr. Evans and/or the Staff Congress Executive Officers will have visited or contacted staff at the Murray campus and all extended campus sites. The purpose of the listening sessions is to gather input from staff and to give Staff Congress guidance on issues and concerns the staff would like Staff Congress to address. Dr. Evans would like the listening sessions to continue in the future, possibly by work area such as Facilities Management, Student Affairs, etc., to allow for focus on concerns that are specific to work areas.

President Lofton said staff at the extended campuses indicated their appreciation for the listening sessions.

Audrey Neal asked if the compensation study will take into consideration how compensation for employees whose positions are funded by grants compares to the compensation for employees whose positions are funded by grants at other universities. Ms. Hixon said that the peer institution grant-funded positions will be taken into consideration.

Faculty Regent Report: Faculty Regent Dr. Melony Shemberger reported on the Faculty Awards Banquet that was held on April 13. She thanked ~~Sondra Kreger at Breathitt Veterinary Center and Tracie Jenkins and Dr. Debbie Reed at the Hutson School of Agriculture~~ Sondra Kreger, Tracie Jenkins, and Dr. Debbie Reed at the Breathitt Veterinary Center for organizing a tour of those facilities for Dr. Shemberger. She said that Dr. Reed is working with the Faculty Senate concerning the development of a structure for non-tenure track faculty similar to the structure for tenure track faculty, to provide non-tenure track faculty the opportunity for promotion. The following Faculty Senate officers were elected for two-year terms: Dr. David Roach, President; Professor Heidi Ortega, Vice President; Dr. Michael Bordieri, Secretary. The Faculty Senate will have an organizational meeting on May 2. At that meeting, the Senate may discuss but not vote on new business. The meeting will allow new Faculty Senate members to become familiar with the group. The next meeting will be scheduled for September. The Faculty Senate will be discussing flexible work. The Governor's Scholars Program will be on campus beginning June 25. Dr. Shemberger is the campus director for the Governor's Scholars Program at MSU. The GSP office will be located in Franklin Hall. The office will open on June 12.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The March 2023 Minutes will be presented for approval at the May 2023 Staff Congress meeting.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT: Dr. Evans said the Treasurer's Report is dated February 28, 2023. Orville Herndon made a motion to approve the March Treasurer's Report as revised. Matt Purdy seconded, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: President Lofton reported on the April 7 meeting of the Executive Committee. The committee discussed potential dates for the listening session at Hancock Biological Station; developing a staff advisor/mentor award; the comments received from the Breathitt Veterinary Center listening session; the Staff Congress Election; the Staff Survey results; training for staff; and the budget. A summary of the Staff Survey results will be prepared and presented to the Board of Regents. A longitudinal report that compiles the results of all the Staff Surveys will be prepared. The survey began in 2006. Staff Congress uses the comments and results from the survey to guide the work of Staff Congress and to make recommendations on behalf of staff.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon reported on the Staff Congress Election results. He read the names of newly elected members: Dayna Hutchinson, Casey Johnson, Travis Plunkett, Shyann Royalty; and re-elected members: Marty Anderson, Duane Dycus, Joshua Hutson, Sondra Kreger, Audrey Neal. Write-in vote recipients in the Facilities Management Category have been verified by Human Resources. The Credentials and Elections Committee will contact the

write-in candidates to ask if they wish to accept election to Staff Congress. The percentage of staff who voted in the election was 23.47, or 146 out of 622.

Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee: Matt Purdy said plans are being finalized for the Staff Breakfast which will be held on May 18, from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., in the Waterfield Breezeway. In case of rain, the breakfast will be held in the Art Gallery.

The committee met on March 15, after the Staff Congress meeting, to discuss staff recognition awards and the possibility of additional staff recognition. The meeting included discussion of promoting the awards to prospective nominators. Also available is the Staff Spotlight and Highlights form on the Staff Congress website: [Staff Congress \(murraystate.edu\)](https://murraystate.edu/staff-congress). The committee will meet on May 10.

President Lofton thanked Jackie Dudley and Sharion Meloan in the office of the Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services for their work with the breakfast.

Communications Committee: No report.

Working Conditions Committee: No report.

Staff Survey Committee: Audrey Neal reported that each Staff Survey Committee member has been assigned a section of the responses on the Staff Survey to read and summarize and to note key issues and frequency of concerns. The committee plans to meet in the next couple of weeks to discuss the summaries and to formulate recommendations for Staff Congress based on the survey results. The committee tentatively plans to present the recommendations to the Staff Congress Executive Officers before the May Staff Congress meeting. The Executive Officers plan to present the Staff Survey results to the Board of Regents at the Board's June meeting. The recommendations will guide the work of the Staff Congress committees for the upcoming year. This year's survey received comments similar to last year's survey. Pay raises, advancement opportunities, cost-of-living increases, and flexible and remote work are the most prevalent concerns staff indicated on the survey. Staff also mentioned communication transparency. The committee is working on a longitudinal report that compiles the results of all the Staff Surveys since the initial Staff Survey in 2006.

President Lofton thanked the Staff Survey Committee members for their work.

Textbook Scholarship Committee: No report.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: Marty Anderson said the committee put forth a policy, concerning compensation for call backs, for Human Resources and Legal Counsel to review. He said it is connected with the proposed remote work policy.

Human Resources Director Courtney Hixon said the proposed policy is being reviewed and no update is available at this time.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee: No report.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: President Lofton said the draft working document of the flexible work policy was sent to Staff Congress members.

Orville Herndon said the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet the following week. He gave an overview of MSU health care and prescription medicine costs.

The proposed flexible work policy has been reviewed by the University-wide Work-Life Balance Committee and the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. The proposed policy would apply only to staff. The faculty and Provost will develop a flexible work policy for faculty. Staff Congress members were also sent a document that explains the procedures for

applying for flexible work. The proposed flexible work policy will require approval by the Board of Regents. Questions and discussion followed.

President Lofton said that the Insurance and Benefits Committee will discuss the proposed policy at its meeting on April 24. She said that staff comments and input from today's Staff Congress meeting will be presented at that meeting. Staff may also contact Mr. Herndon, President Lofton, Staff Regent Dr. Evans, and committee members Marty Anderson, Duane Dycus, Sondra Kreger, and Marion Hale with additional questions and comments for discussion at the committee's April 24 meeting.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: Duane Dycus reported on the presentation made by the Athletics Director at the April 7 meeting of the Intercollegiate Athletic Council. The presentation included benefits of the Missouri Valley Conference, changes to facilities, CFSB lighting, and increasing the Athletics Department's social media presence. The council tentatively plans to meet once each semester, with the next meeting possibly being scheduled during the fall semester.

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 April 24, at 3:00 p.m.

Shared Governance Committee: No report.

Parking Advisory Committee: Duane Dycus reported that the committee tentatively plans to schedule a meeting during the fall semester.

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Business List Revision Committee: President Lofton reported on behalf of Business List Revision Committee Chair Jodi Hanneman who was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting. The committee is working to identify businesses in regional campus communities that offer discounts to university employees in those areas. The committee has developed a form that can be used to add businesses to the list. The form is available on the Staff Congress Business Discounts web page:

[Business Discounts \(murraystate.edu\)](http://murraystate.edu).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Duane Dycus asked if he could email the Credentials and Elections Committee with concerns about the voting process for the Staff Congress Election. He said several of his co-workers and other staff had issues trying to vote in the election. Mr. Herndon responded that Mr. Dycus can email the information to him and he will forward it to the members of the Credentials and Elections Committee to address.

Mr. Hendon said that VoteNet was offline for a while during the election. Possibly a different online voting vendor will be used for next year's Staff Congress Election. Staff with comments or suggestions regarding the election may email Mr. Herndon. He will forward the information to the members of the Credentials and Elections Committee.

President Lofton thanked Jackie Dudley and Courtney Hixon for their work to update the employee list so that the voting link would be sent to staff only.

Information Items: President Lofton said the next Staff Congress meeting will be held on May 17, in Wells Hall, room 118, and online.

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