



## Staff Congress

### Draft Minutes for April 21, 2021 On-line Meeting via Zoom

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

**Guests:** Jackie Dudley, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services; Joyce Gordon, Director of Human Resources; Dr. Robert (Bob) Jackson, President; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President of Student Affairs; and Dr. Melony Shemberger, Faculty Regent.

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

**Dr. Robert (Bob) Jackson, President:** Dr. Bob Jackson thanked staff for their efforts to make the year as smooth as possible with difficulties caused by the pandemic. He encouraged everyone to receive the covid-19 vaccine. He thanked the Health Department and others involved in scheduling vaccination appointments. Dr. Jackson spoke about plans for smaller, outdoor, in-person commencement ceremonies in May. He discussed efforts to have an in-person component for upcoming events including summer camps, Honors Academy, student activities, and recruitment activities. Dr. Jackson discussed pending legislation concerning performance funding, pensions, and the budget. The university is awaiting federal guidelines for covid stimulus package funds.

**Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President of Student Affairs:** Dr. Don Robertson thanked staff for all they have done throughout the semester. The two virtual incoming student orientations held during the weekend of April 16-17 went well. Starting April 23, the university will begin a Diversity and Leadership Symposium to conclude the year-long series of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs. The goal is to continue the program during the next academic year. The symposium registration link is on the Multicultural Initiatives webpage. The university has started the recapture campaign of students eligible but not yet registered for the fall semester. On April 27, the senior breakfast in the CFSB Center will be held in-person and streamed live. Today's is Administrative Professionals Day. He thanked Administrative Professionals for their work.

**Jackie Dudley, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services:** Jackie Dudley thanked the grounds crews for their work making the campus look nice. The regional vaccination clinic will finish in May. She encouraged staff to remind others of the opportunity to be vaccinated. Starbucks and Chik-fil-A will be open during the summer. During faculty and staff appreciation days April 29-May 1, the University Store will provide a 20% discount to faculty and staff. In response to questions, Ms. Dudley said that Steak and Shake will not be open during the summer; the summer hours for Chick-fil-A and Starbucks will likely be the same as the fall and spring hours; and parking is blocked in front of Pogue Library due to work being done on the exterior of Pogue.

**Joyce Gordon, Director of Human Resources:** Joyce Gordon said that on April 1, the Racer Wellness program started its second quarter focus of increasing physical health activity. An interest survey will be sent to employees to determine interest in the ability to track biometrics such as blood pressure.

**Dr. Melony Shemberger, Faculty Regent:** Dr. Melony Shemberger said the Board of Regents will hold a special-called meeting on April 23, 2021. Staff Regent Schooley will discuss the meeting agenda. Faculty are working on end-of- semester items and are advising students who have not yet registered for fall classes. She thanked Staff Congress member Marion Hale who is an administrative assistant in the same department Dr. Shemberger teaches. Ms. Hale's work is appreciated by the departmental faculty.

**Phil Schooley, Staff Regent:** Phil Schooley said at its special-called meeting on April 23, the Board of Regents will install new members and will set tuition, housing and food service rates. He has been in contact with Willem Mathis of Information Systems to distribute the 2021 Staff Survey to staff.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Debbie Plummer made a motion to approve the March 2021 Staff Congress meeting minutes as presented. Marion Hale seconded, and the motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT:** Trish Lofton made a motion to approve the March 2021 Treasurer's Report as presented. Marty Anderson seconded, and the motion carried.

#### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Executive Committee:** Dr. David Wilson said the committee met on April 19. Items discussed at that meeting will be presented in the committee reports during today's Staff Congress meeting.

**Credentials and Elections Committee:** Committee Co-Chair Orville Herndon reported the results of the Faculty Regent Election which concluded March 11. Phil Schooley will continue as Staff Regent. The percentage of staff who voted in the election was 49.54%. The percentage is second only to the percent of staff that voted in the first Staff Regent Election. Evan O'Neal said the Staff Congress Election is in-progress.

**Staff Recognition Committee:** Committee Chair Jeremy McKeel reported that the virtual Staff Recognition video is almost complete.

**Communications Committee:** Committee Chair Charley Allen-Dunn said the committee has been discussing via email the Staff Congress newsletter. The conversation includes distributing the newsletter quarterly in a digital format. Approximately 13 Staff Congress members have completed the contact information form she has emailed them. She encouraged Staff Congress members to complete the form. The information will be posted to the Staff Congress webpage. Staff Congress President Dr. David Wilson encouraged staff to contact the Communications Committee with suggestions of what information they would like to see in the newsletter.

**Staff Special Events Committee:** Committee Chair Trish Lofton said she plans to schedule a committee meeting to discuss the possibility of some type of staff event, for example, a boxed lunch, which would meet covid-19 gathering guidelines.

**Working Conditions Committee:** No report.

**Staff Survey Committee:** No report.

**Staff Congress Foundation Textbook Scholarship Committee:** Committee Chair Tim Williams said applications for the fall text book scholarship are due September 1.

**Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee:** Orville Herndon said that at its April 16 meeting, the committee discussed the spousal hiring policy. Two items have been presented to the committee from the Staff Survey: the spousal hiring policy; and a request that a formal recommendation be made to support staff, voice concerns regarding job security, outsourcing, filling vacancies, and equitable workload. The committee has also discussed reviewing the promotion and transfer policy for staff. The committee plans to discuss the items further and bring related proposals to Staff Congress. The committee will look at the statements and comments from the recent Staff Survey to determine which items the committee can address. Staff can contact the committee with items.

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

**Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee:** Orville Herndon said the committee met on April 9. The committee will meet over the summer, with meeting dates to be determined. Joyce Gordon and other Human Resource Staff, Jackie Dudley, and other administrators will gather 2022 insurance information and present it to the committee. Interested persons can contact Mr. Herndon for the committee's meeting dates.

**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:** Brian Purcell said the Budget Advisory Committee met on April 8. Most of the items discussed in that meeting were discussed in the President's Budget Town Hall meeting on April 14. He read the list of things that were approved including capital project, the performance funding model, KERS funding changes, and TRS hybrid plan changes. A hybrid cost-of-living model will be presented to the Board of Regents for approval on April 23. He explained the details of the cost-of-living plan. It gives the higher pay raise to employees on the lower end of the pay scale which he noted is appreciated. The budget includes asset preservation.

**Shared Governance Committee:** No report.

**Parking Advisory Committee:** No report.

#### **AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

**Bylaws Revision Committee:** Orville Herndon reported that the committee is working to efficiently compose Staff Congress representation based on changes to the number of staff due to outsourcing. The committee would like to have any revisions in place in preparation for the 2022 Staff Congress election.

**Staff Handbook Committee:** Matt Purdy said the committee met with Dr. Wilson to finish discussing proposed revisions to the handbook.

**Diversity Committee:** Brett Shather reported that the committee has completed a draft statement which was emailed to Staff Congress members prior to today's Staff Congress meeting. The Diversity Committee will contact Human Resources and the IDEA office to gather information about diversity in the hiring process and how the process can be refined.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Dr. Wilson said the Staff Congress Secretary emailed to Staff Congress the draft statement from the Staff Congress Diversity Committee. Discussion followed, including asking constituents for feedback prior to voting on the statement. Sondra Kreger made a motion to table the vote. Marty Anderson seconded, and the motion carried. The question was asked regarding where the statement would be sent if approved by Staff Congress. Dr. Wilson said that, if approved by Staff Congress, the statement would be posted on the Staff Congress web page and Facebook page, and forwarded to staff. He sent the draft statement to Dr. Bob Jackson and Jackie Dudley. Staff with questions may contact the Diversity Committee members: Charley Allen-Dunn, Dr. S.G. Carthell, Duane Dycus, Dr. Jessica Evans, Trish Lofton, Brett Shather, Dr. David Wilson.

Dr. Wilson said the Diversity Committee discussed how employees can support each other. He said the tabled motion can be brought for discussion at the next Staff Congress meeting. He reminded Congress members to inform constituents that the diversity statement is a draft. The Diversity Committee may revise the draft based on input received. Any such revised statement will be sent to Staff Congress members. Dr. Wilson thanked the committee members for their work to develop the statement.

Dr. Wilson said Staff Congress needs to develop a means for receiving input from constituents concerning item such as statements from Staff Congress.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Debbie Plummer made a motion to adjourn. Tim Williams seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.