

The University of Mississippi
Minutes of the Meeting, August 7, 2002

Staff Council
Union 404 A/B

A message from the President.

The August meeting kicked off a series of guest speakers that brings out the essence and purpose of our staff council. Mr. Johnny Williams – Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, was our guest speaker this month. Mr. Williams shared with us how The University of Mississippi has positioned itself to handle the dwindling State appropriations and slowing economy. He praised the staff for being an integral part of our success story. He also shared that our student enrollment continues to climb which also helps significantly with our economic stability. We welcome all students back this fall and we must remember that these students are our lifeline and our reason for being here. These students validate our purpose to provide support to their choosing Ole Miss over other institutions for their education. We have an opportunity to personally welcome many students as we participate in the “Meet and Greet” program. Here we can give new students a warm “Ole Miss” welcome and offer directions to classes and buildings during the first two days of a new semester. What a great way to be welcomed to a great institution, by great staff members. WELCOME STUDENTS.

PRESENT: James Akey, Brenda Brannan, Joey Brent, Rachel Bost, Dennis Bullard, Joni Camp, Nina Cheshier, Judy Fos, Mary Harrington, Melissa Hudson, Regina Jordan, Buddy Kahler, Cathy Laswell, Steven Maples, Michele Mize, Renee Moore, Conny Parham, Jean Pinion, Hilarie Pryor, Amelia Rodgers, Dave Sagasar, Tony Seaman, Mark Shows, Doug Stuart, Karen Tuttle, Rosa Vance, Jeannette Wells, Amanda Wood

EXCUSED: Earlene Foster, Dino Johnson, Sam Johnson, Shannon Lovejoy, Linda Sallis

2:35pm Welcome was made by President Tony Seaman. Guest speaker is Johnny Williams, Vice Chancellor of Administrations and Finance. Today he will discuss the state regarding IHL.

Question: State of the State regarding IHL, Where do we stand with the State funding issue?

Answer: The University of MS has taken about \$16 million in state appropriation deductions since FY2000. Our state appropriations in FY2000 were about \$79 million. It will be around \$66 million beginning FY2003, which is \$13 million less than it was. Goal: How have we been able to make it?

- Tuition increases.
- Back in 1997, there was a plan to reduce the percentage of ENT money that was used for scholarships and waivers. This has been a significant source of dollars we have used to replace state appropriation money. Along the way, the Chancellor, the Foundation staff and others have worked very diligently to raise as much scholarship money as possible to make sure our students are able to afford to go to school.
- We have become more efficient and have been able to do more work by using new technologies to a greater degree.

The future is uncertain for FY2003 and FY2004. We have been told that we need to plan for a mid-year budget cut of state appropriations. Tuition may go up again. Our two main sources of funds are tuition and state appropriation funds. For FY2003, it looks like the tuition part of our budget will be more than our state appropriated funding. Hopefully, our leaders will find a solution to the problem.

Question: Has Ole Miss positioned itself to be prepared for the tough times and how can we continue to be prepared?

Answer: We must continue in our efforts to contain costs and continue to use technologies more efficiently and be more creative.

Question: How can the staff help?

Answer: By doing what you're doing -- being productive and creative. A couple of staff members suggested the idea of building a back-up electrical generator to help cut utility costs. It took several years of planning and several years to get it done. It is now in place and will be saving the University a significant amount of money every year, about \$1.5 million per year.

Each year 12 SEC business officers have a meeting. This year Ole Miss hosted it. The Universities get their ideas from each other. Several people wanted to come see our plans for the back-up electrical generator. Another Ole Miss staff member in the Physical Plant Department suggested recapturing the space in Hume Hall. This would make great dry storage space, and it doesn't cost a lot of money to do it.

Question: The 2% IHL raise was approved for January 2003, but what about raises in the future?

Answer: The 2% IHL raise is effective January 1, 2003 as a pool of money built into the 2003 budget. For the future, it depends on the state. The goal is to pay our employees fairly.

Question: Why did MS State get raises and we didn't?

Answer: We are focusing on Ole Miss, not MSU. Last year, we got increases and they did not. MSU was able to make it happen this year when they could not a year ago. They took their 2% pool and raised it a little, that's their strategy this year.

Question: What about the Early Retirement Option?

Answer: This is not the Early Retirement Option; it is a Retirement Incentive Program. If we decided to do this program, we would be offering people an incentive to leave, or retire. MSU wanted to do this, and because of their situation were successful in doing this. It applies to all IHL institutions to take advantage of it.

Ole Miss examined it, but did not think that it would be possible to offer this to our employees by June 30, 2002. We will try June 30, 2003. The law was never passed that says any employee has a right to get any money. The law was passed to allow the institution to save money. The only way the University can save money is if a person retires and we don't hire anybody to take their place. The duties of that retiree would be spread out to others. Another way is if a person takes the retirement incentive plan and we hire another person who would accept less money. It's not good to the University to have people retire early just to save some money. Most of the people that can retire are valuable to their department and to the University. It doesn't make any sense to pay people to leave.

Question: Are there any staff reduction plans to save dollars?

Answer: No, we do not plan to lay people off ,if possible. Part of our re-engineering efforts is to be more efficient and find a better, different way.

Question: How come if there's no money for raises, there's been so many new buildings being built or renovated?

Answer: The Lyceum, for example, was in horrible shape a while ago. There were already plans to renovate this building through bond money through the state. This money could only be used to renovate the Lyceum. The Y Building was renovated through private donations and not through University money. We have donors who give for landscape purposes. We have certain donors who have desires to landscape the University and renovate buildings. Money given for buildings and landscaping is a one time thing. Money for raises has to be a forever thing. It would take \$700,000 plus a year to give a 1% raise.

Question: As far as health care insurance, where do we stand?

Answer: Premiums and deductibles are all going up. There's just not enough state funding to enter at a state level to make it all work.

Question: Are the amounts the employer pays the same all over the State and other institutions?

Answer: Yes, they are.

Question: What is the talk about moving retired employees insurance separate from active employees insurance?

Answer: This would be something Andy Mullins could answer.

Question: Are we still the lowest institution in tuition?

Answer: Although tuition has increased significantly over the past 3 years, we remain a very competitive priced institution and much lower than private institutions. In other words, we are still a great bargain and a great public university.

President Tony Seaman thanked Johnny Williams for his information and time.

MINUTES: July minutes were approved with no corrections.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Approved with no corrections.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Move-In for Students is August 15 – 17, 2002. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Bonnie Reid in Housing.
- Meet & Greet days are August 19 & 20, 2002. We have 37 volunteers at this time. This is the biggest group that has ever participated.
- Book Scholarship: Money will be in our account soon and an email will be sent out to all eligible applicants for voucher pick up.
- Update of the MASCO Meeting:
 - This group consists of 8 IHL institutions that get together to help each other.
 - Portability proposal has been sent to the President's Council again. This proposal would allow the University's employees' children to attend a different institution and still be allowed to get the scholarship funded by the University.
 - Special thanks goes to Special Events and Memory House.
 - We duly impressed the other Universities. MS Valley State, MS State, Southern MS, and the University of MS were the only four institutions that attended July's MASCO meeting.
 - Our University is the only institution to offer the Textbook Scholarship program and the Health Screening Program.
 - We had over 300 participants in the Health Screening Program.
 - We offer 100% paid tuition for children whose parents are both employed with the University. The only other institution that offers this is Delta State.
- The Executive Committee met with the Chancellor on August 6, 2002. Several issues were discussed including the Book Scholarship program and its success and continuation. How the staff can help? By continuing to be creative and innovative. The next scheduled meeting with the Chancellor is in September.

If you have any concerns, please let us know. The Concerns Committee will meet on the last Tuesday of each month.

Meeting adjourned. 3:40pm.

/s/Tony Seaman, President

/s/Joni Camp, President-Elect

/s/Amanda Wood, Secretary

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