Staff Senate Minutes

October 7, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER**

Senator Webb called the Arkansas Tech University Staff Senate meeting to order on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 10:01 am in Webex virtual online meeting.

**ROLL CALL Senators Present:**

Kelli Bates Michelle Bishop Rachel Broussard Judy Crouch

Kaitlin Ennis Shelly Handley Susan Johnson Amber Meeks

Alan Parsons Brittany Reves Lydia Rogers Karissa Webb

Alisha Williams

**Senators Absent:**

Angela Bell Brandi Duvall Andrea Eubanks Teresa Lutz

Chris Pearson

**Visitor(s):**

Jennifer Thomas (Ozark) Dr. Linda Birkner Dr. David Eshelman

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

The minutes from the September 2020 meeting were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Senator Johnson filed a motion to accept the minutes and record the meeting virtually. Senator Williams seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by Senate vote.

**Special Report**

Senator Webb noted Dr. Linda Birkner would be in attendance for today’s meeting. Dr. Birkner reported on Hull, contractor has left. The lights will be installed later, as they come in. Majority of the furniture should be delivered by October 18th with a big thanks for Sandy Mayberry for working with those vendors. New chiller has gone in, due to the pool area was not heated or cooled, and it previous chiller was over 25 years old. There is a fully operating catering kitchen, large stage for presentations and movies. Pool chemical storage building has been demolished. The plaster façade on the South Side is being fixed. Currently working to pricing for paving the parking lot and the drive out in front of the Alumni Office. This was all supported by Student Fee’s. November 1st is the tentative open date, details to come. Williamson Hall bids were open on Phase 2 on October 2nd. Alessi Keyes Construction, based out of Little Rock was selected, they have extensive experience in historic reconstruction. The bid was $2,658,919.00 and will go before next Thursday, October 15, 2020.

**Committee Reports**

* **President’s Communication –** No report
* **Budget Advisory –** Senator Webb spoke on behalf ofSenator Eubanks, who attended one of the meetings. Dr. Bowen gave the committee charge:

1. Understand the budget and Higher Education budget items

2. Provide thoughtful input and feedback

3. This is University wide and what is best for the University as a whole

4. Promote transparency

5. Share information with constituents and what others are working on

6. Assist with FY22 budget and 5-year budget plan

7. Work to avoid future shortfalls

8. Provide feedback about committee structure. The committee structure will be evaluated. Some members may be removed or added.

Challenges: Enrollment was expected to decrease and the pandemic added to that. State funding cuts and less investment income.

The strategic plan will be extended to six years rather than the five, so that we are not lapsed when HLC comes. The next plan may be three years, rather than five. Money follows the students, so courses, programs, student success and access remain important. Universities nationwide are experience the same issues.

ATU will begin a restructure process. During the restructure, internal hires will be given priority. We current face a $12.7 million shortfall or 8.6%. There are several things that have not previously been budgeted in the base budget but those items need to be include in the base budget moving forward. Reductions will be strategic rather than across the board. A, B, & C funding comes from State allocation. We always get A funds, but B & C funds are not guaranteed. If ATU gets B & C funding, the University then wants to establish the following things:

* + 2% salary increase
  + Establish a maintenance budget
  + Program and service improvements
  + Establish a technology infrastructure support budget.

Fee reporting was discussed and fee options.

The committee also met on October 1st and spoke more about the topic discussed at the special session with Mr. Branson. The University will have a budget deficit and major cuts will have to be made. All Vice Presidents are having to cut 20% of their budget and it was stated this is supposed to be at the Vice President level, not 20% per department. It will be up to the Vice Presidents to decide exactly how to reach the 20% cut. Bottom line is cuts will be made to employees. They said no specific areas will be targeted and it can include faculty and staff. They are also looking at a 2%-4% tuition increase. 2% salary has been pushed back to the last three years of the five year plan, since there will be cuts. It was questioned why we would present a raise while some may be asked to exit jobs. President Bowen will be meeting with board members this week to look at the budget models.

* **Green and Gold Cupboard –** No report
* **Scholarship –** Senator Webb inquired about the group being active, no one address this question. A note was made for VP Duvall to follow up.
* **University Strategic Planning –** Senator Webb inquired about the group being active, no one address this question. A note was made for VP Duvall to follow up.
* **Insurance Committee –** No Report
* **IT Prioritization and Impact** – No Report
* **University Communication Working Group –** No report
* **Staff Awards –** No report
* **Institutional Effectiveness –** No report

**New Business**

**Old Business**

*Staff Senate Survey*

Senator Webb noted the original survey was sent in February of 2019. The Senate needs to look into doing another survey in February 2021. Current Senators who are not rolling off need to make sure that this stays on the agenda when the new officers are elected.

*Daily Health Screenings*

Senator Webb inform the group that the inquiry Senator Eubanks made about adding a place for employee’s temperature on the health screenings page. VP Duvall has emailed the ATU Health Services Director, Brandye Bisek. Senator Webb is aware that Brandye Bisek is no longer employed at ATU, and will follow up with VP Duvall about contacting Kristy Davis, Associate Dean of Student Wellness until the Director position is filled.

*Staff Senate Elections*

Senator Webb read the notes from Senator Eubanks: 5 Senators will be rolling off, 2 positions are no longer with the University or have switched jobs to a supervisor position that does not allow them to serve on the Senate. The elections will have openings for those 7 positions, plus the at-large position for a total of 8 open chairs. (Admin & Finance 3, Academic Affairs 2, Enrollment Management 1, Student Affairs 1, and the At-large) Those include Senators Kelli Bates, Michelle Bishop, Brandi Duvall, Andrea Eubanks, Belinda Martin, Chris Pearson, Charity Smith, and the At-Large.

Proposed election timeline: Nominations can begin October 7-14. October 15-21 for acceptance/refusal of the nominations, October 22-28 for voting, and October 29-November 2, if a run off is needed. New Senators will be invited to join the November 4 meeting.

**Open Forum**

**Announcements**

**Meeting Adjourned**

Senator Bishop filed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Parsons seconded the motion. The Senate voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:33 am.

**Next Meeting**

November 4, 2020 @ 10:00 am in Webex virtual online meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Karissa Webb, Secretary