

Minutes of January 13, 1999 meeting

2:00 p.m., Union 404 A&B



ATTENDING:

Julie Andrews, Woodson Boyden, Dennis Bullard, Amy Burrow, Joni Camp, Onice Carter, Mary Chrestman, Buster Clark, Thelma Curry, Judy Fos, Laura Gillom, Mary Harrington, Willie Hilliard, Clay Jones, Floyd Klepzig, Theresa Knight, Traci Mitchell, Conny Parham, Donna Patton, Lucienne Savell, Calvin Sellers, Steve Stricker, Sherry Wall, Martha Woolfolk

Excused:

Cyndi Baskett, Sondra Davis, Cherry Douglas, David Elmore, Jonnie Manning, Jerry D. Moore

Unexcused:

John C. Stone, Doug Stuart

The meeting was called to order by President Onice Carter. Martha Woolfolk was welcomed as a new member to the Council, replacing Sue Hodge.

Speaker

Onice welcomed Dr. Andrew Mullins, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor, as our speaker for this month's meeting. Dr. Mullins is the legislative liaison for the University and he spoke about this legislative session. He said that much has happened already in only one week of the legislative session. Bills are on line now and daily status reports can be accessed via the Internet at billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/.

He reported good news regarding salary increases expected this year. The University is guaranteed a 3% minimum increase this year. This is unprecedented in his 19 years of work with the Legislature. The University will try to get a 3.5 - 4% addition amount which would equal 6.5 - 7%, but we know we will get at least 3%. Much attention is focused on salaries for K-12 teachers. The Legislature wants to get salaries up in that area.

Dr. Mullins stressed that once a percentage has been approved by the Legislature, that amount of money is distributed to the IHL, who then decides how the money will be distributed to the institutions (by merit, etc.). Each institution then decides the specifics of how to distribute the funds. We should not be upset with the Legislature if we do not agree with the system used to distribute the funds.

There are 11.5 weeks to go in this session. The outlook is better than he has ever seen.

He mentioned several issues which are of importance to staff:

1. Retirement Cost of Living Allowance. Currently, it is based on the Consumer Price Index. Some want to lock this amount in at 3%. The bill is pending. An update will be provided later.
2. The University has requested \$10 million in bonds to match \$10 million given for the Performing Arts Project. In March or April, we will begin repairing and replacing roofs with bond money already designated.

Question: There is a bill in the Senate (#2294) which would negate the policy that states that the first day of sick leave must be counted as personal leave. Do you know the status of the bill?

Answer: If it is important to employees that this bill be passed, I will look into it and watch its progress.

Question: Regarding the state health insurance plan, would it be a legislative issue if we wanted to pull out of the state health insurance plant?

Answer: It is a state law that says you can't pull out of the state system, so it would be a legislative issue.

Dr. Mullins said that he would keep the Council updated on important issues and would be happy to speak to the group at any time.

Minutes

The minutes were approved with no corrections.

Committee Reports

Project Discover. Buster Clark reported that the contract with SAP for a software system has been signed. Representatives from SAP will be on campus the end of January. They will be involved in the implementation of the student process system.

The final report (approximately 900 pages) has been sent to the Steering Committee. The report contains 510 conceptual recommendations. The Steering Committee met on January 12. The concepts were adopted with feedback on certain of the recommendations and was sent to the Discover Team. The concepts will be prioritized and will go back to staff teams involved for their feedback. The report can be read by any staff member beginning Tuesday, January 19, in the Project Discover Office (300 LaBauve). It was noted that if someone doesn't have the time to read all 900 pages, the first 85 pages are the meat of the report. Buster will ask if a copy of the report can be put on reserve at the Library.

The next step is to start implementation and re-engineering teams.

Proposals for Funding. Conny Parham reported that their committee hopes to meet with Dr. Gloria Kellum to work on specifics and will report at the next meeting.

Brochure. Woodson Boyden stated that the brochure is in progress. Even though Dr. Ed Meek is retiring from the University, the commitment to fund the brochure stands.

Membership. Traci Mitchell announced that a form was mailed in early January asking staff who are interested in serving on Staff Council and want their name on the election ballot to return the form to her by January 29. The Council membership elections will be held in February.

Concerns. Traci reported one concern: *Why does the Bursar's Office charge \$.50 to cash a check for staff?* Jack Garner, Bursar, stated that this policy was enacted before he became Bursar; however, the small charge is assessed to cover the cost of providing this service to faculty and staff and the fee has not increased since it was first established.

Staff Development. Traci stated that the Staff Development Committee submitted a written request to the Personnel Committee asking that a campus-wide survey be administered to get information on current staff development.. Clay Jones reported that the Personnel Committee met this morning and the concept was approved with some suggestions about the survey instrument itself.

Executive Committee Meeting with Chancellor Khayat.

- The faculty/staff dependent scholarship was discussed and we proposed a sliding scale percentage as an incentive for long-term employment at the University: 0-10 years: 50%; 10-15 years: 75%; and 15 years+: 100%. Chancellor Khayat agreed to discuss this proposal with University administrators.
- We talked again about the need for a reciprocal scholarship policy so that children of UM staff could take classes at one of the other universities in the state if the degree pursued is not offered at UM; and vice versa for staff at the other institutions. Chancellor Khayat agreed to bring this matter before the Presidents' Council.

- We talked about the proposals we are currently preparing and the Chancellor suggested some prospective donors for some of the proposals and asked Dr. Gloria Kellum to work on those.

Staff Appreciation Week. President Carter stated that at the June 1998 meeting there was a lot of discussion about whether or not the Staff Council was placing too much time and effort on Staff Appreciation Week. She asked that each staff council member think and ask other staff about what we should do about Staff Appreciation Week. The February Staff Council meeting will be dedicated to deciding what should or should not be done for Staff Appreciation Week. If you have suggestions, please contact a Staff Council member.

Note from the June 1998 Staff Council Meeting: The 3rd Goal: Improve the Staff Council image. It was stated that many staff members believe that too much Staff Council time is spent on Staff Appreciation Week activities. We need to focus on definite, positive projects and communicate better with staff about the results of the projects. If minutes continue to be printed, they will contain a section on ongoing issues which are being addressed by the Council. It was suggested that a copy of the Staff Council Mission Statement be attached to these minutes for review by Staff members. The following is taken from the Bylaws:

SECTION II: PURPOSE

The purpose of this council shall be to provide a channel of communication to the University administration and to act as an advisory group in policy matters of the University that affect the welfare of the institution and/or the staff it represents.

Announcements

Onice announced that 370 students were served at this semester's exam breakfast. This was down from last year but we believe the exam schedule had an effect on the number participating. It was a big success and Chancellor Khayat thanked the Council for this project and asked Dr. Gloria Kellum to make sure that public relations does a story about the breakfast.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

/s/Onice Carter, President

/s/Traci Mitchell, President-Elect

/s/Donna Patton, 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.