

Staff Senate Minutes

December 5, 2018

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Lou Ann Reeves called the Arkansas Tech Staff Senate meeting to order on Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 10:00 am in Doc Bryan 180.

**ROLLCALL Senators Present:**

Kelli Bates Michelle Bishop Angie Bell Josh Carey Pam Dixon Andrea Eubanks Dona Kirkpatrick Chelsea Martin Michelle McMinn Chris Pearson Lou Ann Reeves Megan Green Braxton Lay Hope Vilavanh Denise Wallis Karissa Webb Brandi Duvall Marvin Mashburn

**Senators Absent:**

 Tera Simpson Charity Smith

**Visitor(s):**

 Christi Brown - Advancement

 Thomas Pennington - Associate VP and University Counsel

 Jennifer Thomas - Ozark Campus

The minutes from the November 7, 2018 meeting were distributed electronically and at the meeting. Senator Martin filed a motion to accept the minutes and Senator Dixon seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

President Reeves opened the floor for Senator Pearson to discuss old business pertaining to crosswalk and AEDs. (See Old Business for report).

Christi Brown, Scholarship Administrator in Advancement, demonstrated the new scholarship website and showed everyone how to apply for Foundation scholarships through OneTech. The Faculty/Staff Scholarship is separate from the Faculty/Staff Waiver. Previously, faculty/staff/dependents who completed a waiver form were automatically awarded a scholarship from the funds. Now, those interested in the Faculty/Staff scholarship need to apply and the award amount is $500 per semester, for no more than two consecutive semesters. Faculty/staff/dependents, who qualify (must be full-time, benefits eligible), who are interested in applying for Foundation scholarships can apply through OneTech, Tuition and Aid tab, Scholarships, Apply for Foundation Scholarships. The deadline for the Faculty/Staff scholarship is December 31st for spring term and August 1st (tentatively) for fall term. All other Foundation scholarship applications are due February 15, 2019.

Thomas Pennington, Legal Counsel, addressed the Senate and presented proposed Ethics Policy (attached), proposed update to the Official Function Policy, and External Employment Policy (already in effect, to be added to the Staff Handbook when approved). Sub-committees were formed to review the Ethics Policy, which has already be reviewed by the Faculty Senate and they have provided their feedback, and to review the Official Function Policy update. Thomas also informed the Senate the internal hiring process will stand as is for all vacant positions. It is Executive Council’s reasoning that the current process helps create opportunity for diversity. Fellow senators expressed their disappointed in the process and with the decision that is supported by Executive Council. Several members, across multiple areas of the University, expressed how when one person leaves, it may take six months to a year to fill and train new members of the staff and get back to a fully functioning office. One Senator reported in one year’s time her supervisor has run 14 searches. The majority of senators expressed how costly of time and money the process is. An internal hiring policy subcommittee was formed to further explore the policy.

Lou Ann reported updates from the committees she attends as Staff Senate President. The Fee Committee is still reviewing Fee proposals. The Budget Advisory Committee discussed the minimum wage increase that will take effect January 1 and go to the $9.25 per hour rate. If you have student workers in your area, please take into consideration the wage change. College Work Study money is available and you can contact Tracey Hale in Financial Aid to verify if a student is eligible and Lou Ann to budget to money for your department. Presidents Communication Committee shared Dr. Mike Murders from Ozark is leaving as of January 1 and is going to VPAA at South Ark. The Library will be open 24 hours during finals. If your area has collected items for the Staff Senate Food Drive to support the Green and Gold Cupboard, please reach out to any staff senator to make arrangements for those items to be delivered to the Green and Gold Cupboard by noon Friday. Please let me know if you have items and I will be happy to get them! Public Safety is collecting Toys for Tots through December 15.

Two items were submitted through the Staff Senate portal located on the website. The first item inquired about the option to purchase multiple hangtags. The idea is so an individual would have the option to purchase an additional hangtag, resulting in additional revenue and decrease the need to temporary hangtags for those who forgot theirs. Discussion did not support this idea and a lot of senators indicated they would not be interested in spending an additional $40 dollars for a hangtag. The use of temporary hangtags would still be needed for guest parking so the practice cannot be done away with completely. The second item submitted was the use of oil diffusers and sprays. Those with allergies may have to leave areas completely due to overpowering smells. The Senate did not like the idea of creating a policy that would take away the use of these items. Discussion was to share this concern with our constituents and encourage staff to be mindful of others sensitivities and remember that what smells good to me may not smell good to someone else.

President Reeves asked Senators to come up with goals for the Senate this year. Some are to collaborate with Faculty Senate on some issues, restructuring the Senate, and possibly updating the constitution and by-laws.

Please mark your calendars for Staff Appreciation activities in the spring: February 7, Basketball game; Cookout May 23, Tucker Coliseum 11 am – 1 pm.

To benefit employees, new change in holiday policy. Executive Council approved holiday pay. Extra hours must be approved by supervisor.

**Old Business:**

Senator Pearson discussed a request to Facilities Management to stripe the Young/Tomlinson parking lot for pedestrian crossing. Would have to remove parking spaces and is not considered a roadway. This location will be the new student union. The senate agreed to go no further with this discussion.

Senator Pearson stated we have five AED’s on campus and two are located at the Physical Plant. The request to get more on campus is currently in process.

The Staff Senate yielded more than 310 pounds of donated items and cash donations to benefit the Green and Gold cupboard.

Thomas Pennington stated changes can still be made to staff handbook.

**New Business:**

Senator Wallis mentioned leave day before Thanksgiving. She spoke to Julie, Brian, and Ms. Hinkle about comp time for employees working more than four hours. Ms. Hinkle is working on resolving issue.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

Senator Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:53 am. Senator Dixon seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

**Next Meeting:**

January 2, 2019, @ 10:00 am in Doc Bryan 180

Respectfully submitted,

Hope Vilavanh, Reporter