



Draft Minutes for April 24, 2024
Mississippi Room, Curris Center and Zoom

Present: Christian Barnes, Dedrick Brooks, Duane Dycus, Jodi Hanneman, Orville Herndon, Dayna Hutchinson, Joshua Hutson, Matthew Jones, Trish Lofton, Jeremy McKeel, Audrey Neal, Matt Purdy, Tressa Ross, David Shelton

Absent: Russell Dunn, Sondra Kreger, Kim Newbern, Angela Richerson

Guests: Chris Haynes; Camela Ramey; Dr. David Wilson, Staff Regent

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Trish Lofton called the meeting to order.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS PRESENT:

President Lofton presented announcements on behalf of Courtney Hixon, Director of Human Resources, who was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting. A Racer Wellness gardening event is scheduled for May 14, at the Arboretum, with details to follow. Phase 1 of the Wellness Pledge ends on May 31. Wayne Corporation Employee Assistance Program offers monthly webinars and newsletters. Information is updated monthly on the Human Resources web site. Staff with questions may contact Courtney Hixon or Lauren Smee in Human Resources.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson said the university Town Hall is scheduled for April 25. He discussed information presented at the Budget Advisory Committee meeting that was held on April 23. He encouraged staff to listen to the Board of Regents meeting online.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Jodi Hanneman made a motion to approve the March 13, 2024 Minutes as presented. Dedrick Brooks seconded, and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT: Joshua Hutson said the scholarship award has not been subtracted from the budget yet. Treasurer Jodi Hanneman said because the award has not yet been deducted from the Staff Congress scholarship fund, she cannot deduct it on the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Hanneman will contact the MSU Foundation regarding awarding the scholarship.

Joshua Hutson said the March 22 rebate night for the textbook and professional development award funds raised a little over \$100. The rebate night may have had lower participation due to spring break. Mr. Hutson is arranging other rebate nights.

The motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made and seconded. The motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: President Lofton reported on the April meeting of the Executive Committee. At the meeting, the Staff Congress officers discussed the compensation study, the Staff Congress Election, the Staff Survey, and the inclement weather policy. The Executive Committee would like to look at the language and understand the inclement weather policy better, including which employees are essential, how to work remotely, and how to monitor remote work.

Audrey Neal said that in the Staff Survey comments, staff indicated they do not understand how the remote work policy works. President Lofton suggested having a staff forum with Human Resources to discuss the remote work and inclement weather policies.

President Lofton said she would like to set a date for the Staff Congress retreat in July. She has served the maximum number of terms as president as allowed by the Staff Congress Bylaws, so a new president will be leading Staff Congress beginning in July. The Executive Committee discussed being added to the agenda for the Board of Regents retreat to present the Staff Survey results. The Executive Committee felt that presenting the previous year's Staff Survey results at the Board of Regents retreat in 2023 worked well because the regular meetings have a full agenda. Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson will ask for the presentation of the Staff Survey results to be added to the agenda for the 2024 Board of Regents retreat.

The Executive Committee discussed having a Staff Congress get-together. Staff Congress Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee Chair Jodi Hanneman is working to arrange a date and location for the event. Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson asked about having a rebate night for the textbook scholarship at the Staff Congress get-together.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Joshua Hutson reported on the Staff Congress Election in-progress. He said that staff must click "save" and "submit" for votes to be counted.

Orville Herndon said that Shyann Royalty and Travis Plunkett have resigned from Staff Congress.

Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee: Jodi Hanneman reported that the Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee is in the process of planning an event to be scheduled for after the spring semester is finished. The staff breakfast is scheduled for May. Discussion followed regarding staff feedback on the staff Christmas reception.

Communications Committee: No report.

Working Conditions Committee: No report.

Staff Survey Committee: Audrey Neal thanked the Staff Survey Committee members for preparing the Staff Survey summary and recommendations report. The report has been sent to the Staff Congress Executive Committee. The survey included comments from staff on the following topics: a 4-day work-week during the summer; parking discounts or sliding fee scales, or free parking for years of service fewer than the current 20 years of service required for free parking; increased mental health supports for staff; mental health days; reviewing the tuition waiver policy; information meetings for staff on topics such as procurement, building conditions, heating and cooling, and remote and flexible work; ways to increase staff morale, and the inclement weather policy.

Textbook Scholarship Committee: No report.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: No report.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee: No report.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Orville Herndon reported on the April 19 meeting of the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee. Marsh McLennan, MSU's new health and wellness consultant, gave an overview of the services the company provides. During the fall 2024 semester, the committee will work on the 2025 health plan. Mr. Herndon asked that staff forward to him any staff comments and input for insurance.

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: Audrey Neal gave a summary of the following items discussed at the Budget Advisory Committee meeting on April 23: state appropriation; performance funding; and increases in tuition, scholarships, and housing and dining.

President Lofton said that at the Budget Advisory Committee, she, Staff Congress Vice President Audrey Neal, and Staff Regent Dr. David Wilson presented concerns about staff position that are not filled when they become vacant due to retirement or a move to off-campus employment, which leads to increasing workloads for remaining staff. President Lofton said the Town Hall is scheduled for April 25, at 3:00 p.m., in Wrather Auditorium.

Shared Governance Committee: No report.

Parking Advisory Committee: Duane Dycus reported on the Parking Advisory Committee meeting held on April 22. The committee discussed parking during the construction of the nursing building. To replace some of the spaces that will be affected by the construction, some red parking spaces will be changed to blue parking spaces. President Lofton added that persons with blue parking tags are able to park in red parking spaces. The university applied for a grant to install electric vehicle charging stations, but did not receive it. The university is discussing with the TVA other options regarding installing charging stations.

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Business List Revision Committee: Jodi Hanneman said the committee does not have any updates.

President Lofton noted that some businesses requesting to be added to the Business Discount List are not located in the Murray State region or do not offer discounts specifically for MSU employees. Ms. Lofton has sent a letter to those businesses explaining that businesses that are located regionally or that offer discounts specifically created for MSU employees will be considered for the list.

Merit Pay/Years-of-Service Pay Committee: President Lofton said she wants to see how the compensation study takes into consideration how long individuals have worked in their job positions, then, the next steps for the Merit Pay/Years of Service Committee can be determined. The compensation study included information from benchmark universities. The committee may want to discuss other ways to recognize staff.

Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee: Orville Herndon reported that the Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee is collecting Staff Regent Election process information from peer universities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

INFORMATION ITEMS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Joshua Hutson made a motion to adjourn. Dedrick Brooks seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.