



**Draft Minutes for November 15, 2023
118 Wells Hall and Zoom**

Present: Marty Anderson, Christian Barnes, Dedrick Brooks, Russell Dunn, Duane Dycus, Jodi Hanneman, Orville Herndon, Dayna Hutchinson, Joshua Hutson, Casey Johnson, Matthew Jones, Sondra Kreger, Trish Lofton, Audrey Neal, Kim Newbern, Travis Plunkett, Matt Purdy, Tressa Ross, Shyann Royalty, David Shelton, Matthew Todd, Dr. J. David Wilson

Absent: Jeremy McKeel, Angela Richerson

Guests: Sharion Meloan, Executive Coordinator, Office of the Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services; Dr. Melony Shemberger, Faculty Regent

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress President Trish Lofton called the meeting to order. She said the Board of Regents will meet on December 8. The second reading of the flexible and remote work policy is expected to be on the agenda for that meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Joshua Hutson made a motion to approve the October 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Dedrick Brooks seconded, and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT: Dedrick Brooks made a motion to approve the October 2023 Treasurer's Report. Joshua Hutson asked if the Treasurer's Report reflects the inter-account bill for the professional development fund scholarship awarded for the fall semester. Audrey Neal said the Office of Accounting and Finance is working to determine the process for that. Ms. Neal will ask what the next steps in the process are. President Lofton added that the scholarship recipient for the previous semester did not submit travel receipts. Consequently, the award could not be processed.

Tressa Ross seconded the motion to approve the October 2023 Treasurer's Report, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: President Lofton discussed the Staff Congress listening sessions that were held on November 7 and 9. She thanked Audrey Neal for working with Mentimeter which allowed listening session attendees to provide anonymous feedback. Ms. Neal said approximately 20 to 30 people attended each session. She reviewed the feedback the participants provided at the sessions.

President Lofton said the comments received during the sessions included positive comments for Staff Congress. The Staff Congress executive officers plan to host listening sessions during the spring semester.

At the executive officers' November meeting, the officers discussed the Staff Regent election timeline and the progress made by the ad hoc Merit Pay/Years-of-Service Pay Committee. The compensation review committee is scheduled to meet November 27.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon said the dates for the Staff Regent special election and filing period were sent to staff. The filing period opened on November 13. Candidate forums will be held before the election.

President Lofton said that under New Business in today's Staff Congress meeting, she would like to discuss forming an ad hoc committee to discuss changing the bylaws related to the Staff Regent election timeline.

Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee: Jodi Hanneman reported that arrangements have been confirmed for the children's Christmas party and the staff recognition event. The children's party is scheduled for December 2, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., in the Wellness Center. Set-up will start at 8:00 a.m. The staff recognition event is scheduled for December 13, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., in the Curris Center. The staff breakfast will be held on May 23. Candy for the children's party is needed by November 30. Canned goods for the Racers Helping Racers food pantry and candy for the children's party can be taken to Ms. Hanneman's office or to President Lofton's office.

Communications Committee: No report.

Working Conditions Committee: Matt Purdy reported on the Working Conditions Committee meeting held on November 8 with Haley Stedelin, Associate Director of Human Resources. The committee discussed orientation for new staff. Human Resources is developing an orientation module to be added to Canvas. For the orientation module, Human Resources welcomes information from Staff Congress regarding university governance. The Working Conditions Committee has created a Google form staff can use to volunteer or to submit presentation proposals for the staff blitz week planned for the week of January 8. The committee suggests using the name Staff Success Week for the staff blitz week. Presentations can be pre-recorded. Some of the blitz sessions being planned came from suggestions made during the staff listening sessions.

Discussion followed regarding suggested topics for orientation, Staff Success Week presentations, and ongoing modules for staff.

Staff Survey Committee: Audrey Neal said the Staff Survey Committee will meet on November 17, to make final edits to questions for the upcoming Staff Survey. President Lofton said she has contacted Courtney Hixon, Director of Human Resources, and Laura Castleberry, Director of Information Services Management, to request the Staff Regent listserv. The listserv was developed at the request of former Staff Regent Dr. Jessica Evans by updating the staff email list to include only staff. The original staff email list included faculty with administrative duties.

Textbook Scholarship Committee: No report.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: Dr. Wilson reported on the November meeting of the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee. The committee is reviewing the grievance procedure in the MSU Policies and Procedures Manual to determine if any updates might be proposed. The committee is also researching the grievance procedures of other universities as well as how to inform employees of the grievance process. Any proposed update would require approval by the Board of Regents. The committee's next meeting will probably be scheduled after the December break. Human Resources is reviewing the proposed changes to the overtime and exceptional compensation policy.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee: No report.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Orville Herndon said the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet on November 27. The committee will select a new chair. He will send Staff Congress members an updated meeting link.

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: No report.

Shared Governance Committee: No report.

Parking Advisory Committee: Duane Dycus reported on the fall meeting of the Parking Advisory Committee. Construction on the nursing building is scheduled to begin in summer 2024. The committee discussed how construction will affect parking. Regarding the removal of assigned parking spaces for College Courts apartments, a survey of College Courts residents indicated that over 50% of those residents do not own a vehicle. College Courts residents with children may request an assigned parking place in College Courts. The committee discussed the future increased demand for vehicle charging and solar canopies. The Parking Advisory Committee will meet again during the spring semester.

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Business List Revision Committee: Jodi Hanneman said a Google form is available for businesses to complete in order to be added to the Business Discount List. The form is available on the Staff Congress web page and Facebook page. She asked Staff Congress members to share the form on social media.

Merit Pay/Years-of-Service Pay Committee: Matt Purdy said the Merit Pay/Years-of-Service Pay Committee has discussed ideas with Human Resources. The compensation study is currently in-progress. The results of the study are needed in order to move forward with merit pay discussions. The committee will continue to discuss pay for years of service.

President Lofton said that Staff Congress Parliamentarian Orville Herndon has suggested organizing an ad hoc committee to update the Staff Congress Bylaws regarding the Staff Regent election timeline. Ms. Lofton has asked Mr. Herndon to chair the committee. She asked for volunteers to serve on the committee. The following Staff Congress representatives volunteered to serve on the ad hoc committee to update the Staff Regent election bylaws: Christian Barnes, Jodi Hanneman, Orville Herndon, Tressa Ross, Dr. David Wilson.

Mr. Herndon added that, because any bylaws changes approved by Staff Congress require two readings by the Board of Regents, changes to the Staff Regent election bylaws will probably not be completed in time to be implemented during the regular Staff Regent election that will be held in 2024. The Staff Regent special election that will be held in December 2023 will follow the current bylaws.

Tressa Ross asked if the bylaws require that the Staff Excellence Award stay with the employee who receives the award or if the award stays with the employment position when the person accepts a different position. Mr. Herndon said that issue is governed by policy and is not in the bylaws. President Lofton added that the Staff Excellence Award process could be updated and streamlined. In addition, an updated process would need to consider having the award stay with the recipient and not the employment position.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: President Lofton said the December Staff Congress meeting is currently scheduled for December 20, when the university will be closed. She proposed that the meeting be moved to December 13. Orville Herndon made a motion to move the December 20, 2023 Staff Congress meeting to December 13, 2023. Joshua Hutson seconded. Ms. Lofton asked if there was any discussion. There was none. The motion carried.

Mr. Herndon asked if any other meetings need to be moved to avoid being scheduled during spring break or Racer Nation Orientation. President Lofton said the March 20, 2024 meeting is currently scheduled during spring break. She asked if the group would like to move the meeting to March 13. Discussion followed. Ms. Lofton said she will send a Doodle Poll to Staff Congress members to ask about potential dates for the March 2024 and June 2024 Staff Congress meetings.

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