Staff Senate Minutes

March 10, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Margie Link called the Arkansas Tech University Staff Senate meeting to order on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 10:01 a.m. in Webex virtual online meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

**Senators Present:**

Kaitlynn Beaird

Angie Bell

Rachel Broussard

Judy Crouch

Cynthia Dixon

Cole Hendrix

Susan Johnson

Margie Link

Brittany Reves

Lydia Rogers

Tammy Rye

Lyndsey Simpson

Amee Standridge

Alisha Williams

**Senators Absent:**

Christopher Duncan

Shelly Handley

Amber Meeks

Alan Parsons

Brandi Duvall

Kaitlin Ennis

**Visitor(s):**

Linda Birkner Janet Carnahan-Lee Jennifer Thomas

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the February 2, 2021 meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Senator Crouch filed a motion to accept the minutes. Senator Simpson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by Senate vote.

**Special Report**

Dr. Birkner:

* Asking the Board for approval to:
  + Use savings from the Hull project and use reserves for roof repairs. If the Board approves, they will start in May.
  + Hire architect and/or engineers for HVAC work. The CARES Act provided funding to make repairs to improve air flow to eliminate antigens, etc. The money must be used by April 2022 so it is very important to get started on this immediately.
  + Hire an architect for Jones Hall, a residence hall that has several systems and mechanical issues that need to be repaired.
* Weather Event: The weather event in late February caused damage across campus. There are currently 22 locations that have insurance claims.
* Construction
  + Williamson: There is great progress occurring, but the weather events and manufacturing delays have pushed the completion date to October 2021, instead of August.
  + Residence Life: Projects planned for this summer are smaller than normal, especially in light of knowing that significant work will be made at Jones Hall.
  + New Entrance Project: In conjunction with city of Russellville and ARDOT, a roundabout is planned for fiscal year 2023 (October 2022-September 2023). The interior part is the university’s responsibility and will be the road that will join through our parking lot by Tucker.
* Budget Advisory Committee: They will meet on March 11th and that will go to the board the following week.

**Committee Reports**

* **President’s Communication –** No report
* **Budget Advisory –** No report
* **Scholarship –** No report
* **University Strategic Planning –** No report
* **Insurance Committee –** No report
* **IT Prioritization and Impact** – Senator Crouch

The committee met on February 24, 2021 to discuss:

* + Software Review Sheet for the process of sunsetting software and create a template to assist in this process
  + Is software duplicating another package already purchased by the university?
  + Are different departments using the same package licensed by each department independent of each other?
  + Template modified to change it into a before/during/after lifecycle of software: approve software, review software before it is up for renewal, processes for IT purchases, how items get funded into the Technology Budget.
  + Clearly ID the primary owning unit of software
  + Yearly reviews by the owner
* **University Communication Working Group –** No report
* **Campus Space and Utilization –** No report
* **Green and Gold Cupboard –** No report
* **Staff Awards –** No report

**Old Business**

*Staff Senate Survey*

President Link sent the survey out and the last day to complete it is March 22nd. We will review those results at the next meeting.

*Update and Distribute Constituents*

President Link said she did not have anything new to add.

**New Business**

*New Senators*

President Link welcomed the new senators:

* Tammy Rye, Administration & Finance
* Cole Hendrix, Student Affairs

*Inclement Weather Policy*

President Link said that she received three e-mails requesting that the Senate address compensatory time for essential employees. Those issues included that some employees were not aware they were essential personnel and those employees must use compensatory time within the same pay period due to an inclement weather event, but this incident happened at the end of the month. Staff Senate agreed that supervisees and supervisors must better communicate about who is essential and working things out within the department. Senator Bell suggested that compensatory time should be extended to the next pay period and President Link agreed. The policy in question can be found in the Staff Handbook on page 85 (<https://www.atu.edu/hr/docs/Staff%20Handbook%20-%20FINAL%2009_24_2019.pdf>). President Link said that she would look into how things are handled among departments. Dr. Birkner shared that Human Resources assesses the handbooks and makes suggestions for possible changes and that this issue has been placed on the list to review.

**Open Forum**

*Staff Awards*

Senator Dixon asked if a decision had been made about staff awards. President Link shared that based on the feedback she’s received, staff members are not really interested and are more interested in professional development opportunities. Senator Bell mentioned that President Bowen requested that Staff Senate add staff awards, so they sent a proposal to Dr. Bowen, but they were denied saying that there was no funding. President Link suggested subtracting the monetary award and resending it. Senator Williams mentioned that Advancement might could find funds and requested for someone to send her the proposal. Senator Bell said that she would try to find it.

*Staff Morale Boosters*

Senator Dixon also asked about morale booster ideas and President Link asked the Staff Senate what they would like to see. Based on the list that President Link sent, Senator Standridge brought up either being off or being able to work virtually the day before Thanksgiving, as well as being able to work virtually during the week of Spring Break would be nice since it wouldn’t cost the Executive Committee anything. President Link asked Dr. Birkner if it could be considered by EC for this upcoming spring break and Dr. Birkner said that she wasn’t sure, but to get that request to her as soon as possible. President Link said that she would send an e-mail request to Dr. Birkner who will pass it along to Dr. Bowen and EC.

**Announcements**

None

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 7th at 10 a.m.

**Meeting Adjourned**

Senator Williams filed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Standridge seconded the motion. The Senate voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kaitlynn Beaird, Secretary