

Staff Senate Minutes

July 10, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**ROLLCALL Senators Present:**

Kelli Bates Angela Bell Michelle Bishop Josh Carey

Pam Dixon Brandi Duvall Andrea Eubanks Braxton Lay

Belinda Martin Marvin Mashburn Michelle McMinn Lou Ann Reeves

Tera Simpson Charity Smith Hope Vilavanh Denise Wallis

Karissa Webb

**Senators Absent:**

Chris Pearson Megan Green

**Visitor(s):**

Bernadette Hinkle Susan Johnson Janet Leigh Trisha Clark Bryan Bramlett

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the June 5, 2019 meeting were distributed at the meeting. Senator McMinn filed a motion to accept the minutes. Senator Webb seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a Senate vote.

**Committee Reports**

* **Official Function Committee** – No Report
* **Insurance Committee** – No Report
* **Scholarship Committee** – No Report
* **Awards Committee** – No Report
* **Elections Committee** –
  + President Reeves stated that all Staff Senators should have received an email outlining their constituencies to communicate with regarding Staff Senate business between now and the upcoming Staff Senate elections this fall. [see Appendix I]
  + Per the recommendation of the Elections Committee, Senator Eubanks filed a motion stating that in future Staff Senate elections staff can only vote for the positions that represent their division. For example, only staff in Academic Affairs may vote for senator positions that represent Academic Affairs. Senator Duvall seconded the motion and the Senate voted to approve the motion. President Reeves stated that the Elections Committee will now work to implement this new practice for the Fall 2019 Staff Senate elections.
* **Constitution & Bylaws Committee** –No Report
* **Staff Handbook Committee** –
  + President Reeves stated that the committee has received the items they needed from Human Resources to move forward with the Handbook review. The committee will be meeting with staff from the Ozark campus soon to return any changes to Mr. Thomas Pennington.
* **Medical Marijuana Committee** – No Report
* **Free Speech Committee** – No Report
* **Diversity Committee** –
  + President Reeves confirmed that this campus-wide committee has been dissolved. There is another diversity-focused committee that will continue doing work on campus.

**Old Business**

*Faculty Staff Tuition Waiver*

President Reeves re-visited an item from the May and June Staff Senate meetings concerning the Faculty/Staff Tuition Waiver policy. President Reeves recognized Senator Smith to report on the work the Tuition Waiver Subcommittee has done since the June Senate meeting. Senator Smith reported that the Tuition Waiver Sub-committee will propose two changes to the current Tuition Waiver policy.

The first proposed change is to the waiver policy Section 1 – Eligibility, Paragraph II: “Tuition Waiver requests must be submitted by the last day to drop with 80 percent reduction for each term (fall, spring, summer, condensed classes) in order for the waiver to be considered.”

The second proposed change is to Section 2 – Extent of Benefit, A. Employee: For graduate programs: “9 additional hours above the program requirement.” Example: If an employee is in a graduate program that requires 30 hours, the extent of benefit would be 30 + 9.

Senator Smith also reported that the Tuition Waiver version approved by the Board of Trustees has an appeals process, but that wording is not present in the version available on Human Resources website. The Tuition Waiver Subcommittee recommended that all versions of the policy be updated to match the Board of Trustees version.

Several Senators presented ideas for additional edits to the policy concerning extend of benefit, grace periods, and payback requirements in the instance of dropping classes. Senator McMinn filed a motion to table voting on changes to the Tuition Waiver policy until the August Staff Senate meeting to give the Tuition Waiver Subcommittee time to consider these additional items in their proposal. Senator Vilavanh seconded the motion and the Senate voted to approve.

*Feedback from Staff*

President Reeves opened the floor for Senators to provide the feedback gathered from staff as directed at the June Senate meeting. Several Senators presented the feedback they had gathered:

* The majority of staff spoken to wanted to keep their birthday leave as is and not use it for the Friday of Spring Break
* Some Non-classified staff noted that their evaluations do not have a clear meaning beyond a basic performance review
* Staff in front-line offices noted that their offices have difficulty having staff meetings due to have to keep the offices open continuously
* Information from the President’s Communication Committee is not trickling down across all areas of the university
* Staff Picnic & Appreciation night
  + Several staff noted that the picnic was effective, but that appreciation night is inconvenient since it happens outside normal work hours
  + Some staff requested a wider variety of food at the picnic
  + Some staff suggested giving out staff awards during the picnic
  + Some staff suggested giving out cafeteria gift certificates for staff who cannot make it to the picnic
  + A staff member suggested bringing in a snow cone truck one day
* Several staff asked questions about bonuses and stated that they go a long way to make staff feel appreciated
* Some staff asked the question who non-classified job listings on cornerstone no longer list a pay scale. No answer was available for this question.
* Some staff stated that they appreciated the livestreaming of major campus meetings and announcements since not all staff can attend due to continuous office operations
* Staff requested announcements for open jobs at the university

*Pending Items*

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

* The request to pave the walkway between the Caraway/Browning parking lot and Brown Hall
* The request to add picnic tables near Brown Hall
* The proposed revision to the Staff Senate Constitution
* The submitted timeline for Staff Awards
* The Official Function policy

**New Business:**

*New Policies for Review*

Ms. Hinkle stated that she would be bringing some policies from Executive Council for the Senate to review at the August Senate meeting. Ms. Hinkle also provided a handout for the Senate regarding the policy proposal process for Executive Council [see Appendix II].

**Open Forum**

President Reeves opened the floor for open forum discussion. Senator Mashburn asked what criteria the institution follows for calculating time-served-based raises. Senator Bishop stated that Human Resources does not follow time-served-based raised. Ms. Hinkle stated that the institution follows the classified pay schedule of the state, as determined by the Department of Higher Education. She stated that education is needed for employees regarding how that affects pay.

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

* Someone asked why open forum candidates’ identities are hidden until the day of their forum. Ms. Hinkle answered that this was to protect the candidates who are currently employed at other institutions.
* A custodian asked why they have to wear t-shirts that say “Custodial Staff” on the back. The submittee stated that they were made uncomfortable by this since other staff shirts just say “Staff”.
* Someone submitted a comment that they are unhappy with the food quality in the cafeteria and BazTech.

President Reeves stated that the Staff Senate would take action on the submitted items that are within the Senate’s scope, but that the Staff Senate is not a grievance committee. For area-specific issues, staff should speak with supervisors in their areas.

**Announcements**

No announcements

**Meeting Adjourned:**

Senator McMinn filed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Webb seconded the motion. The Senate voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:32 pm.

**Next Meeting:**

August 7, 2019, @ 10:00 am in Doc Bryan 180

Respectfully submitted,

Tera Simpson, Secretary

**Appendix I – Temporary Senate Reporting Structure**

**Advancement**

* Megan Green – VP for Advancement, Alumni

**Enrollment Management**

* Charity Smith – Financial Aid, Admissions/Recruitment
* Tera Simpson –MARCOMM, Grad Enrollment Mgmt, International Admissions

**Student Affairs**

* Chris Pearson – Public Safety, Veteran Services
* Karissa Webb – Residence Life Director’s office, Assoc. Dean of Campus Life, Dean of Students
* OPEN: Int’l/Multicultural Student Services, VP Student Services, Affirmative Action/Disability Services, Student Health Services

**Admin/Finance/FAMA**

* Lou Ann Reeves– Budget, Controller’s office, VP Admin/Finance, Payroll, Student Accounts, Purchasing
* Kelli Bates – Split Custodial Services
* Josh Carey – Plant Admin, Building Maint., Construction Mgmt, Landscape and Grounds, Motor Pool, Tree Maint.
* Marvin – Split with Josh
* Michelle Bishop – HR, Admin Services, Events Management, Post Office, Food Service, Lake Point Conference Center
* OPEN: Custodial
* \*Floater – Hope Vilavanh

**President/Athletics**

* Belinda Martin

**Academic Affairs**

* Andrea Eubanks – VP of Academic Affairs, Assessment
* \*Angela Bell – Sponsored programs/STEM, Business
* \*Pam Dixon – Career Services/Tutoring, SSS, Veterans Upward Bound, Emerg. Mgmt
* \*Braxton Lay – Computer Services/Acad. Comp. Support, Technology Center
* Brandi Duvall – Registrar’s Office, Academic Advising, Upward Bound
* \*Michelle McMinn – Arts and Humanities, Education, eTech, Natural Health Sciences
* \*Denise Wallis – Library, Graduate College

**Appendix II – Executive Council Flow Chart**

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