

Staff Senate Minutes

August 3, 2023

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Kristian Thompson called the Arkansas Tech University Staff Senate meeting to order on Thursday August 3, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in a hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual online meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

**Senators Present:**

Sabrina Anwar  
Peggy Ayers  
Rachel Broussard  
Deidra Dillard

Joey Davis  
Julie Ennis  
Connie Herring  
Kim Hilliard

Amber Jacimore  
Kacie Lopez  
Krystle Manning  
Whitney Moore

Tanda Morrison  
Tammy Rye  
Miranda Senn  
Kristian Thompson

**Senators Absent:**

Natasha Branch  
Slade Dupuy

Katie Hook  
Cody Neal

**Visitor(s):**

Alex Manly  
Alexis Scrimshire  
Alisha Nix  
Amber Meeks  
Andrew Stadler  
Alisa Waniewski  
Angela Westbrook  
Bryan Bramlett  
Chris Moss  
Cody Parsons  
Daniel Land  
David Blackburn  
Ilona Davidson  
Jamie Young  
Joceline Argueta

Joel Arivett  
Joseph Gordon  
Kaylin Telford  
Kim McKown  
Kimberly Newman  
Mackenzie Bray  
Melissa Riffle  
Nick Schluterman  
Rhonda Ralph  
Shawna Davis  
Steven Campbell  
Sylvia Cooper  
Tammy Weaver  
Tracey Hale

### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the July 13, 2023 meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Senator Hilliard filed a motion to accept the minutes. Senator Dillard seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by Senate vote.

### **Special Guest**

Dr. Keegan Nichols.

### **Special Report**

We had the opportunity to have Dr. Nichols join our meeting again this month as acting President of the University.

Dr. Nichols gave a brief update on Dr. Bowen and her progress. She also mentioned that we are expecting to see her back in action about Mid-September. As that schedule changes, she will keep us as updated as possible.

With that in mind, Dr. Nichols will be acting President as we start the fall semester. She encourages anyone to let her know or remind her about any issues that the beginning of the semester brings, that could possibly fall between the cracks. She is more than happy to take time with anyone that needs it.

Dr. Nichols spoke briefly about the Welcome Back event happening on August 18<sup>th</sup> and what that is going to look like.

We were also reminded that O Street will be opened up for Move-In Day. That will be everyone's last chance to use the street before it is closed permanently. If you'd like to drive it for memory's sake or whatever the case may be, Saturday August 19<sup>th</sup> will be your last opportunity.

She also reminded us that we will be preserving and moving the MLK Boulevard so that it can be moved to its new location. That location has not been determined yet but the Equity and Diversity Committee has been tasked with deciding that location. As soon as a location is determined, we'll be happy to share the news!

The first football game is coming up as well as the Green and Gold Scrimmage. Dr. Nichols went and visited the President's box and the furniture was in poor shape. They looked at different options to replace/repair the furniture. The cost to replace it was very high so it was not considered as an option. They tried to steam clean it and that helped but didn't fully fix the issues. The decision then was made to recover the furniture. We will be doing that using the Pepsi money and will cost about \$5,500. We want to make sure that area looks nice for our donors and special guests.

Dr. Nichols also took the time to make sure everyone knew how important every single person on this campus is. We all have a role, we all have a purpose, and we all contribute to keeping this University running. She wants everyone to know how powerful they are and how much she appreciates us all.

Thank you, Dr. Nichols, for joining us at our August meeting!

### **New Business/Discussion**

President Thompson gave a brief reintroduction to the new Staff Senate Officers. He also wanted the senators to know that new officers had attended a meeting with their predecessors to discuss what has been accomplished, what we want accomplished, and what we are in the process of working on currently.

President Thompson mentioned that the Staff Senate will be taking a hard look at the current committees that the Senate is involved in. We will review the ones that need to stay and the ones that need to be put on a back burner.

Senators Ayers and Rye discussed the Pepsi machines around campus. They wanted to make sure that if anyone is noticing issues with the machines, including but not limited to needing refills, repairs, etc., to let Senator Rye know so she could get with our Pepsi contact to make sure all is in order.

President Thompson went over important upcoming dates and events that are listed below. First on the list is the Board Meeting. If there is anything we'd like discussed in the meeting, he'd be happy to present it. Just shoot him a message and he'll make it a priority.

Secondly, the Welcome Back meeting, President Thompson would like ideas on how to make it fun. If you can think of any activities that everyone would enjoy, let him know so he can share the idea with Dr. Nichols.

Third, the Meet and Greet for Jerry III, will also be taking donations in the form of monetary contributions as well as toys for our newest ambassador. Senator Ayers wanted to remind the senate that Jerry is paid for by donations since no state funds can be used for the ambassador. The Greek communities on campus are doing a fundraiser and whatever group on campus raises the most money for Jerry, will receive a play date with him. Who doesn't love puppy cuddles?? President Thompson also wanted to take the opportunity to thank Sam and Heather Strasner for making Jerry a part of their home and family. Taking care of him is a 24-hour job and they do it wonderfully.

Senator Lopez presented a concern about disability and mobility doors and the length of time they stay open. It seems as though some of the doors are closing way too quickly or have started not working at all. We would like to see those fixed, preferably before students that need them return to campus. Guest Joel Arivett from FAMA and said that they would be sure to look into that for us. We appreciate him joining us and for volunteering to make sure that gets looked at.

Senator Manning wanted to make sure everyone was reminded to buy your parking pass. Public Safety is going to be a little lenient for the first little bit of the semester especially with all of the construction going on. However, getting that parking pass helps them determine the parking needs on campus especially with the construction fence covering quite a few parking lots. Senator Moore mentioned that there were a lot of new hires over the summer that may not have been able to get a parking pass at the time of their hire like new hires typically do the rest of the year. If you have a new hire in your area, please make sure they know how to purchase a parking pass and possibly remind them about it since they have never had to do it before. Senator Manning said if there are any questions about parking or parking passes, shoot her a message and she will get back to you.

President Thompson mentioned that he is going to work on getting us updated head shots for the Staff Senate website. The group discussed and decided that we liked the room we were in for our meetings and agreed to start having them in RCB 355 for the foreseeable future.

Last but not least, we were able to fill out last two empty positions on the senate. We would love to welcome Senators Amber Jacimore and Cody Neal. They are going to be great additions and we look forward to working with them.

### **Upcoming Events**

Board Meeting: August 17<sup>th</sup>

Faculty/Staff Welcome Back: August 18<sup>th</sup> at 10am in Hull

(All Faculty and Staff are encouraged to have lunch at Chambers afterwards for free in order to celebrate the start of the semester and network)

Move-In: August 19<sup>th</sup>.

Anyone that would like to volunteer, please let William Titsworth know and he will get you a T-Shirt

First day of classes: August 23<sup>rd</sup>

New Student Orientation: August 19<sup>th</sup> through 22<sup>nd</sup>

Involvement Fair: August 21<sup>st</sup>

If your department would like a table, please let Senator Broussard or Chelsea Neal know and they will get you a table

Jerry III Meet and Greet: August 21<sup>st</sup> 4-6pm

G&G Football Scrimmage: August 22<sup>nd</sup>

Volleyball: August 26<sup>th</sup>

### **Meeting Adjourned**

President Thompson asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Senator Ayers made the motion and Vice President Herring seconded it at 9:53 am. President Thompson wanted to make sure the group knows that they can message him any time if they'd like to discuss something and that his door is always open as a safe place.

Respectfully submitted,  
Whitney Moore, Secretary