



**Draft Minutes for April 20, 2016
304 North Applied Science Building**

Present: James Barnett, Jami Carroll, Jessica Evans, Debbie Griffin, Orville Herndon, Dana Howard, Laura Lohr, Ann Matheny, Robyn Pizzo, Chuck Plummer, Debbie Plummer, Brian Purcell, Ashley Rogers, Maria Rosa, Tressa Ross, Rhonda Timmons, Stephanie Totty, Dwaine Willoughby, Chad Wortham, John Young, and Staff Regent Phil Schooley.

Guests: Dr. Bob Davies, President; Joyce Gordon, Director, Human Resources; Dr. Martin Jacobs, Faculty Regent; Dr. Tim Todd, Dean, Bauernfeind College of Business.

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Laura Lohr called the meeting to order.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:

Dr. Robert Davies, President: Dr. Davies said that a budget has passed the general assembly and is on the governor's desk. He thinks the governor will sign the budget and use line-item vetoes, but doesn't think MSU's budget will be vetoed. Dr. Davies gave an overview of the proposed budget item of free tuition to community colleges.

An email will be sent to employees informing them of a university hall meeting in Alexander Hall on April 28 at 2:00 p.m. The topic will be tuition and other fiscal realities. The university will continue to focus on student success and maintaining rigor and excellence in academic programs. He complimented staff for their work. Dr. Davies answered questions.

Dr. Davies presented Racer Proud Pins to the following individuals:

Chuck Plummer, Groundskeeper in Facilities Management: On behalf of all Facilities Management employees for switching from heating to air conditioning in the campus buildings;

John Young, Administrative Assistant I in the Center for TSM: TSM staff gave a presentation on cyber security for a board member;

Ann Matheny, Administrative Assistant I in Regional Academic Outreach: In recognition of her work with the community colleges and facilitating good transitions for students to Murray State;

Tressa Ross, Coordinator of the College of Education and Human Services Recruitment and Retention Center: for her demonstration of MSU spirit on stage at the Ms. MSU Pageant after her daughter Rachel was crowned Ms. MSU.

Joyce Gordon, Director Human Resources: Joyce Gordon said that Human Resources is working to minimize the impact of the budget reductions. Ideally, Human Resources would like to be able to find a university opening for all displaced employees. Job audits are continuing.

Human Resources is looking at efficiencies. The department is also working to improve its social media presence in addition to the Human Resources web page. The office would like to continue reducing paper use without reducing the quality of communications.

Use of the Employee Assistance Program is increasing. The university knows only the number of people and types of services used. No names are given to the university. EAP offers webinars on topics such as stress management and difficult co-workers. Recordings of the webinars can be watched at the viewer's convenience. Members of employees' households are also eligible to receive services from EAP.

The Department of Labor regulations concerning non-exempt positions are expected to be published by mid-May, which is too late for the finalization of the university's budget. Implementation may be expected to be completed in 30-60 days in order to be compliant with the new regulations. As result of the regulations, some staff will have to submit time sheets although they weren't previously required to do so. After Human Resources has received the regulations, that office will provide trainings on them.

Human Resources is working to have log-in access for all insurance and benefit providers available to employees. Employees will still be able to meet individually with benefit vendors.

Staff Congress President Laura Lohr and Human Resources Director Joyce Gordon thanked Dr. Tim Todd for his service as Interim Provost. Dr. Todd responded that he has been honored to serve under Dr. Davies' leadership and to work with Laura Lohr, Staff Regent Phil Schooley, and others on Staff Congress.

Laura said Senior Presidential Advisor for Strategic Initiatives Dr. Renee Fister had planned to attend today's Staff Congress meeting, but was involved in a conference call. On behalf of Dr. Fister, Laura reminded Congress members to complete the short survey from the President's Office. If desired, the survey can be completed on paper.

Laura noted that the Budget Strategic Plan is currently receiving the most focus now. The university's other strategic plan still in process.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley said the Board of Regents will have a special-called meeting on May 13 at 10:00 a.m., to discuss tuition. The regularly Board of Regents meeting is scheduled for June 10. Phil will email the agenda when he receives it.

The Faculty and Staff Leadership will meet with Dr. Davies on May 20. The Senior Breakfast will be held on May 5.

MARCH MEETING MINUTES: Tressa Ross made a motion to approve the March Meeting Minutes as presented. John Young seconded, and the motion carried.

MARCH TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Jessica Evans presented the March Treasurer's Report. Orville Herndon made a motion to approve the March Treasurer's Report as presented. John Young seconded, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: Staff Congress President Laura Lohr read a note to Staff Congress from the 2016 Faculty & Staff Thank-a-thon organized by the Alumni, Development, Outreach and Communication Teams.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Committee Chair Orville Herndon said Congress members should have received an email listing the candidates for the 2016 Staff Congress Election, scheduled for April 26-28. Orville asked Congress members not running in the election to assist with the voting booth kiosks in Faculty Hall for the second shift workers.

Staff Recognition Committee: Committee Chair Ashley Rogers received confirmation from Jackie Dudley that the Staff Recognition Luncheon has been approved. It will be on August 3.

Staff Special Events Committee: Jessica Evans read the report on behalf of Staff Special Events Committee Chair Shanna Burgess who was out-of-town on university-related business. She asked if anyone had space to store supplies for the Children's Christmas Party. Anny Matheny volunteered some of her office space for the items.

Communications Committee: No report.

Working Conditions Committee: Working Conditions Committee Chair Rhonda Timmons said her committee and the Staff Congress Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee have been gathering information concerning the request made at the February 2016 Staff Congress meeting by Clay Wyatt, Building Services Technician, to clarify when overtime is pay is given to staff who work during the hours the university is closed and later reopens on a delayed schedule. The committees will meet again to further discuss the issue.

Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee: No report.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: Personnel Policies and Benefits Chair John Young referred the report presented by the Working Conditions Committee as that is the only issue currently assigned to the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: John Young said the University-wide Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet on April 29, which may possibly be the last meeting of the spring semester. One item to be discussed is flexible work. Staff should contact Flexible Work Subcommittee members Jessica Evans, Orville Herndon, or Sheri Riddle before the April 29 meeting with related comments.

The following Staff Congress members serve on the University-wide Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: James Barnett, Jami Carroll, Jessica Evans, Orville Herndon, Debbie Plummer, Sheri Riddle, Stephanie Totty, and John Young.

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.

Dual Employment Committee: Tressa Ross said the Dual Employment Policy proposal was discussed at the recent meeting of Faculty and Staff Leadership and Dr. Davies. Staff Congress representatives presented the wording changes approved by Staff Congress. Faculty and Staff representatives agreed to disagree over the wording of the Dual Employment Policy proposal. Dr. Davies will decide which version of the policy proposal to the Board of Regents. He may possibly present both versions of the proposed policy to the Board or Regents.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Stephanie Totty and Ashley Rogers explained that they have been informed of a new stacking order for financial aid and scholarships, including university tuition waivers used by dependents.

Starting with the upcoming academic year, dependents of employees will be required to submit a FAFSA to determine eligibility for financial assistance. After financial aid is applied, employee tuition waivers can be applied. Employees wanting to use tuition waivers for themselves will not have to complete a FAFSA.

Discussion followed.

Staff noted that if tuition waivers are considered scholarships, they should not be taxable. Additionally, because KEES funds may be used towards books, supplies, room, board, transportation, and other education expenses, students have been allowed to have issued directly to them any KEES money in excess of their balance paid to the university. For some students, applying tuition waivers after KEES money applied to university charges would decrease or eliminate the amount of KEES money issued to directly to the student for supplies and other education expenses.

Staff Congress President Laura Lohr asked if Congress members would like to assign this topic to a Staff Congress committee.

Stephanie Totty made a motion to send this topic to the University-wide Insurance and Benefits Committee which will meet on April 29. Orville Herndon seconded, and the motion carried. Employees who are not members of that committee may attend the meeting but may speak only if recognized by the committee Chair.

ADJOURNMENT: John Young made a motion to adjourn. James Barnett seconded, and the motion carried.