

STAFF SENATE

Friday, July 10, 2015

Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

The Ozark Campus Staff Senate was called to order by President Birchler on Friday, July 10, 2015 at 10:06 a.m. in Rm 174 of the Technical Academic Support Building.

ROLL CALL

Senators Present:

Sandra Anderson

Jessica Birchler

Faith Johnson

Jennifer McIntare

Sharyl Moffit

Laura Rudolph

Ex-Officio Present:

Beverly Nehus by conference call

MINUTES: Minutes were read. Motion to approve minutes as read was made by Laura Rudolph, seconded by Sandra Anderson and all approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Survey Results** – Committee reviewed results of the survey sent out by email to the staff. It was understood the purpose and duty of the committee with the review is to try and implement the requested changes as best as possible, in a timely manner, to build confidence in the group among staff. The following items were rated as of highest concern to the staff under each area:

Staff and Wellness Area – *Schedule workshop on relaxation, stress management and work life balance topics*

Staff Professional Development – *Educational Sessions*

Staff Self Help Sessions – *Retirement Information Session*

Potlucks – *Quarterly*

Types of Recognition beyond Staff Quality Service Award – *Service Year Awards*

Further discussion and suggested action for each area was also discussed by the committee and included:

Staff and Wellness Area:

The group discussed the top concern of *Schedule workshop on relaxation, stress management and work life balance topics* and suggested the following actions be taken:

- Check with campus Human Resources Department to look into what programs the state offers (Arkansas.gov website). Look to answer the following questions: What is available? What is the process?
- Mrs. Nehus will look to contact Dr. Warnick and President Birchler contact the Staff Senate on the main campus to see what Professional Development may be in the works already. Members asked to suggest perhaps a half day there and half day here sessions. The group also agreed to consider both Summer II and Fall Break as a time to schedule workshops.

Other top areas of concern noted for this topic area on the survey were:

With upcoming fitness center in the new Allied Health Building look to setup a workout buddy system and designate a time such as either 5 – 6 pm or 11 – 12 pm for staff only. Others topics ranked as important were health food plan information and group walks. The following is a list of suggested actions to work on these matters of concern:

- Consult with Administration to find out whether a designated time is even a possibility
- Send out questions to staff about when best to possibly designate such a time for staff on a new survey to get logistics of staff preferences to help move forward.
- Expressed issues to work out for this area were: not knowing what equipment will be available, being able to pick own buddy and rotating staff out within departments

Staff Professional Development Area:

Members discussed the top concern of *Educational sessions* and noted the following actions be taken:

- Members took notice to the specific areas suggested by staff for the needed educational sessions: Banner training, Blackboard, Advanced Excel training, Conferences, Time management, Team building and with these the Staff Senate added the need for ARGOS training
- Suggestion was made to split up Banner and ARGOS training based on needs
- Though we usually want all survey information kept anonymous Staff Senate members considered the importance of identifying the specific individuals needing certain training. Suggestion was made to either use a separate questionnaire during a potluck or ask the departments to help identify who specifically by a show of hands and what training their staff desire to help ensure these individuals get what they need
- Noted that the general consensus of staff during the last team building session was to have it include the Officers and ensure all staff including Maintenance are able to participate. Previous costs of the 4H Excel group was estimated at 1500. Members suggest the staff be asked for specifics of how to improve the experience
- Seek out a means to create a general pool of money to send a couple of staff at a time to conferences to learn new skills and bring back information for a possible lunch and learn sessions
- Suggested the following candidates be ask to conduct Blackboard Training: Mike Murders, Ritchie Powers or look at someone who recently went through E-Tech certification such as Chris Rambo

Self Help Area:

Members discussed the top concern of *Retirement Information Session* and noted the following actions be taken:

- Work through our Human Resource Department to see what is available. Laura Rudolph suggested Kristen Nelson with the Franklin County Extension Office be brought in as a possible speaker. Informed Kristen provides information regarding both retirement and insurance that is not a

sells pitch. Mrs. Rudolph will provide Kristen Nelson's contact information to Mrs. Nehus and President Birchler

- Members suggested the Fall Break period to be a good time for such information sessions. It was noted that this type of information would be best before open enrollment, believed to be around November, so best to consider the session for a day in September
- Suggestion was made to look to the Credit Counseling of Arkansas for assistance with information regarding Budget and Savings. It was noted that the Credit Counseling of Arkansas would provide good information without a sells pitch. Another suggestion made was to bring someone in from the Credit Union to discuss Christmas account information
- Suggestion was made to consider creating a mini conference in house with rotating sessions where individuals can choose which sessions to set in on. Provide a choice of two days at the end of the week to help with staffing issues. Also suggested two days in Fall and Spring be reserved for these information sessions
- Members took note of the request for a four day work week and though it is out of reach, the members will strive to see if there is a way to at least achieve a little more flexibility with scheduling. Some thoughts discussed were a 30 min. lunch if desired and leave early 30 min. on some days, keep a sign in sheet where if work over one day be able to use that time on another day or keep a sign in sheet where if need to renew tags or something then allow to do so without getting penalized so long as not abused. Staff Senate members decided it best to table this matter for further discussion until able to see what may be possible regarding this concern

Potluck Preference:

Members noted and accepted the surveyed preference to have potlucks quarterly.

Staff Awards Area:

Members took note of the enormous response to this area of concern. Majority of the staff surveyed requested to *provide service year awards*. Second most voted concern was to *spotlight an employee weekly on campus TVs and social media*. Among the many comments it was evident there is a very strong desire to offer a *peer nominated staff award*. Other feel good perk possibilities discussed by the group were to offer no cost textbooks or ability to rent textbooks, relaxed dress code for summer, Staff Senate send out birthday cards and to allow the employee of the month a choice of parking spot providing a mobile reserve sign. Other items noted among the comments and discussion were: issues with morale, and personal time being used for community committees.

Discussed Actions:

- The question was brought up as to whether to move forward with the already created Staff Excellence Award procedure, last set a side due to the inability to offer a monetary reward, with now a possible issuance of a plaque instead, or try to poll the staff again to see how the staff prefer to setup the award. Note the Staff Excellence Award is a peer nominated award procedure originally created at the same time but is a separate award from the SGA, student voted, Staff Quality Service Award that has had a plaque presented for the past three years. Members of the Staff Senate unanimously decided that with the very strong interest with this

matter it would be best to poll the staff once more for specifics of how to best to setup the staff award selection process. A suggestion was made to also see whether the awardee(s) for the staff award(s) may be presented the award(s) during commencement.

- President Birchler has already obtained the costs of a mobile reserve sign with David Spicer, Public Safety Officer.
- Members learned through discussion of the weekly employee spotlight that ATCC Arkansas Technical Career Center needs electronic signage.

Expectations of Staff Senate Area – With the review of the comments the following items came to light:

- Members unanimously agreed it best to address the staff awards first since they are the biggest area of concern and most commented on.
- Staff Senate needs to find out overall what is available and what is not, check on group budget.
- Should look to provide the history of the Staff Council now Staff Senate to staff during up-coming potluck scheduled for Wednesday, July 15, beginning at 11:30 a.m. to better inform staff of how we were created and what has been accomplished by the group so far. President Birchler will use a PowerPoint presentation for this during the potluck, copies were provided for review during the meeting. Come and go potlucks were suggested without having a program to make it fun and friendly opportunity to catch up with one another. Another idea to make potlucks interesting is to perhaps see if staff would be interested in opting in a confidential coworker game with secret gifting once a month and a reveal at last potluck of the year. Members agreed since it would encumber some cost this should be a question on the next staff survey. A suggestion was also made to have staff all fill out information sheets that we may publicize with the monthly employee spotlight to help get to know one another better.
- Need to have more information regarding the morale comments to really know what direction to take to possibly fix the issues. Suggested a confidential comments spot on a hopeful Staff Senate webpage. President Birchler will place a request with Megan Morris, Public Information Specialist, to get these items in the works
- Members agreed on the need to address the inability to grant a 32 work week but wish to provide assurance to staff that more flexible scheduling options will be sought out by the group for consideration
- Members agreed on the need to publicize meeting minutes on the Staff Senate website when created
- Survey results and meeting minutes will be provided to Mr. Sikes to share with the Officers
- Staff Senate members unanimously agreed it would be nice and at low cost to the group to send out birthday cards to the staff. Members suggested to even look at an electronic birthday card with employee(s) picture on the electronic signage. Group would need to work with Megan, Public Information Specialist
- Email or present roll out points of Survey results to the staff and ask if anything more should be added to help move forward on these issues

- Make aware to staff that they may report to any one of the members serving on the Staff Senate not just the ones from their department
- Staff Senate members by word of mouth were called on from concerned staff to review the staff waiver process to see why it is so late in the semester the waivers are posted and whether the process may be changed to have the waivers post at the beginning of each semester. The issue for some is that they have to pay out of pocket for books and for those with dependents taking full time or better with more expensive books when they take out a loan, with the situation with the waiver, they the student or parent if unable to pay out of pocket must take an even greater loan amount to cover books, though they are guaranteed the waiver funds. When the waiver goes through a refund is generated but the student or parent still ends up paying the interest on the additional amount taken out with the loan. Julie Schmalz in financial aid has offered to call to research the waiver post policy to see why it is the way it is to help the Staff Senate decide further possible action. The request to research this matter is also expected to be delivered to Human Resource and Student Accounts.
- Members will look into whether it may be possible to either provide books for free to staff taking classes, a book scholarship with staff award or provide a book rental opportunity. Considering the encouragement of staff to further education as a means of Professional Development. Only issue noted as food for thought with the staff award book scholarship is that not all staff take classes.
- Staff Senate expects to create a to do list
- Members were all asked to assist in getting notes together to help develop the next deeper questionnaire for staff to help the committee move forward with possible solutions to some of the expressed concerns.

Last comments and discussion were called by President Birchler, no further discussion regarding the survey, none opposed.

- **Clarification and Voting of Officers** – Nominations required, vote by secret ballot during July meeting and no consecutive terms for office were read from the Staff Senate constitution as a guide to the election process. First nominations for the position of Secretary were taken: Faith and Sharyl, with Sharyl currently holding the position. Secondly nominations for the position of Vice President were taken: Faith and Sharyl. Voting results ruled Faith Johnson for **Secretary** and Sharyl Moffit for **Vice President**. For **President** the majority ruled Jessica Birchler to remain in office.
- **Web Site or Blackboard?** – Sharyl Moffit motioned, Laura Rudolph seconded and all approved to setup a Staff Senate website. It was suggested to perhaps model it after the main campus Staff Senate website. Members voiced the following items should be listed on the website: list of Staff Senate members, history of Staff Council now Staff Senate, announcements, publicize minutes and provide an anonymous comment drop box as a start.
- **Potluck:** President Birchler sent out first notice of the potluck to staff on June 30th.
 - **Staff Senate Cleanup?** Laura informed the group of her previously scheduled Regional workshop event and Faith informed the group of her previously scheduled vacation leave so the two would not be able to make the

potluck on Wednesday. Both Laura and Faith agreed to provide needed items to help out with the potluck ahead of time. For those present it was asked for clean up to be by 2 p.m.

- **What do we present?** President Birchler prepared and provided copies of a PowerPoint presentation to be delivered to the staff during the potluck. Suggested and approved by members was to add an explanation of the history of the Staff Council now Staff Senate stating how we became part of it. Explain how members will roll off every two years showing how it is a fluid thing, provide an inspiration quote, and look to have random snap shots of staff as part of it. Suggested centerpiece was an empty vase and slips of paper for recommendations. It was asked to add a please give feedback slide to the presentation and a thank you slide.
- President Birchler has already received a few emails stating what individuals are planning to bring to the potluck. She will send a new email to let everyone know what is on the menu as of today. Mrs. Nehus added pinwheels to the menu, Sharyl mexican chicken, Sandra bacon wrapped hot dogs, Laura lasagna and Faith agreed to provide plates, cups with a bottled drink.

OLD BUSINESS

- Non-Credit Assessment – It has been asked that the group create a list of Professional Development topics. Here is the groups compiled list so far:
 - Excel
 - Banner
 - ARGOS
 - Blackboard
 - Office Etiquette
 - Employment Law
 - Supervisor Training
 - Team Building

Date for the Non Credit Assessment Meeting: Members suggested that Fridays are better and asked Mrs. Nehus to check with Mr. Sikes to see if either August 7th or 14th would be good. If choose August 7th the group is good with moving the next meeting time if needed. Members were okay with using same location Room 174 in the Technical Academic Support Building.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Next Meeting is presently scheduled for Friday, August 7, 2015 at 10 a.m. in Room 174 of the Technical Academic Support Building unless a move is needed for the soon to be scheduled Non Credit Assessment Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Laura Rudolph motioned, Sharyl Moffit second, and all approved the motion to adjourn at 12:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Johnson, Secretary
07-24-15