



Staff Congress

Draft Minutes for November 18, 2020 On-line Meeting via Zoom

Present: Charley Allen-Dunn, Marty Anderson, Laura Buchanan, Dr. S.G. Carthell, Duane Dycus, Dr. Jessica Evans, Marion Hale, Ladonna Hamontree, Orville Herndon, Matt Jones, Sondra Kreger, Trish Lofton, Jeremy McKeel, Evan O'Neal, Debbie Plummer, Lindsey Powers, 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. 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. Robert (Bob) Jackson, President: Dr. Bob Jackson thanked staff for all they have done during the semester and during the pandemic. He wished everyone a happy thanksgiving.

Dr. Tim Todd, Vice President of Academic Affairs: Dr. Tim Todd thanked staff for all they have done during the semester. He thanked Jeremy McKeel for his work on the virtual graduation ceremony. Dr. Todd wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Joyce Gordon, Director of Human Resources: Joyce Gordon said that open enrollment went smoothly.

Debbie Plummer asked if any updates have been made to the budget. Dr. Jackson responded that Governor Beshear said no performance funding cuts will be made this fiscal year. The Kentucky legislature will be back in session in January. If the legislature does not take any action, the university's contribution to KERS will increase from 49% to over 93%. A work group has been formed to discuss performance funding.

Faculty Regent Report: Faculty Regent Dr. Melony Shemberger said that faculty are advising students in preparation for registering for the spring semester. The Faculty Development Center will host its annual Blitz Week virtually during the week of January 11. She thanked staff for their work and wished everyone happy holidays.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley said the Staff Survey Report will be presented at the Board of Regents meeting on December 4. He wished everyone a good Thanksgiving.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Sondra Kreger noted a correction to be made to the October 2020 minutes. The report should read as follows. Chair Jeremy McKeel thanked Dr. Jessica Evans and the Staff Recognition Committee for sending postcards and mints to staff. Dr. Jessica Evans presented the idea for the postcards and mints. She made the purchase and others on the committee contributed and passed out the cards.

Marty Anderson made a motion to approve the October 2020 meeting minutes as corrected. Trish Lofton seconded, and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT: Debbie Plummer made a motion to approve the October 2020 Treasurer's Report as presented. Marty Anderson seconded, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: Dr. David Wilson reported that at its November 12 meeting, the Executive Committee prepared the Staff Survey Report presentation for the December Board of Regents meeting. The committee discussed a resolution sent to Dr. Wilson from Faculty Senate. The resolution will be discussed later in today's Staff Congress meeting. Staff Congress Communications Committee Chair Charley Allen-Dunn spoke to the Executive Committee about communications ideas. Jackie Dudley is working on plans to recognize Years of Service recipients and Staff Recognition Awards winners.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Co-Chair Orville Herndon said the Staff Regent Election will be held in March 2021. The Staff Congress Election is schedule for April 2021.

Staff Recognition Committee: No report.

Staff Special Events Committee: Chair Trish Lofton reported that the committee had discussed the possibility of a drive-through Christmas event for children and families instead of the usual in-person Christmas party. Due to the pandemic and possible upcoming related closures, the committee recommends hosting virtual visits with Santa instead of a drive-through event.

Communications Committee: Chair Charley Allen-Dunn met with the Staff Congress Executive Committee to present ideas discussed by the Communications Committee. The committee is working on a google form which will enable Staff Congress members to provide a short biography to be included on the Staff Congress webpage along with contact information.

Working Conditions Committee: No report.

Staff Congress Foundation Textbook Scholarship Committee: Chair Tim Williams reported that the committee has received two scholarship applications for the spring 2021 semester.

Staff Survey Committee: Dr. David Wilson said the Staff Survey Committee has compiled the Staff Survey results for presentation to the Board of Regents at its December meeting.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: No report.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Committee Chair Orville Herndon reported that at its meeting on November 13, 2020, the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee voted and approved forwarding to university administration recommended revisions to the Funeral Leave Policy. He thanked Dr. Jessica Evans and the subcommittee for their work on the recommended revisions to the policy. The Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee received a request to examine reinstatement of tuition waivers for part-time employees. A subcommittee has been formed. The next meeting is scheduled for January 15, at 8:30 a.m., via Zoom. Persons interested in attending the meeting may contact Mr. Herndon.

International Studies Advisory Committee: No report.

Naming Campus Facilities Committee: No report.

Judicial Board: No report.

Sick Leave Appeals Committee: No report.

Budget Advisory Committee: No report.

Shared Governance Committee: No report.

Parking Advisory Committee: No report.

Intercollegiate Council: No report.

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Bylaws Revision Committee: No report.

Staff Handbook Committee: No report.

Diversity Committee: Dr. Wilson said the committee will meet after Thanksgiving.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dr. David Wilson referred to documents he emailed to Staff Congress members prior to today's Staff Congress meeting: The document from Faculty Senate titled "Support for the Relocation of the Downtown Confederate Monument" Message from Dr. Bob Jackson, Dr. Don Robertson, and Dr. S.G. Carthell dated June 4, 2020.

Dr. Wilson explained that when Faculty Senate forwarded the resolution to him, he referred to the Board of Regents Policy Manual and sought input from the Staff Congress Executive Council to determine if the Staff Congress President has the authority to sign the resolution and to determine if the resolution fits within the scope of the purpose of Staff Congress. He was unable to find an answer for either concern. He is now presenting the documents to Staff Congress for discussion. According to the Staff Congress Bylaws, Article V,

Section 4, the discussion of an issue is limited to twenty minutes with a maximum of two minutes per person. He added that the resolution was drafted by Faculty Senate and presented to Staff Congress for signature. It was not drafted jointly by Faculty Senate and Staff Congress as indicated in a recent article in the MSU News. The resolution was also presented to the SGA President for signature. The SGA President declined to sign the resolution, explaining that as the SGA President, he is a member of the Board of Regents. As a member of the Board of Regents, he defers to the statement made by the MSU President and indicated that the SGA President should not make a statement in addition to the MSU President's statement.

Discussion included support for the resolution and removal of the monument; support to leave the monument in its current location; statements that Staff Congress should not participate in the resolution but interested individuals should express their opinions as citizens and not as Staff Congress members; and comments that Congress members should seek input from their constituents before deciding about the resolution. Concern was expressed regarding the procedural issue of making a statement on the issue after the university president has made a related statement. Concern was expressed about the accuracy of the information in the resolution and that no sources were cited for that information.

Dr. Jessica Evans made a motion to refer to the Staff Congress Diversity Committee the Faculty Senate document titled "Support for the Relocation of the Downtown Confederate Monument." Trish Lofton seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Orville Herndon said that interested persons may want to contact Calloway County Judge Executive Kenny Imes and the Calloway County magistrates to express their opinions regarding the monument.

Jackie Dudley, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services: Jackie Dudley had no report. She said she appreciates the conversation Staff Congress had regarding the resolution and monument.

Brett Shather asked if staff can vote to indicate their preference for Staff Congress' response to the resolution and monument issue. Parliamentarian Marion Hale responded that as elective representatives for staff, Staff Congress members have authority to vote on behalf of staff, and are to vote for what the staff want. Congress members should contact their constituents to ask their opinions on the issue.

ADJOURNMENT: Marion Hale made a motion to adjourn. Tim Williams seconded, and the motion carried.