



Western Kentucky University Staff Council
Monthly Meeting, February 14, 2019
Jody Richards Hall – Cornelius A. Martin Regents Room

Minutes

Call to Order (Jennifer Miller, Chair) – 9:00

Roll Call (Fallon Willoughby, Secretary) – Absent: Rachel Cato

Approval of Prior Monthly Meeting Minutes

- January minutes – Jenny motioned, Monica seconded. All in favor, approved.

Acknowledgement of Guests/Open Discussion with Staff

Guest Speaker at 9:00 AM – President Caboni (summarized notes from the discussion):

President Caboni acknowledged the immense pressures we are all under (particularly in the past year and a half). He expressed his gratitude for the work, patience, and the positive outlook from the staff. President Caboni referenced an article about another university that was in a similar position as WKU last fall (9 million a year deficient); however, that university did not address their issues and now it is going to take them 20 years to get back to where they were six years ago.

The President understands that great change causes uncertainty, and uncertainty causes fear. The university is beginning to see the results of the changes that have been made such as, improved retention rates (especially minority and first generation). He recognized a process change related to holds on student accounts for small amounts of money, which were hindering our students from enrolling in classes. Eliminating those types of holds is critical to their success and we have to be self-critical of what we are doing. He discussed the CAPE process which is asking faculty to evaluate themselves. He notes that programs we offer should make fiscal sense. The first year village was mentioned and was explained to be an intervention around living and learning communities – built to support retention of students. WKU will be launching the Summer Bridge program for students with 2.0 to 2.5 GPAs. Every student we admit should stay and graduate in four years. Admitting people when they are not prepared is something we should not do and the Summer Bridge program will be a catalyst for effectively improving that matter.

The President agreed that the merit raise was not perfect; however, the 4% pool was a remarkable accomplishment for the budget crisis. The process was handled differently across campus. The raise was not only about money, but also about having conversations, sometimes difficult conversations. Our leaders were supposed to talk with us – but it didn't always happen. Our leaders should know who is doing what, and be willing to have hard conversations and be open to change. If you don't know who is doing what, if you can't have hard conversations and can't do change, you don't need to be in that role.

The President opened the floor for questions:

Ronda Sullivan asked about the regional campuses and how they fit into the overall strategic plan. The response highlighted a long-term commitment for regional campuses, and the need to appeal to local jobs needs and the regional workforce. For example, instead of offering a history degree at Glasgow – we should focus on manufacturing/healthcare majors that are connecting to the economy. Also, there will be a Paralegal program in Owensboro. The campuses are not going away.

Tracy Harkins asked about a long term commitment for pensions due to the email that was sent out late on the 2-13-19: There is much linked to the KERS system and state universities' contribution rates are at 47% and will go up on July 1 to 84%; that is a 7 million charge next year. The President has been working with other university presidents on lobbying the legislature. Pension costs and healthcare costs continue to rise; however, the new bill would allow you to stay in KERS if you want, or remove yourself from it with your vested money, you would be placed in a personally controlled retirement fund. New hires would automatically be placed in ORP. WKU will pay their bill for those retired and still in, but at a set cost. There would be sessions to help employees decide what to do. More information about the status of the bill will be shared once an update is known.

Jenny Toomey asked if there would be more cuts: There will be no more faculty/staff cuts. If there are reductions it will occur within departments/etc., it will not be university wide. These will be decisions made by deans.

According to the President, this is culture change. This is a different way of thinking about our business, and focus on every student's individual success. Our job is dependent on their success. This has been an adventure and you can learn from everything; trying things, going to scale, figuring things out. The President ended with saying, "I thank you for the work you do."

Guest Speaker at 10:30 AM – Dr. Jennifer Tougas, Parking & Transportation Update

Dr. Tougas mentioned that they are looking for other ways to being in money, including federal funding for ridership and working with the city. The first year village will be changing several of the parking lots. She also mentioned that in their survey, F/S can find parking and are not frustrated. Everyone wants permit prices low, everyone wants more parking. There are Pay as you go permits – pay for the days you are here (\$25 to get it, pay for it as you use it – came with 5 days of parking). If you change your permit, there is a refund up until spring break and you can get a refund if you leave the university. The transit service is greatly appreciated, especially the ADA service. Thanks to the cut through on Emmett, they were able to eliminate the need for 2 buses on the white line and saved \$109K saving over the last year. They did lose ridership from the change in enrollment and change in classes at South Campus. Decrease in use of Green line because of decrease in international students. On prices, we compare favorably with peer institutions. There is a proposal of a 3% increase of permit fees (around \$5 for most permits).

Member Reports

Officer Reports:

- Chair (Jennifer Miller)
 - Meeting with President: Discussed the upcoming House Bill regarding KERS. Other items discussed were mentioned during today's discussion.
- Vice Chair (Mike Loftis)
 - Staff Election Committee – is hopeful that at the next meeting we will present changes
 - For Staff Council there will be up to 5 at large spots open.
- Treasurer (Jenny Toomey)

- The Book Scholarship has been delivered for spring
- All auction items delivered.
- 3 gift cards remaining from winners from survey
- Staff Council Balance – in the red 300 dollars, will be gotten to 0 by the end of year
- Staff can donate to book scholarship at any time
- Technology Officer (Chris Ware)
 - Updated Mentor email that goes to all new hires
 - Photos on the website are all updated
 - Working on updating categories for everyone on there
- Communications Officer (Rachel Cato)
 - Out

Staff Regent Report – David

Board committees met on February 8th. TV/Radio have separate audits from the university and they were approved. All will come up for final vote on 3/1/19. Tuition and mandatory fees increase – there was quite a bit of discussion from Higdon and Johnson. What was the financial difference in rounding down – she said it was \$40k to 50k, it is significant individually but not overall. Finance likes to do numbers that can be easily divided by 12 – they did that last year – there is difficulty in the math if the dollar amount was included. Jennifer Miller gave a quarterly internal audit report. Approval of sabbatical leave requests. Information items about CAPE review from Dr. Price. Regent Claus had several discussion points and other points on comments. There were issues with CAPE because One college made it public, and another locked their recommendations down. There is a Need for greater communication. For the Student Affairs committee, Chris Jensen presented on retention. College Heights acquired Minton property. No cost to university: Minton donated 400k, other donations made up the price. There were Questions about empty space in Alumni center. Would the foundations come together and all operate out of one building? No vote on this.

As a note: Based on recent news, David is not leaving the university. His wife will be moving to UWF.

Discussion of Monthly Committee Reports

University Committee Reports:

- University/Academic Calendar Committee – meeting last Friday, voted for proposal – 2 options, voted on option 1.
- Benefits Committee – n/a
- Campus Library Advisory Council – not met
- Campus Master Planning Committee – February’s meeting was canceled, they are meeting in March, focused on WKU Commons in January (at Helm), walkways and access to buildings.
- Parking Appeals Committee – haven’t met yet, but all meetings were recently set up.
- Parking and Transportation Committee – Fees may go up, information covered by Dr. Tougas.
- Preston Center Advisory Board – They met last week. The phase 3 project is on hold. However, it is up to donors on where their money goes, so they are still going to look at getting money and try to get the rock wall. They will be presenting a way to have F/S membership covered through Health/Wellness Benefits Committee
- Staff Excellence Committee – n/a
- Sustainability Champions – They have appointed a new interim Officer of Sustainability, however next year the office reporting structure may change.
- President’s Committee for Diversity and Embracement – n/a

- University Senate – Updates to senate charter are coming up and budget updates as well. The Chair is a member of CAPE committee and added to Council of Academic Deans (renamed groups, CAD – Dean’s & provost, executive group - associate provost and budget officers, etc., CAD+ - Academic Affairs Council – everybody plus Faculty Senate Chair. Tried to gather interest for new senators. There will be edits to handbook. SEC is being driven out of their space in HELM and are looking for new home. Discussed the rise in retention rates. SGA President was not present. Registrar talked about online catalog for undergraduates hopefully going life next academic year.

Standing Committee Reports: None for all

- Staff Leadership Committee – n/a
- Book Scholarship Committee – Scholarship awarded.
- Staff Satisfaction Committee – Awaiting results of the survey.
- Fall Break Brunch Planning Committee -n/a
- Election Committee – Meeting on 3/1/19
- Staff Mentor Program Committee – meeting during Spring Break

Ad-hoc Committee Reports

- Staff Tenure Recognition Committee – n/a
- New Employee Training Committee- n/a

Council Business

Strategic Plan – the new Steering Committee needs a representative form Staff Council, as the president has also asked for volunteers. 1 or 2 year terms. This committee will be checking metrics and things being measured as they go. They will be monitoring and measuring success of the plan. Monica Hines volunteered.

The Staff Satisfaction Survey: Results should be known soon, hopefully in time for March meeting.

Discussion

Council Email Review

There was one anonymous email that will be given directly to the president about pay raises.

Another email was about time sheets, and has been given to payroll. Per the payroll office: “We are moving forward with a plan to have everyone record their time in TopNet. This plan would be similar to the paper timesheet in place now with employees recording their time in and time out in TopNet and submitting to their supervisor at the end of every pay period for approval. Time keeping is tedious and repetitive but it is very necessary to complete timely and accurately - on paper and/or electronically.”

Announcements

Next Meeting Date/Time/Location

- March 6, 2019, 9:00 A.M., Jody Richards Hall, 2nd Floor

Notable Events

- Board of Regents Meetings: March 1, 2019, Regents Room, JRH
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Adjournment – 12:01 pm