Staff Senate Minutes  
Wednesday, October 10, 2012  
9:00 AM, Billingsly Boardroom

2012/2013
Executive Committee
Michelle Arwood  
President
Bob Tessman  
President Elect
Brenda McDaniel  
Secretary


Member(s) Absent / Excused: Natalie Bruce

Determination of Quorum: Fifteen of Sixteen active members present at the beginning of the meeting, quorum established.

Call to Order: Arwood called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Approval of Minutes: Wilmoth made a motion to approve the minutes; Frossard seconded the motion. Wilmoth noted item 7 is missing the committee name; that has already been revised (Shared Governance was added) and the highlighting has been removed. Motion carried and the amended minutes from September 12, 2012 were approved as written.

Administrative Comments: Arwood welcomed everyone including the gallery.

Administrative/Special Guest Comments

Committee Reports: Arwood called for Staff Senate committee reports:

1. Communications Committee – Tessman reported at the meeting last week the main topic was Accents. Cassie Mathes and Steve Smith from University Relations attended the meeting. They were very receptive to the possibility of revamping Accents – Mathes will discuss with JoAnn Graffam. Accents was used as a notification tool for upcoming events; the frequency and short lead time of upcoming events makes the use of Accents less viable. Smith advised it is an antiquated system, it is difficult to get to the archives. Different options were discussed; such as a biweekly or monthly newsletter, changing the format and who is responsible for content.

2. Elections Committee – Doak advised the group met last week to review the Southern Service Champ award nominations. The winners have been chosen and will be announced once the checks have been cut and distributed. Nominations were down this quarter in spite of “advertising”. Doak noted there will not be any fourth quarter Southern Service Champ awards due the Superior Service Awards; the links for the Southern Service Champ awards have been taken down temporarily.

3. Executive Committee – Arwood reported the Executive Committee met to discuss the Superior Service awards and ways to increase committee involvement. Yust suggested an eye catching, “in your face” email listing the committees and members to encourage employees to share their suggestions and complaints.

At the meeting with President’s Council SharePoint was discussed. There is not a set procedure for getting information posted on the SharePoint site. Dr. Oakes designed the archive section of the site but he is not
responsible for the ongoing updating of it. President’s Council is going to address how to get information posted.

The other topic pertained to non-monetary ways for the university to show appreciation to employees. We have been given the Wednesday off before Thanksgiving which is very much appreciated. If you have any ideas let them know.

4. Legislative Oversight Committee – Wengert asked for people to join this committee; currently there are only three members: Wengert, Wilmoth and McDaniel (terms all expire in June 2013). Arwood would like to see senators with long terms get involved so there will be continuity of the committee’s tasks.

5. Staff Welfare Committee – Wilmoth advised they have a proposal for discussion later in the meeting. They are looking at some ideas – one is to revise the list of community businesses that offer discounts to MSSU employees. The group is looking for feedback; what projects should they be pursuing? Wilmoth referenced the list of budget cost cutting measures as a source for ideas. The possibility of a staff retreat during spring or fall break for fun, team-building type events is being discussed. Previously President’s Council mentioned they were open to the possibility of shutting down the campus for part or all of a day. Wengert noted she is chairing the Cost-Cutting Subcommittee of the Budget Advisory Committee and they are reviewing the list of cost cutting ideas. Wengert will share their condensed list with the Staff Welfare committee.

**Arwood called for campus committee reports:**

1. Administrative Council – Did not meet last month, scheduled to meet today; Arwood will be attending.

2. Appreciation Committee – Hughes promoted the quarterly coffee coming up on October 26 from 7:30 AM to 8:30 AM in Billingsly 309. Stop by to socialize and have coffee, donuts and MOSO muffins. February 9th is the tentative date for faculty/staff appreciation night; the plan is to do something a little different this time.

3. Budget Advisory Council – Wengert was unable to attend the last meeting. Several presentations were made by subcommittees explaining the process they will use to review information and make recommendations. Edwards and Talley are also Staff Senate representatives on this committee.

4. Diversity Committee – Natalie Bruce usually reports on this committee; she is home with her new baby!

5. Faculty Senate – Bruggeman advised Faculty Senate met October 1, Dr. Lipira spoke about program prioritization. The rubrics and templates have gone out to the areas. The report is due the end of December. Dr. Lipira also talked about promotion (of faculty) being a high priority; she is working with President’s Council and the Board of Governors on this project. A Student Senate representative was present at the meeting asking for input & feedback on some of the issues they are going to be addressing. The rep brought up a smoking ban; some discussion took place. Faculty Senate asked questions of the student concerning retention rates, and why do students choose MSSU.

Arwood commented on the potential smoking ban; it was a hot topic last year – her remembrance of the discussion was that having legal smoking areas that followed the legal distances from building entrances the space would be in the middle of the oval; which isn’t really feasible. Wengert added Staff Senate asked Student Senate to bring back a revised version of the smoking ban; but nothing has come forward.

Tessman asked when Faculty Senate meetings take place – the first Monday of each month (during the semester).

6. Master Landscaping – Epperson reported the committee has met twice with RDG to review their master landscaping plan. We have to move forward with small steps. A question was asked about a statue, or icon, for the campus – that will be further down the road. Right now they are trying to remove the unhealthy trees; some new trees have been added along Newman Road.
7. Orientation & Training – Wilmoth advised they will meet in December after the first semester of training is complete. The feedback forms will be compiled and reviewed.

8. Strategic Planning – Arwood reported the first meeting of the semester will be October 26th.

9. 75th Anniversary – Lewis announced the committee met last month; the bulk of the meeting concerned Homecoming. The next meeting is today (October 10). Epperson mentioned the movie “Some Like it Hot” is currently showing in Phelps Theatre as part of the decade movie series.

Old Business:

1. Revised Code of Conduct Proposal – Wengert advised the proposal was previously approved by this body; Mr. Yust suggested a few changes before presenting the proposal to President’s Council. Two revisions have been made. Under Article IV, D the wording “make a good faith effort to” was added (bold, underlined). In Article V, Section 6 bullets replaced numbers so that it would not appear that items were ranked in a specific order.  
   • Wengert made a motion to accept the revised proposal. Wilmoth pointed out Article IV, section F should have bullet points instead of numbers. Wengert revised her motion to include changing section F to bullet points. Tessman seconded the motion.
   • Discussion about the items listed in section F; if they are left as numbers then it appears the actions would follow that order and would require defining the parameters for a verbal warning, a written letter of reprimand and dismissal.
   • What if the “offender” is a member of the Executive Council? They must be held to the same standards and not set apart. That was not legislated in the Code of Conduct (more of a procedural issue) but it had been discussed that the Elections Committee would step in if one of the Executive Council members is the “offender”. The Legislative Oversight Committee would write the specific procedures; currently all we have are bylaws. Arwood asked that the LOC start working on the procedures so they can be put in place quickly
   • Talley suggested the wording of section F be revised to include the word “suggested” in front of following courses of action. Tessman stated that we shouldn’t self-govern. After additional discussion the wording in section F was not revised.
   • The motion was approved.

New Business:

1. Staff Survey – Natalie Bruce was in charge of the survey last year; as previously noted she is out on maternity leave. How often should we do the survey? Is every two years adequate? The consensus was every two years. For better input on future surveys the campus needs to see that actions have been taken on their suggestions. We should, as a group, revisit the survey results. **The Staff Welfare Committee will review the results and bring an item to the next meeting for discussion.**

2. Student Senate Representation – Student Senate has asked for collaboration between the senates (including Faculty Senate). The only drawback is that the Student Senate meets twice a month at 5:30 PM. They are happy to work with us; if a Staff Senate representative is only able to attend once a month they are agreeable to that. We could take volunteers or take turns attending Student Senate meetings. **Arwood offered to send out an email with their meeting dates; senators could choose a date to attend on a volunteer basis. (Student Senate meets every other Wednesday – next meeting October 24, November 7 and 28)** Expressing concern about overtime Tessman asked if we could have a one-on-one meeting with their president. Wengert asked if there has ever been a meeting between the Executive Committees of all three senates. The consensus of the group was “no”, such a meeting has not taken place.

3. Tuition Reimbursement Policy Proposal (for discussion only) – Wilmoth introduced the proposal which would offer partial reimbursement to employees for graduate programs. Details of the proposal include: completion of
two years continuous fulltime employment at MSSU to be eligible, approval prior to start of a program, completion within 4 years, reimbursement after program completion, reimbursement in the amount of $150 per credit hour with a maximum of $5500, maximum of five participating employees per year, administered by Human Resources. This proposal will not be voted on today; it has been brought to the table for discussion and feedback. Discussion items:

- Approval process first come, first serve. Does it have to be limited to five people per year? A set number allows for budgeting a specific dollar amount. This would budget would be handled differently than a departmental budget (where funds cannot be carried over to the next year). Could funds be allocated from our current graduate programs?
- How is reimbursement handled, tax and IRS consequences, how do other universities handle reimbursement? Maximize benefits to the recipient.
- No restriction on the type or field for the graduate degree.
- If an employee applies but is not chosen then starts classes and one of the five drops out could the employee take the place of the person that dropped out? Not as the proposal is currently written.
- Should there be a wait list? What happens to those not chosen?
- Will employees who receive this benefit be expected/required to stay at MSSU for a certain amount of time? No, we do not currently have that requirement for undergraduate reimbursement. In addition; this would be a partial reimbursement. Should we have some type of expectation written into the proposal?
- If MSSU offers the degree, can the employee seek the same degree at another school?
- Professional development funds available.
- What do other Missouri universities offer for undergraduate and graduate reimbursement?
- This could be viewed as a recruitment tool.

**The proposal will be revised and brought back to the group.**

4. Superior Service Awards – Arwood was approached by Deborah Dutch Kelley, the chair of the Superior Service Awards committee, with several questions/concerns. One is the size of the committee (currently sixteen) and getting that many people together in the short amount of time available to complete their charge. The committee includes the winners from the past two years (twelve total), three Staff Senate members and the Director of Human Resources. There was a question about continuing to view Physical Plant as a separate entity as well as questions about the pool of candidates; can an employee win again. Staff Senate can address the size of the committee but not the other questions. Arwood talked with several previous winners to gather information. Based on those conversations a proposal was created to revise the structure of the committee.

- The main points of the proposal are: First, the Vice President of Business Affairs and/or a member of the MSSU Foundation would be involved in the final tally of nominations alleviating any concerns regarding oversight of the final selection process. Second, with the addition of representation in the final tally process Staff Senate representation would no longer be necessary.
- Arwood made a motion to consider the Staff Senate proposal to reduce the size of the Superior Service Award Committee by removing the three Staff Senate members and allowing oversight by the VPBA and Foundation. Wengert seconded the motion.
- Talley noted she was on the committee last year; there was good discussion among the group which included having someone else present to validate the final count. The process should protect the integrity of the person or persons handling the final count. Staff Senate’s presence didn’t change the process. Wilmoth noted she spoke with Dutch Kelley; the final count has always been handled this way – she is very open to changing this process. There is a strong desire to keep the winners a surprise; the full committee does not know who the winners are.
- Wilmoth suggested asking the entire campus about eligibility (employed for a year) and if prior winners are ever eligible again. Arwood had suggested that be decided by the committee and noted if a person won ten years ago and they are nominated again; that’s the kind of people we want working here. Talley mentioned both questions were voted on last year by the Superior Service Award committee. Stipulations stated in a memo from Dutch Kelley to Rob Yust: 1) to be eligible for nomination a person must be employed by MSSU in a fulltime position for a minimum of twelve months as of October 1 and 2) if a person has won previously they
are not eligible for future award consideration. Dutch Kelley asked for and received Staff Senate endorsement of these stipulations. It may have come up again because at that time it seemed imminent that the Physical Plant was going to be absorbed into classified staff. That hasn’t happened and the pool of eligible nominees from Physical Plant is very small. Arwood asked Wilmoth to provide information and numbers on the different classifications of personnel to give us something to work with. A change to the Physical Plant category also affects the makeup of Staff Senate. Wilmoth notes the only reason the three categories exist; Professional, Physical Plant and Classified is because of the Superior Service Awards. In all other aspects everything is either Classified or Professional.
• The proposal was approved.

Comments and Announcements/Guest Input:
Greg Jackson talked to Darren Fullerton about the flagpole near the rose garden. It is a memorial dedicated to our veterans during Southern’s 50th anniversary. Jackson asked Fullerton if the memorial could be rededicated during our 75th anniversary year; Fullerton was to take the suggestion to President’s Council. Jackson asked Staff Senate for individual support of this rededication; no date has been set it may happen on or around Veteran’s Day in November.

Anonymous Comments
No new comments have been posted.

Adjournment: McDaniel made a motion to adjourn. Talley seconded the motion; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 14, 2012 in Billingsly Board Room

Respectfully submitted by: Brenda McDaniel