



Staff Congress

Draft Minutes for October 18, 2023
304 North Applied Science Building and Zoom

Present: Christian Barnes, Dedrick Brooks, Russell Dunn, Duane Dycus, Jodi Hanneman, Orville Herndon, Dayna Hutchinson, Joshua Hutson, Casey Johnson, Jeremy McKeel, Audrey Neal, Kim Newbern, Travis Plunkett, Matt Purdy, Tressa Ross, David Shelton, Matthew Todd, Dr. J. David Wilson

Absent: Marty Anderson, Matthew Jones, Sondra Kreger, Trish Lofton, Angela Richerson, Shyann Royalty

Guests: Marcie Clark, Assistant Director of Benefits, Human Resources; Dr. Jessica Evans, Staff Regent; Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President, Student Affairs; Dr. Melony Shemberger, Faculty Regent; Lauren Smee, Wellness Coordinator, Human Resources; Erin Tyree

CALL TO ORDER: Staff Congress Vice President Audrey Neal called the meeting to order.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS PRESENT:

Marcie Clark, Assistant Director of Benefits, Human Resources: Marcie Clark presented information about open enrollment which is scheduled for October 20 through November 3. During open enrollment, employees should review their insurance information in myGate and print or save a copy of their insurance selections for 2024. Human Resources will hold an open enrollment question and answer session on November 1. Employees may also contact Human Resources with questions. An FAQ section is available on the open enrollment website.

Lauren Smee, Wellness Coordinator, Human Resources: Lauren Smee said the Health and Benefits Fair is scheduled for October 25, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., in the Curris Center Ballroom. Representatives from the benefits and retirement providers will be available to answer questions at the health fair. She listed the screenings and information sessions scheduled for the fair.

Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President, Student Affairs: Due to technical difficulties during the meeting, Dr. Don Robertson's report was presented later in the meeting.

Staff Regent Report: Staff Regent Dr. Jessica Evans reported that the Board of Regents has received updates on enrollment. Staff Congress Executive Officers and the Staff Regent will host listening sessions on November 1, at 2:00 p.m., and November 3, at 9:00 a.m. More information on the listening sessions will be presented later in today's Staff Congress meeting. The next Board of Regents meeting is scheduled for December 8.

Audrey Neal asked if any update has been received regarding the compensation study.

Regent Evans said that no update has been received. The Compensation Review Committee has not met since the spring semester. The committee is waiting for information from the consulting firm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Tressa Ross made a motion to approve the September 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented. Joshua Hutson seconded, and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT: Orville Herndon made a motion to approve the September 2023 Treasurer's Report as presented. Tressa Ross seconded, and the motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee: Audrey Neal said the Executive Committee met and discussed possible programs such as MentiMeter to use during the listening sessions to allow staff to ask and answer questions anonymously during the sessions.

The committee discussed researching the process of establishing an ombudsman for employees to contact with grievances. The committee, in conjunction with the Grievance Committee, will continue to research the ombudsman process.

Dr. Don Robertson, Vice President, Student Affairs: Dr. Don Robertson reported on enrollment numbers and credit hours for the current semester. He reported on admission applications for the 2024 fall semester. Dr. Robertson thanked staff for their involvement in recruiting and welcoming students and families.

Dr. Robertson said that record numbers of employers and students attended the fall semester career fairs hosted by Career Services. Career fairs have been held for all majors, graduate school, STEM/OSH, and Agriculture. An education career fair is upcoming. He asked staff to encourage students to attend the career fairs. Juniors can benefit from the networking opportunities available at career fairs.

Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon said the Credentials and Elections Committee discussed possible dates for the March 2024 Staff Regent Election. Mr. Herndon made a motion that the Staff Regent Election be held March 12-14, 2024, with the filing period to be held February 12-26, 2024. He explained that after the filing period closes, Human Resources verifies that candidates meet the eligibility requirements. In addition, two candidate forums will be held after the filing period closes. The forum dates will be determined. Jeremy McKeel seconded the motion. Vice President Audrey Neal asked if there was any discussion. There was none. Ms. Neal called for the vote. The motion carried.

Mr. Herndon said that during the April 2023 Staff Congress Election, some staff commented on the length of time for online voting during the election. Some staff requested that the voting period be longer; others asked that the voting period be shorter. He asked Staff Congress members to contact him with comments regarding the length of the voting period. Discussion followed regarding the voting period and technical difficulties experienced during the April 2023 election.

Mr. Herndon suggested that Staff Congress mail postcards to staff with a reminder of the election dates. He has been informed by Information Systems that the university is considering using a different online voting program.

Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee: Jodi Hanneman reported that the Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee is planning the Children's Christmas Party. She thanked Dr. David Wilson for suggesting the Wellness Center for the location of the children's party, as other previously used venues were unavailable for this year's event.

Communications Committee: No report.

Working Conditions Committee: Matt Purdy said the committee was not able to meet in October due to scheduling conflicts and fall break. The committee plans to schedule a meeting in November.

Staff Survey Committee: Audrey Neal reported that the Staff Survey Committee met to discuss questions for the upcoming Staff Survey and to discuss questions from staff surveys at other Kentucky universities. The committee will meet again in November and plans to have the survey ready in December so it can be sent to staff in January. The committee will then develop a report and recommendations based on the survey responses received in order to present the information at the spring or summer meeting of the Board of Regents. The report will include data and trends from previous surveys. Suggestions for the survey may be sent to Staff Survey Committee members Audrey Neal, Tressa Ross, Jeremy McKeel, Joshua Hutson, Dedrick Brooks, Dr. David Wilson, and Duane Dycus.

Textbook Scholarship Committee: Joshua Hutson said the Textbook Scholarship Committee is in the process of converting the applications for the textbook scholarship and the professional development fund to Google forms. The committee will discuss fundraising for the scholarship and professional development fund.

Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee: Dr. David Wilson reported that the Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee met in October and is developing a list of ideas and questions for the committee to address. The committee will be reviewing the grievance procedures. He asked Staff Congress members to email him with questions and input. He will organize a committee meeting for November.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee: No report.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:

Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee: Orville Herndon and Audrey Neal said the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee will meet on October 23, at 9:30 a.m. At the committee's previous meeting, committee assignments were made. The committee will review topics such as wellness benefits, childcare, and work-life balance.

Intercollegiate Athletic Council: Tressa Ross said MSU's official NIL entity, the Blue and Gold Standard, has been announced. The entity will allow university athletes to receive compensation.

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 said the Parking Advisory Committee will meet via Zoom on October 31, at 11:30 a.m.

Dr. David Wilson said the Housing Office has received calls from students regarding parking in College Courts. The parking in College Courts has been changed to a yellow zone, and spaces are no longer reserved for the apartments. Some parking spaces still have apartment numbers but anyone may park there because the spaces are now in a yellow zone. The change was made by Parking Services and is not under the control of the Housing Office. Mr. Dycus said he will ask about this at the Parking Advisory Committee meeting.

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Business List Revision Committee: Ms. Neal said that Business List Revision Committee Chair Jodi Hanneman emailed to Staff Congress the updated Business Discount List and a link to add businesses to the Discount List. Staff Regent Dr. Jessica Evans forwarded the email to regional Chambers of Commerce. Ms. Hanneman added that the document and link have been posted to Staff Congress social media.

Merit Pay/Years-of-Service Pay Committee: Matt Purdy reported on the September 28 meeting of the Merit Pay/Years-of-Service Pay Committee. The committee has been researching the merit pay and years-of-service pay policies at other universities, and is developing a list of professional development topics that may interest staff. The committee will meet with Human Resources to discuss the topics of merit pay and years-of-service pay.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

INFORMATION ITEMS: The next Staff Congress meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Matt Purdy made a motion to adjourn. Jeremy McKeel seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.