

Staff Senate Minutes

August 7, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Lou Ann Reeves called the Arkansas Tech Staff Senate meeting to order on Wednesday, August 7, 2019 at 10:00 am in Doc Bryan Student Services Center 108.

**ROLLCALL Senators Present:**

Michelle Bishop Josh Carey

Pam Dixon Brandi Duvall Andrea Eubanks Braxton Lay

Belinda Martin Marvin Mashburn Michelle McMinn Chris Pearson

Lou Ann Reeves Tera Simpson Charity Smith Hope Vilavanh

Denise Wallis Karissa Webb

**Senators Absent:**

Kelli Bates Angela Bell Megan Green

**Visitor(s):**

Bernadette Hinkle Dr. Jan Jenkins Dr. David Eshelman Bryan Bramlett

Brett Arrington Meredith Lawson

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the July 10, 2019 meeting were distributed electronically. Senator McMinn filed a motion to accept the minutes. Senator Vilavanh seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a Senate vote.

**Special Report**

Dr. Jan Jenkins, representing the Green & Gold Cupboard thanked the Staff Senate for their past support of the Cupboard via food drives. Dr. Jenkins stated that the Green & Gold Cupboard board had decided that the Staff Senate could have the option of appointing a member to the Green & Gold Cupboard board due to the nature of the Senate’s involvement with the Green & Gold cupboard.

The duties of the appointed member would be as follows:

* Have keys to the building
* Be involved in decision making and planning
* Work an open session at the building
* Meet as a board 2-3 times per year

Senator McMinn filed a motion that states that the Staff Senate will appoint a member to the Green & Gold Cupboard board. Senator Eubanks seconded the motion and the motion was passed by a Senate vote.

**Committee Reports**

* **Official Function Committee** – No Report
* **Insurance Committee** –
  + Senator Carey reported that Blue Cross and Blue Shield is seeking an increase of 24% to health insurance and no increase to dental or vision. Ms. Hinkle confirmed that the university is actively seeking competitors to Blue Cross and Blue Shield to review as a new insurance vendor.
* **Scholarship Committee** –
  + Senator Smith reported that the Faculty/Staff Scholarship application is live on the Foundation website here: <https://www.atualumni.com/s/978/bp18/interior-left.aspx?sid=978&gid=1&pgid=1772>
  + The deadline is August 23rd for the Fall Semester. It is required that applicants must reapply every semester.
* **Awards Committee** – No Report
* **Elections Committee** – No Report
* **Constitution & Bylaws Committee** –No Report
* **Staff Handbook Committee** – No Report
* **Medical Marijuana Committee** – No Report
* **Free Speech Committee** – No Report

**Old Business**

*Picnic Table & Gravel Walkway by Robert Charles Brown Building*

President Reeves reported that a picnic table has been moved over to the Robert Charles Brown building area per a request from the Staff Senate online feedback form. President Reeves also stated that funds totally $4,700.00 have been released for work to improve the walkway between the Caraway Hall and Robert Charles Brown Building parking lots.

*Custodial Shirts*

President Reeves reported that she spoke with Brian Lasey regarding the request via the Staff Senate online feedback form to look into changing the custodial shirts to say “Staff” instead of “custodial staff”. President Reeves stated that Mr. Lasey answered that those shirts were chosen by a committee and the identifier of “custodial staff” was chosen for security reasons since custodial staff enter secure areas where other staff are not allowed to enter. Senator Wallis provided additional context from custodial staff stating that they do not like being identified as “custodial staff” outside of work and requested the t-shirt to say “staff”. President Reeves noted she will pass the information to Mr. Lasey.

*Elections*

Nominations for Staff Senate elections will open on September 2 and close on September 13. Nominations can be emailed to President Reeves at [rreeves5@atu.edu](mailto:rreeves5@atu.edu). Self-nominations are also accepted. Eligibility requirements can be found in the Staff Senate Constitution available on the Staff Senate website at [www.atu.edu/staffsenate](http://www.atu.edu/staffsenate). The following positions are open for nominations:

* 5 positions in Academic Affairs
* 5 positions in Administration & Finance
* 2 positions in Student Affairs
* 1 position in Enrollment Management

*Tuition Waiver*

Senator Smith reported that the Tuition Waiver subcommittee met following the July Staff Senate meeting to address the concerns listed during that Senate meeting. The subcommittee recommended the following:

* Leaving the graduate hour cap at 45 hours due to logistics issues uncovered at the second subcommittee meeting
* Moving the due date for the waiver to the last day to drop classes with an 80% reduction in bill
* Publishing the Waiver Appeals process outlined in the Board of Trustees version of the waiver

The subcommittee recommended the Senate vote on these changes now and allow additional time for a new subcommittee to address the larger issues brought up by the Senate at the July meeting.

Senator Bishop filed a motion that the Staff Senate approve the changes proposed by the Tuition Waiver Subcommittee. Senator Eubanks seconded the motion and the motion was passed by a senate vote.

*Pending Items*

President Reeves reported that she is waiting on responses for the following active business items:

* The proposed revision to the Staff Senate Constitution
* The submitted timeline for Staff Awards
* The Official Function policy
* The Staff Handbook
* The Free Speech policy

**New Business:**

*Crosswalk by Robert Charles Brown and Rothwell Halls*

Senator Smith reported that a staff member brought it to her attention that the long crosswalk in front of Robert Charles Brown and Rothwell Halls at the corner of Coliseum Drive and O Street could be unsafe during high volume foot traffic times. Senator Smith contacted Chief McMillian to see what options there were for moving the crosswalk or making it safer. Chief McMillian answered that there are no plans to move the crosswalk, but that some things could be done to make it safer. President Reeves stated she will explore this with Chief McMillian.

**Open Forum**

President Reeves reported that the online feedback form had received two submissions:

* A staff member asked why career services bonuses did not go into effect on July 1. President Reeves answered that since the law did not go into effect until July 24th, the career services bonus would be present in the August pay period if applicable to that employee.
* A staff member asked why we have to provide vehicle make and model when ordering hangtags. Senator Pearson stated that it is a requirement by the hangtag system, but that hangtags are transferrable to multiple vehicles because it is tied to one’s T Number. Another staff member had asked about hangtags being paid for via a payroll deduction. President Reeves stated that the Senate has explored that request before will revisit the previous answer received from Payroll.

Senator Wallis read a statement from a staff member outlining the need for review of the grievance policy in the current Staff Handbook. Senator Eubanks stated that this issue will be reviewed at the next Staff Handbook committee meeting.

Senator Duvall stated that a staff member had asked her to request that signs be placed in elevators that outline what offices are on what floor of that particular building.

Visitor to the Senate and staff member in the Graduate College, Meredith Lawson, spoke to the Senate regarding the ideas for morale boosters discussed at the June Senate meeting. Lawson stated that she had experienced some of these ideas firsthand at other institutions and wanted to give context on how those institutions had handled them.

* Flex Time & Summer Time
  + At the University of Alabama – Birmingham, Lawson had the opportunity to choose to have a flexible work schedule. She stated that each individual’s schedule was worked out between that employee and their supervisor and that it was the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that offices received adequate coverage during the workweek.
  + At Southern Arkansas University, Lawson worked under regular summer hours. That was a 10-hour day, four days a week, with Friday being the day off. She stated that some employees volunteered to work on Fridays to keep necessary offices open five days a week while other offices had a mandatory rotation schedule.
* Health Benefits at the on-campus health center
  + At Southern Arkansas University, employees were able to use the on-campus health center at no cost to the employee. The Health Center billed the employee’s insurance and the university covered the co-pay.

**Announcements**

Nominations for Staff Senate will be accepted September 2 – 13, 2019.

August 17, 2019, is move-in day.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

Senator McMinn filed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Webb seconded the motion. The Senate voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 am.

**Next Meeting:**

September 4, 2019, @ 10:00 am in Doc Bryan 180

Respectfully submitted,

Tera Simpson, Secretary