Staff Senate Minutes
Wednesday, February 16th, 2011 9:00 AM, Billingsly Board Room #310

Members Present: Josh Doak, Julie Wengert, Debbie Woodmansee, Erik Hilgendorf, Ted Wright, Leslie Willis, Ann Quade, Brenda Hayes, Greg Killingsworth, Brenda McDaniel, Olive Talley, Michelle Arwood and Mike Davies.

Member(s) Absent / Excused: Gary Edwards, Bob Harrington & Heidi Carlin

Determination of Quorum: Thirteen of Sixteen active members present; quorum established.

Call to Order: Erik Hilgendorf called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

Approval of Minutes: Erik called for changes in the minutes; there being none asked for a motion to approve; Olive Talley motioned and Michelle Arwood seconded; all in favor; motion carried and the minutes from Jan. 12th 2011 were approved as written.

Administrative/Special Guest Comments: None

Committee Reports:

1. Communications Committee – No Report

2. Election Committee – No Report

3. Benefits Committee – In Old & New Business

4. Executive Budget Committee – No Report

Old Business:

1. Lion’s Roar Award-Erik Hilgendorf met with Rob Yust to discuss Lion’s Roar Award. Rob likes idea, but wishes for a broader appeal to all University employees. Lion’s Roar is currently being addressed in the Appreciation Committee.

Agreement among senators is that incorporating all employees into this award system would be ideal, but withholding award from moving forward while faculty evaluates whether to join, wasn’t a desired move. Vote to push Lion’s Roar with staff only was passed unanimously.

In the event Lion’s Roar is adopted by both faculty and staff, selection structure would need equal representation from each senate group. Since all employees would be adopted into award, expansion from awards would be given all quarters instead of three out of four (as originally outlined by staff to not interfere with Superior Service Award in December).
2. Update on Personal Days Proposal-The prospect of submitting a proposal to institute personal days for employees was reintroduced for discussion. Proposal is part of an effort to assist administration on finding ways to reward University employees during economic recession. Erik Hilgendorf shared that personal days are not an uncommon benefit to employees at other universities, citing several schools including Pittsburg State, Northwest Missouri, Southwest Baptist, University of Missouri system.

Comments list below in support and against the proposal were shared:
- Are we already getting sufficient perks and/or days off?
- This would be great perk in light of likelihood of no raises for at least another year
- Personal days would be great for doing task that can’t be done outside of work (example...car repairs, closing on house, parent teacher conference, etc...) and are not vacation or sick related.
- Will this be perceived as being greedy to request more benefits?

Issue was tabled to allow senators time to get feedback from co-workers. Issue will be reintroduced in the March meeting.

New Business:
1. Share Governance Task Force Update-Olive Talley gave a brief overview of her role on the Shared Governance Task Force-Framework Committee. Her role on the committee is to help evaluate the structure and the Shared Governance structure as a whole.

Julie Wengert informed the senate that she’s on the Shared Governance Task Force-Survey Subcommittee. The task of her committee is to identify ways to effectively share governance on campus. Her committee is currently seeking input on the three areas below of the latest shared governance that are negatively rated.

I. The institution fosters shared governance by maintaining reasonable workloads, supporting faculty and staff development of governance skills, and rewarding participation in governance work.
II. Relationships between and among the staff, faculty, the administration, the President, and Board of Governors are cooperative.
III. Given reasonable time, the administration, the President, and the Board of Governors respond expeditiously to faculty and staff concerns and to the need for action on institutional issues.

Any responses on how to improve the area above, please send to Julie Wengert or other members of the subcommittee.

2. Secretarial Pool Policy-In discussions with Rob Yust, Erik HIllgendorf stated that Rob liked the policy, but there’s a hang-up on the pay structure for an employee who volunteers to assist in another department with different pay. This issue would be looked into by Rob to iron out details before introduction to the President’s Council.

3. Staff Survey-In light of the faculty survey being distributed, the issue of whether staff should follow suit was introduced. Dialogue ensued about the faculty’s survey, but no definitive reason for staff to execute a survey surfaced. Most senators agreed that before survey was to be considered, tangible goal/purpose would need to be outlined. One senator stated that it is premature to have a survey before Shared Governance document is implemented. Issue was tabled for later review if needed.

4. Emergency/Closing Notification Awareness-Erik introduced the University’s closing notification on the agenda. Several senators were asked to present this issue. Root of subject was the timeliness that University employees were notified. Comments collected were that individuals felt notification needs to be decided earlier to help with planning of how to deal with children who don’t have school and to prevent employees who live far away from beginning their commute to work. A request for official cancelation notification time would be requested from the University for future cases.
Appreciate was announced to all the Physical Plant, maintenance and others who worked during the snow storm and keep campus running.

Comments and Announcements/Guest Input:
Erik opened the floor for comments and announcements:
1. Julie Wengert passed out a flyer to each senator informing of all the area businesses/organizations that sponsor the Athletic Department. She asked that anyone doing business at these businesses please tell them thank you for their support.
2. Josh Doak announced that the faculty staff wellness fair would be Wednesday, March 16th. Costs on blood tests and other special tests are unknown, but information would be coming in the next few weeks.

Adjournment: Erik asked if there was any other business to bring to the table. There being none, Erik Hilgendorf made the motion that the meeting be adjourned; Julie Wengert seconded the motion; motion carried; meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 16th 2011 at 9:00 AM. Billingsly Student Center room 310 (Board room).

Respectfully submitted by:
Josh Doak