

Minutes of October 3, 2001 meeting

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



PRESENT:

Jean L. Baker, Bettie Bey, Betty Brown, Joni Camp, Nina Cheshier, Shirley Fisher, Earlene Foster, Shellie Harrison, Melissa Hudson, Sam Johnson, Regina A. Jordan, Buddy Kahler, Anne Klingen, Denise Knighton, Shannon N. Lovejoy, Jonnie Manning, Lynn Mills, Conny Parham, Dave Sagaser, Tony Seaman, Mark A. Shows, Karen Tuttle, Rosa L. Vance, Amanda Wood

EXCUSED:

Janea McDonald, Sherry Wall, Jeannette M. Wells

UNEXCUSED:

Dennis J. Bullard, Dino Johnson

The meeting opened with a moment of silence to remember the victims and families of the September 11, 2001 tragedy.

President Buddy Kahler welcomed guest speaker, Johnny Williams, Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance.

GUEST SPEAKER:

Mr. Williams spoke on the following issues:

- Today's topic was on the Health Care Issue. The problem was finding ways to help active employees get more funding to pay for dependent health care, and finding ways to better compensate retirees without hurting the active employees. Clay Jones and Johnny Williams went to a meeting last month to get information on this issue. The state is still working on this process to help find ways to solve the problem.
- Another issue was on Strategic Planning. To help make the University of Mississippi a better institution, we must try to control cost by being more efficient and analyze how we work.
 - The University gets its money from the state, tuition funding, and private individuals. The negative side of this is that we've taken a reduction where state appropriation of funds is concerned, and we may have to take more cuts in the future.
 - The positive side is that the University has grown as the number of students and tuition rates have both increased. This has helped mitigate the funding issues.
 - The September 11 events have certainly hurt our revenues, but we will move on and we will make it.
 - Annually, we receive federal grant dollars which are used for research. This money is not available for personnel issues.
- Employee compensation is a high priority and is still moving forward. Recently, category EEO 4 (Secretarial/Clerical) received the benefits of good management and the impact of fee increases and increased student enrollment. Enhancements to other EEO categories are being looked at as well. Compensation to the entire EEO categories as a group has been made possible through changes and efficiencies as a result of Project Discover. Other categories are being looked at include EEO 5, 6, 7, some technical and professional positions.
- A member of the Staff Council asked, since payroll is semi-monthly, is there a pool of money that is put into

interest? The answer was no. When the University was paying monthly, employees would start on the first of the month and would not get paid until the end of the month. Now that we are getting paid semi-monthly, employees who start on the first of the month will get paid on the 15th of the month. There is no delay until you terminate.

- President-Elect Tony Seaman wanted to thank the entire EEO 4 category for all their hard work and creative thinking.

Buddy Kahler thanked Johnny Williams for his time.

MINUTES:

Approval for September Minutes was voted unanimously. There were no corrections for last month's minutes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Staff Council's new office will be located in Johnson Commons.
- A group of people in the Physical Plant Department is trying to conduct a fundraiser for the New York and Washington victims and their families. If anyone has any suggestions or would like to get involved, please notify Buddy Kahler at 915-7051.
- There is an Adult Education Program on campus for anyone interested in improving his or her basic skills or working toward a GED. Please have anyone interested in your departments contact Esther Padgett at 915-6521.
- The Chancellor will provide the Thanksgiving dinner again this year.
- The Staff Council will host the Exam Breakfast in December this year and in May 2002. Please volunteer your services.
- For those of you who plan to change your cafeteria plans, contact Human Resources for details.
- Staff Text Book Scholarship. The Chancellor has agreed to fund the Staff Council Text Book Scholarship Fund by giving \$5000 for the spring 2002 semester and \$10,000 for each of the fall and spring semesters next year. Let's thank our Chancellor for his support.
- MASCO meeting. Tony Seaman and Buddy Kahler attended the MASCO meeting last month at Mississippi State University in Starkville and stated the issues at the other institutions are generally the same issues we experience. The University of Mississippi appeared to be in much better shape than the other institutions because of Chancellor Khayat's leadership and concern in these areas.

Jay Eads was the guest speaker at the MASCO meeting. He talked about the Legislative Process and the Health Care initiatives. He felt certain the public support would get a bill passed addressing these issues. The challenge will be finding ways to fund the bills.

- The Chancellor is working hard to create a 10-year Strategic Plan for the University. If you have ideas, let your departmental representatives know. Once programs are identified, then we can work toward getting them funded.

- Fall Staff Council meeting with the Chancellor has been changed to 1:30pm at Fulton Chapel on October 11, 2001. The meeting will be available by webcast and is funded by the Chancellor's office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- The funds for the Staff Textbook Scholarship spring 2002 semester have been entered in the Staff Council account.
- Parking is still an issue.
 - The parking behind the Turner Center has been completed.
 - Construction at Weir Hall will limit parking between Weir Hall and the University Police Department.
 - Construction in the quadrangle bordered by the Library, Johnson Commons, The Chapel, and Bondurant Hall will be closed as well.
 - If you are handicapped and have a handicapped sticker from the state, you must go to UPD to get a handicapped tag.
 - You need to get a temporary hangtag from UPD for unloading and loading materials at your offices or you will get ticketed.
 - Staff and Faculty no longer have the authority to write tickets. Cobra ticket writers and UPD are the only ones who can officially write tickets.

CONCERNS:

- A staff member stated a suggestion to the staff council about the 1st day illness having to come out of vacation time. She stated that being off with a sick child is not vacation time. It seems that this rule punishes responsible people with children, so that a few do not abuse sick leave time. Tony Seaman replied that this is a state rule and is state mandated. This cannot be changed unless the state law is changed. State employees can, however, take their concerns on this issue to their State Legislators for their consideration.

Meeting was adjourned.

/s/Buddy Kahler, President

/s/Tony Seaman, President-Elect

/s/Amanda Wood, 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.