

Minutes of April 5, 2000 meeting

2:30 p.m., Room 404 A/B Union



Present:

Julie Andrews, Bettie Bey, Woodson Boyden, Betty Brown, Joni Camp, Onice Carter, Mary Chrestman, Buster Clark, Heather Crockett, Martha Deal, Cherry Douglas, Shirley Fisher, Judy Fos, Laura Gillom, Melissa Hoskins, Clay Jones, Buddy Kahler, Anne Klingen, Theresa Knight, Denise Knighton, Jonnie Manning, Janea McDonald, Mark Miller, Traci Mitchell, Jerry Moore, Conny Parham, Donna Patton, Lamar Pickens, Michael Vanderlip, Sherry Wall

Excused:

Floyd Klepzig, Etta Miller, Lynn Mills

Unexcused:

Sylvia Denton, Calvin Sellers, Jim Stephens, Martha Woolfolk

Guest Speakers

Traci Mitchell introduced guest speaker **Marti Ryan** from Mississippi Blood Services, who asked that we remind faculty and staff of the Blood Drive which will be held during Staff Appreciation Week. The drive is scheduled for Tuesday, May 16 from 11-4 and on Wednesday, May 17 from 7:30-11 a.m. and 12-4 p.m. in the Ole Miss Union Lobby. Anyone planning to donate should bring their ID. Ms. Ryan reminded us that the blood supply is low and encouraged everyone who can to donate. Donors are requested to sign up in advance so that staffing can be scheduled properly.

The next guest speaker was **Dr. Andy Mullins**, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor and the University's liaison to the Mississippi Legislature, who reported on the current legislative session. Dr. Mullins noted that during the past five years, there has been unprecedented revenue and budget growth in Mississippi, which may have led to unrealistic expectations by legislative budget planners. The legislature must anticipate and project revenue more than a year in advance, and this figure was over-projected for this year. Only 35% of the cost of running the University comes from state funding. The remaining funds come from the federal government (grants, etc.) and self-generated funds (tuition). Unlike community college boards and K-12 school boards, our board cannot raise taxes to increase funding. The actual amount of money coming into the treasury is more than last year, but less than projections anticipated. The budget projections were based on 5.6% growth, but the actual amount of money coming in is about 3% growth.

By law the state has to balance its budget. Higher education is facing a cut of about \$13 million. The University's share of that cut is about \$2.6 million. Dr. Mullins listed several reasons why revenue is down. They include:

1. Individual income tax collections are down due to increasing unemployment statewide.
2. Use tax collections (taxes charged on heavy equipment coming into the state temporarily for construction) are down because construction has slowed down.
3. Corporate income taxes are down because interest rates have been raised several times recently and that causes corporations to stop investing and their profits decline.

The legislature has many built-in costs, including

1. Medicaid (state must match federal funds or lose them),
2. health insurance costs, which are rising due to the high costs of pharmaceuticals (doubled since 1997) and

- retirees whose payments do not cover the costs of their medical expenses,
3. debt service (bond payments) and
 4. costs of Adequate Education Act.
 5. Additionally, due to the 85% Rule on Corrections (every prisoner must serve 85% of time sentenced before eligible for parole), prison costs in the state have sharply escalated.

In 1993, the legislature passed HB 400, which mandated that any revenue received by the state which was above projected estimates would be divided between a rainy day fund (50%) and education (25% to K-12 and 25% to higher education). Each year to date there has been HB 400 money to divide. But now revenue is below projections and there is no HB 400 money.

The legislature did increase our general fund expenditures to cover most of the projected \$2.6 million cut, but it is expected that there will be no extra money for raises this year. Dr. Mullins says that the legislature may have been too generous last year because of the elections, but no one anticipated the slowing of the economy. He declined to guess how long the current budget crunch would last, but cautioned that the legislature would certainly underproject growth in the near future.

Project Discover:

Buster Clark reported that Campus Management meetings are being conducted and staff are attending training sessions. SAP employees are on site working on Funds Management and Position Control to provide the University with the ability to encumber funds and produce monthly and annual reports required by the state. Payroll is merging with Human Resources to provide staff, faculty and students with one location to address needs associated with these functions. Payroll will be housed in Paul Johnson Commons in the Human Resources offices.

Onice Carter announced that training will begin next week for all deans' offices staff to go live on SAP.

Standing Committees:

Traci Mitchell announced that the Executive Committee had requested and Chancellor Khayat had agreed that Staff Council should have a representative on every University standing committee. She asked that members sign up for a committee in which they are interested at the end of the meeting.

Announcements:

- Mary Chrestman announced that the Health Insurance Forum sponsored by the Faculty Senate and Staff Council will be this Friday, April 7, 2000, at 4 p.m. in the Ole Miss Union Ballroom. The format will be a panel consisting of State Sen. Gray Tollison, State Rep. Jay Eads, Gary Anderson, Head of the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration, Therese Hanna, State Insurance Administrator, and Mickey Brown, Manager of Advanced Health Systems. The session will be moderated by Hugh Sloan, Associate Professor of Management. A list of questions has been submitted to the panelists in advance and anyone in the audience can submit a written question during the forum. Refreshments will be served following the forum.
- It was announced on behalf of Floyd Klepzig, Chair of the Staff Council nominating committee, that officer nominations will be accepted through April 15. Names should be submitted to Floyd by that time, and anyone nominated must have given permission to have his/her name submitted.
- Traci Mitchell thanked everyone, including Staff Council member Donna Patton, who had worked so hard on the Oxford Campus Campaign and announced that a press conference would be held at 10 a.m. on April 11 in the Martindale Lobby to announce the results of the campaign. Staff Council and other staff are encouraged to attend.

- Staff were reminded to encourage everyone, faculty, staff and especially students, to complete and return their census forms. Anyone who did not receive a form can obtain one from the Census web site, from their toll free number, or from Max Williams, in the Center for Population Studies on campus.
- Volunteers are needed to help Physical Plant Department set up and take down the tables and chairs for the Staff Appreciation picnic on May 19, so that these employees may enjoy the festivities. Please respond to Sherry Wall, PPD.
- It was announced that the gym at Turner Center is undergoing renovations and both the gym and the pool will be closed for a short time. A new dance studio is being constructed, causing the loss of some of the racketball/handball courts. Staff should probably call to check on status of the facilities before planning to use them.

Minutes:

The March, 2000, Staff Council minutes were approved as published.

Staff Appreciation Week:

Clay Jones, committee chair, announced that the committee and various subcommittees have been meeting and expressed his appreciation to everyone who is helping with this project.

- Laura Gillom, chair of the picnic committee, recommended a menu of fried catfish, baked beans, coleslaw, and dessert to be provided by Aramark. The Council approved this menu recommendation. Laura also asked the Council for their suggestions on whom should be asked to serve at the picnic. In some previous years, administrators were asked to serve, but last year Staff Council members served so that administrators could answer office phones to allow more staff to attend the picnic. The council voted that that same procedure should be followed this year, and also approved asking other employees to volunteer to serve.
- Theresa Knight, chair of the Outstanding Staff Awards committee, announced that ballots would be stuffed on Thursday, April 6, and asked for volunteers. The ballots are to be mailed on that date.
- Donna Patton, chair of the Awards Day committee, announced that Fulton Chapel would be under renovation on the day of the Awards Ceremony, and the Grove would be unavailable because the chairs from graduation would be in the process of being removed. The only available space large enough for the ceremony is the Education Auditorium, and Donna's committee made that recommendation. The ceremony has been moved to 8:30 a.m. so that Chancellor Khayat can attend. The certificates are ready and the pins have been ordered. Donna noted that last year at the ceremony only 22 out of 58 employees who were eligible to receive 5-year pins came to the ceremony--this was time-consuming and embarrassing. She and the committee recommended changing the format of the program so that employees with 5, 10, and 15-years of service will have their names read and will be asked to stand to be recognized, but will not walk across the stage to receive their pins and certificates, which will be available to be picked up following the ceremony. After some discussion, it was concluded that although this solution will not please everyone, it was worth a try, and the Council approved this recommendation.
- Onice Carter, chair of Games in the Grove committee, announced that there would be Bingo (Shirley Fisher in charge), volleyball and a plant swap (chaired by Ann O'Dell and Anne Klingen) and guest lecturer on plants. She has arranged to rent "Games Galore", a sort of outdoor play station for adults, and the Double Decker bus will be available for tours. She will ask Dr. Walton to serve as tour guide for the bus. Music has not yet been finalized and anyone who has radio contacts, etc. should contact Onice. Anything that needs to go in the brochure that accompanies the ticket must be turned in to Onice by April 20.
- Thelma Curry and Lucienne Savell are in charge of the tournaments. Mike Vanderlip will head the golf tournament and hopes that there will be a day when staff can play at the University course free of charge. There will also be softball, volleyball and basketball competitions. Mark Miller is in charge of the spades tournament.

- Sherry Wall, chair of prizes committee, announced that the committee has contacted about 100 merchants and received some prizes. Also, the committee is asking departments to donate prizes.
- Melissa Hoskins is chairing the blood drive, and again reminded us to sign up to donate. She is working with the radio stations in the area and may be able to get one of them to be at the picnic.

Concerns Committee:

Clay Jones answered a question regarding whether retirees can get the discount given to the employees at the Medical Center. The answer is yes, as long as the discount is passed on to their insurance such as Medicare (i.e., the insurance company should receive the discount up front).

The meeting was adjourned.

/s/Traci Mitchell, President

/s/Clay Jones, President-Elect

/s/Conny Parham, Secretary

Staff Council e-mail address: staffcouncil@olemiss.edu

Staff Council Homepage: http://www.olemiss.edu/orgs/staff_council/

If you are interested in joining the Staff Listserv, please visit the Staff Council Homepage or talk to a Staff Council Representative or send an e-mail message to Majordomo@listserv.olemiss.edu with the words "*subscribe staff*" in the body of the e-mail message.