Murray State University Staff Congress
Draft Minutes for September 21, 2011
Curris Center: Barkley Room

PRESENT: Terri Benton, Christian Cruce, Tami Dandeneau, Susan D'Angelo, Laura Dziekonski, Liz Fain, Marion Hale, Orville Herndon, Wade Herndon, Dana Howard, Lana Jennings, Anthony Jones, Margie Miller, Jerry O'Bryan, Kerry Pinkston, Chuck Plummer, Debbie Plummer, Sheri Riddle, Tressa Ross, Stephanie Totty, Rebecca Wilder, Tim Williams, Lisa Willis, Dwaine Willoughby, Gina Winchester, John Young, and Staff Regent Phil Schooley. Guests: Tom Hoffacker, Director of Human Resources, Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff; Olivia Medovich, *MSU News*; Linda Miller, Chief Information Officer; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice-President for Student Affairs; and Catherine Sivills, Vice- President of Communications.

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Gina Winchester called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS:
Gina welcomed Olivia Medovich from the *Murray State News*.

Linda Miller, Chief Information Officer:
Linda Miller reported on the process of changing email addresses from *first name.last name* to *first name first initial.last name* to match myGate log-ins. Email address have been converted for employees in some departments. The conversions will continue throughout the semester. On-campus list-serves will have email addresses updated by the university. She explained the off-campus list serve email process. Network log-ins remain unchanged at this time. She welcomes questions at anytime and will speak to groups if desired. Sheri Riddle provided information regarding mobile devices and the email address updates.

Josh Jacobs, Chief of Staff:
Josh Jacobs reminded everyone that President Dunn's State of the University address will be presented on October 5, at 3:00 p.m., in the Freed Curd Auditorium. The address should be streamed live for those who cannot attend in-person. Dr. Dunn typically gives this report at the professional staff/faculty luncheon. This year, the speech is being made available to all staff.

Catherine Sivills, Vice-President of Communications:
Catherine Sivills reported that MSU has been included in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* as one of the best academic institutions in the country for which to work. She discussed some details of the survey, including strengths and areas for improvement. She suggested Staff Congress discuss what benefits might be recommended for the university to consider offering.

As requested by Staff Congress President Gina Winchester, Catherine showed the recruitment video *We are Racers* and discussed the feedback received on it. She also showed *The Racer Shuffle* video which has received almost 10,000 views since its release on You Tube.

Dr. Don Robertson, Vice-President for Student Affairs:
Dr. Don Robertson complimented the *We are Racers* and *The Racer Shuffle* videos and said many students are talking about them. He thanked staff for welcoming students and their families this past weekend at Family Weekend. He also complimented Re'Nita Avery-Meriwether and her staff for preparations made for the event. He added that because of staff efforts, visiting family members made many positive comments on the beauty of the campus and the services of dining personnel. Many also said that students and families are made to feel more welcome than on some other campuses.

Student Affairs is contacting non-returning juniors and seniors who have not yet graduated to find out why they did not return for the fall semester and to determine any services the students may need in order to resume their studies.

Gina Winchester asked about Racer Day, on September 24, when prospective students and their families can tour the campus, meet faculty, and learn about financial aid and scholarship opportunities. Dr. Robertson reported on preparations for that event.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Phil Schooley distributed copies of his report. The Governor's Conference will be held on September 22 and 23. Dr. Dunn is planning to schedule a special Board of Regents meeting regarding the lease agreement for the Paducah campus. Phil reported on the status of the staff survey to be distributed this fall.

Every four years, including this year, Dr. Dunn will be evaluated by staff. He is evaluated annually by the Board of Regents. Phil welcomes questions at any time.

Tom Hoffacker, Director of Human Resources:
Tom Hoffacker reported that his department is preparing to develop job descriptions for all staff positions, which will then be posted on the university's website. His department is also working on the 2012 benefits program. He answered questions.

Anthony Jones asked if some benefits information sessions could be scheduled a few days preceding the open enrollment period in order to accommodate various work schedules. The Employee Health Fair will be held on October 4.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST MINUTES: Susan D'Angelo noted a correction in the August minutes. In Reports from Special Guests, Tom Hoffacker's report, second paragraph, the first part of the second sentence should read as follows; "One specific concert is that when *combining* pay…" rather than "*combing*." John Young noted that in Reports from Special Guests, Dr. Don Robertson's report, fourth paragraph, first sentence, "exits" should be "exists" so that the sentence reads as follows: "Dr. Robertson reminded staff than an intervention team exists for students experiencing difficulties."

Laura Dziekonski made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Debbie Plummer seconded, and the motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Laura Dziekonski presented the August Treasurer's Report. John Young made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. The motion was seconded, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: Gina Winchester reported on the Faculty and Staff Leadership meeting with Dr. Dunn held on September 15. At the meeting, Dr. Dunn shared his vision for new strategic imperatives as well as the status of faculty searches in relation to the budget. Gina said the Finance Committee of the Faculty Senate is considering performing a faculty salary study. The study would be conducted in-house rather than by hiring an outside consultant. The Faculty and Staff Leadership will meet with Dr. Dunn on October 20.

On October 18, an open meeting with university administrators will be held in Wrather Auditorium.

At the Faculty and Staff Appreciation football game, the Athletics Department will mark of a section of seats for faculty and staff. Volunteers are needed in the stands to ensure others are aware the section is reserved.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: Stephanie Totty reported on topics discussed at the recent meeting of the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee. The committee is gathering information concerning promoting from within the university. Regarding merit raises, the committee is researching possible distribution criteria and determining whether the evaluation process could be improved. Gina Winchester added that Dr. Dunn is in favor of Staff Congress' offering suggestions for merit pay distribution criteria. She also noted that Dr. Dunn commented that employees currently do not provide self-evaluations prior to being evaluated by their supervisors. Other topics the committee is considering include customer service training, selling back unused vacation days, pregnancy leave, leaving work after donating blood, and reimbursement for prescription safety goggles and other safety equipment not currently reimbursed by the university. Stephanie said Dr. Dunn asked the committee to obtain price quotes for prescription goggles.

Jay Morgan, Associate Provost:

Jay Morgan reported on the university's preparations for the SACS re-accreditation process. He asked staff to review all the policies, forms, and procedures in their departments as well as department websites to ensure consistency among all documents. Staff should notify supervisors of any corrections needed in the documents. The university will be notified of the re-accreditation results by December 2014. He answered questions.

Staff Recognition Committee: Dana Howard will notify committee members of the committee's meeting date when it has been determined.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon said that at its meeting on September 7, the Credentials and Elections Committee discussed Staff Congress and Staff Regent Elections to be held in spring 2012. He asked staff to email him suggested dates for the Staff Congress elections to be held in April and for the Staff Regent election to be held in March.

Staff Special Events Committee: No report.

Communications Committee: Laura Dziekonski said the committee would like to send out the next Staff Congress newsletter before the Thanksgiving break.

Working Conditions Committee: Jerry O'Bryan thanked the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee members for their work. He reported on items being addressed by the Working Conditions Committee, including hiring family members and reimbursing staff for the cost of safety footwear.

Staff Congress Foundation Book Scholarship Committee: Debbie Plummer said that at its August 24 meeting, the Textbook Scholarship Committee discussed fundraising ideas for the scholarship. A draft letter requesting vendors for donations which would assist with fundraising is being reviewed by Tom Denton's office before distribution.

Debbie said if Staff Congress members would work at the game concession stands, a percentage of sales would be donated to the textbook scholarship.

AD-HOC COMMITTEES
Staff Congress Handbook Review Committee: No report.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:
Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Stephanie Totty reported that its September meeting, the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee discussed the insurance package for 2012. The committee is considering adding an optional vision insurance plan in the future.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: No report.

Naming Campus Facilities: Christian Cruce reported that a naming proposal will be sent to the Board of Regents for approval. The details cannot be discussed at this time.

Judicial Board: Sheri Riddle said the Judicial Board is being reviewed for compliance with laws which govern the functions of the Judicial Board to ensure fair representation of students. Any resulting changes will not affect staff. The Judicial Board does have a case, the details of which cannot be discussed.

Sick Leave Appeals Committee: No report.

OLD BUSINESS:
Staff Congress Banner: Laura Dziekonski gave price quotes for a banner with a stand and carrying case and for a banner with an easel. Discussion followed. Orville Herndon made a motion that Staff Congress purchase a banner with a stand and carrying case. Terri Benton seconded, and the motion carried. Laura will ask the University Communications office for assistance with designing the banner.

NEW BUSINESS:
Staff Survey: Gina Winchester asked for volunteers for an ad hoc committee to work with Gina and Staff Regent Phil Schooley to prepare the questions for the Staff Survey to be distributed approximately the first week of October. Susan D'Angelo and Debbie Plummer volunteered for the committee.

Staff Congress Meeting Location: Gina asked if Congress members prefer to hold the monthly meetings in the Curris Center Barkley Room or in the CTLT classroom in the Applied Science Building. Discussion followed. Chuck Plummer made a motion to hold the 2011-2012 monthly Staff Congress meetings in the CTLT classroom. The motion was seconded, and the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: John Young made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:22 p.m.