Murray State University Staff Congress
Draft Minutes for October 13, 2010
Curris Center: Stables

PRESENT: Vicki D. Anderson, Terri Benton, Johnathan Chancellor, Christian Cruce, Susanne D'Angelo, Orville Herndon, Wade Herndon, Cheryl Hicks, Anthony Jones, Margie Miller, Jerry O'Bryan, Kerry Pinkston, Debbie Plummer, Sheri Riddle, Jordan Smith, Stephanie Totty, Becky Wilder, Gina Winchester, Janeen Winters, and John Young. Guests: Cathy Bazar; Amelia Dodd, Healthy Life; Dr. Dunn, President; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President for Student Affairs; and Phil Schooley, Staff Regent.

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Gina Winchester called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:
Dr. Randy Dunn explained the purpose of the Staff Compensation Study and the implementation of the study's findings. He complemented the past and current Staff Regents who have worked to keep the administration aware of the need for the Staff Compensation Study.

Dr. Dunn discussed employee health insurance for 2011. He noted the university has worked to contain costs and to keep the employee premium increases as low as possible. He spoke of the budget and that, at this time, the state has not given any indication of a required give-back for the current fiscal year. In the effort to stretch funds, some programs will be changed.

Dr. Dunn said he is happy to attend future meetings as requested by Staff Congress. Questions and discussion followed. He thanked Staff Congress members for their work toward the betterment of the university with programs such as the staff book scholarship and the children's Christmas party.

Amelia Dodd, Healthy Life Wellness Coordinator, said she will speak to campus groups on request regarding the Healthy Life Program. She distributed a handout and elaborated on the program, the focus of which is to encourage employees to make healthy choices. She referred to the blue folder employees have already received regarding the Healthy Life Incentive Plan and encouraged staff to participate in the program. MSU Health Services offers blood drawing and some other services required by the Healthy Life Program. Staff may call her if needing assistance using the online health risk assessment or with questions about the program. Employee health information submitted for Healthy Life is not given to Human Resources. Gina Winchester suggested that Staff Congress participate in the Healthy Life Program as a group.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley presented his report along with a written copy of it. The next Board of Regents meeting will be held on December 10. The Staff Survey has received replies from approximately 52% of staff. Survey responses will be accepted for about two more weeks. Results of the survey will be posted on the Staff Congress webpage.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES: Vicki Anderson noted that she was not included in the attendance list although she attended the September meeting via Elluminate. Lisa Willis said she also attended the meeting via Elluminate, but was not included in the attendance list. Orville Herndon made a motion to approve the September minutes as corrected. Christian Cruce seconded, and the motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Laura Dziekonski was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting due to a family emergency. She will present the August Treasurer's Report at the November meeting.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:
Executive Committee: Gina Winchester said the Executive Committee met with Dr. Dunn on September 9. Earlier in today's Staff Congress meeting, Dr. Dunn reported on many of the items discussed at the September Executive Committee meeting. The committee has a tentative meeting scheduled for October 14. Gina asked staff to inform her of any topics they would like the Executive Committee to discuss with Dr. Dunn. She encouraged staff to attend the insurance information meetings. She will ask Human Resources to add more insurance information sessions in order for staff in departments such as Facilities Management to attend around their work schedules. She has heard that the meetings are very helpful and informative.

Gina said discussion has begun as to whether or not Staff Congress would like to propose that the university have an information line somewhat like a customer service line for persons who have a concern or comment. The person answering the phone would not answer questions, but would forward them to the appropriate persons who would later contact the callers with the responses. Discussion followed.

Personnel Policies Committee: Sheri Riddle reported the committee has not met this month. The group has been looking at the wording of sick leave policies of other state institutions. The committee plans to draft a revised wording recommendation for MSU's Sick Leave Policy.

The committee has forwarded to Human Resources a request to consider issuing a free parking permit to employees with 20 or more years of service with the university. Questions and discussed followed.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:
Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Sheri Riddle reported that the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee is going to look at ways to educate the university community about choosing generic prescriptions as well as other ways to reduce insurance costs. She distributed a flyer titled "Ideas for Employees during Open Enrollment to Help Control Costs."

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:
Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon reported that the Credentials Committee is looking into the possibility of having online voting for Staff Congress elections.

Staff Recognition Committee: Terri Benton said she is currently overseeing both the T-Room and Catering. When a new Catering Manager has been hired, she will schedule a meeting of the Staff Recognition Committee.

Staff Special Events Committee: Janeen Winters said that at the November Staff Congress meeting, she will have a sign-up sheet for Staff Congress members to volunteer to help at the December 4 Children's Christmas Party and the December 9 Staff Reception.

Working Conditions Committee: Jerry O'Bryan reported on the Working Conditions Committee meeting. Some staff have asked about the possibility of taking more than one class per semester. A subcommittee of the university-wide Insurance and Benefits Committee is developing wording for the university guideline regarding the number of classes staff may take per semester. The wording will include the provision that taking more than one class during a semester be allowed so long as class attendance doesn't interfere with the employee's work responsibilities.

Jerry asked if Facilities Management has an employee handbook in addition to the university employee handbook. Gina Winchester listed the four university manuals: The Board of Regents Manual, the Faculty Handbook, which is currently under revision, the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, and the Staff Handbook. Terri Benton added that some individual departments such as Food Service do have employee handbooks that are specific to their units.

AD-HOC COMMITTEES
Staff Congress Handbook Review Committee: Christian Cruce reported that this committee is reviewing the Staff Handbook which may possibly be combined with the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.

Jerry O'Bryan said the Working Conditions Committee is curious as to why only those staff who have a Commercial Driver's License are required to have drug testing, but other staff are not. Discussion followed. Gina Winchester requested that the Working Conditions Committee draft a statement of recommendation for such a drug testing policy.

Jerry said the background checks for students take so long, that while one department is waiting for the background check results, another department hires the students. Christian Cruce replied that the student worker background checks are submitted simultaneously which makes the process take longer than it does for staff background checks which are done in smaller groups throughout the year as employees are hired.

Communications Committee: Laura Dziekonski is now the Communications Committee Chair. No report.

Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee: Debbie Plummer reported that one application has been received for the fall book scholarship award. The committee will post the scholarship guidelines on the Staff Congress webpage. Donations are needed for the book scholarship. The deadline for spring scholarship applications is February 1.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: Sheri Riddle reported on the Intercollegiate Athletic Council meeting held this morning. This was first the meeting under David Wexler who took Bill Whitaker's place. She noted student athlete scores as well as retention and graduation rates have improved.

Naming Campus Facilities: Christian Cruce reported that the RSEC has been renamed for Community Financial Services Bank.

Judicial Board: No report.

Sick Leave Appeals Committee: No report.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Gina asked if Staff Congress members want her to pursue the customer service phone line idea. Discussion followed. Gina will check on having a voice mail set-up which will then be promoted in the Staff Congress newsletter

Jerry O'Bryan asked what would be the next step in requesting implementation of drug testing for staff. Gina recommended the Working Conditions Committee or Jerry, as the committee chair, meet with Human Resources to discuss this topic, then draft a resolution.

Debbie Plummer and Gina Winchester reminded everyone of the next Staff Trivia Night at Nick's Family Sports Pub on Tuesday, October 19.

ADJOURNMENT: Orville Herndon made a motion to adjourn. Debbie Plummer seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:16 p.m.