

Marshall University Classified Staff Council
September 17, 2009, John Spotts Room (MSC 2E37)

Members Present: Nina Barrett, Amber Bentley, Barbara Black, Johnny Bradley, Tootie Carter, Betty Cook, Mike Dunn, Toni Ferguson, Carol Hurula, Annalisha Johnson, Darrell Kendrick, Diana Lewis, William Lewis, Leonard Lovely, Kris Standifur, Lu Ann South, Mary Waller, Joe Wortham

Members Absent: Bernice Bullock, Virgil Crockett, Brenda Flemings, Ronnie Hicks, Okey Napier, Jan Parker

Guests: Mr. Bill Burdette, Ms. Michelle Douglas, Dr. Stephen Kopp, Delegate Jim Morgan

The meeting was called to order at 1:36 p.m. by Chair Nina Barrett.

Approval of Minutes:

The August 20th minutes were approved with corrections.

Michelle Douglas – Human Resources

Ms. Douglas indicated that more information from H1N1 Flu Advisory Group concerning the H1N1 virus would be distributed as it becomes available. She stated that the University's sick leave policy may need to be relaxed concerning the requirement of a doctor's slip following a 5-day absence to accommodate those who need to be off due to the virus. She also said she is willing to meet with departments upon request to explain procedure.

Ms. Douglas also stressed the need for those who are sick with the virus to stay home.

ACCE Report – Mike Dunn

Mike said that ACCE members have met with the Select Committee on Higher Education Personnel. ACCE representatives have also met with the consultants for the personnel study. Mike says he is hopeful and would like the higher education institutions in the state to provide a united front for the personnel study. He stressed that the personnel study is a work in progress; he is hopeful that everyone will have a working copy of the study by the end of October or early November.

Board of Governors Report – Mike Dunn

Mike sent the Board of Governors report to Council members by e-mail prior to the meeting. He attended the Board of Governors Summit at Stonewall Jackson State Resort on August 20-22, 2009. The next Board meeting is scheduled for October 15, 2009.

Delegate Jim Morgan

Mr. Morgan discussed the responsibilities of the Legislature's Higher Education Personnel Committee of which he is a member. This select committee, with the approval of the House and Senate, hired the consultant who had previously worked with the personnel study in 2005-06, to continue with the project. He indicated areas of concern include the classification system and the staff salary schedule. Delegate Morgan stated that SB519 which deals with furloughs was passed by the Senate last year but was stopped when it came to the House Education Committee (of which he is a member). Mr. Morgan feels that there are several issues within the bill that need to be worked out (such as the issue of contract employees) before it can go forward.

Mr. Morgan opened the floor to questions/comments:

MU has 600+ of the approximately 1000 higher education classified employees that are not fully funded according to the 2001 salary schedule. Most of those who are fully funded are new hires. The staff is disheartened when they see other in-state higher education institutions paying above the salary schedule. The implementation of salary funding has been left up to the individual institutions by the Legislature. There has been no penalty to those institutions not funding the schedule. Also, nothing has been written into the classification system to permit the upgrading of positions with the changing of technology. A lengthy discussion ensued. Mr. Morgan indicated that there are several things to be done in this area. The committee is addressing certain issues with the hope of getting something done in the new legislature and moving on to other items.

Does the committee have a definitive time table for completion of this project? Mr. Morgan said there is a timeline but he does not anticipate the committee dealing with the entire issue as one item. There should be some legislation ready for committee review by December 2009.

What does the cost of living have to do with someone doing the same job in another area of the state? Why is someone paid more because he/she chooses to live in a more expensive part of the state? In areas, such as the border state areas, with a higher cost of living and companies paying more, it is difficult to attract and maintain a quality work force without paying a competitive salary.

Has a study been done to see if higher education is still competitive with the benefits offered? The last study showed a 3% difference (the example of Shepherd University in the eastern panhandle is always used).

Mr. Morgan thanked Council for inviting him to the meeting and encouraged staff members to contact him with their concerns.

Dr. Stephen Kopp

Dr. Kopp stated his belief that in order to improve the University's financial situation and address the classified staff salary schedule, it is necessary to grow enrollment through increasing the number of freshmen and retaining current students.

Dr. Kopp stated that the University will experience at least a 4% reduction in state appropriations next year. Because it will be back-filled with stimulus money, the University will stay even again. Freshman enrollment increased by 11.5% this year, non-resident enrollment was flat last year and remained the same this year, Nation-wide; however, universities saw a significant decrease in non-resident enrollment.

The goal by 2012-13 is to have 2000 freshmen students every year. The additional revenue which comes with such growth is base revenue. Retention is the other piece of the puzzle. MathWorks has been introduced to freshmen students on a trial basis through a grant from the HEPC. MathWorks is an early identification and intervention program to identify at-risk freshman students. At present, the University has about a 50% response rate from freshmen. The University plans to do a survey of every student who did not return and was in good academic standing when they left to determine the reasons they did not return and what can be done to keep them here. The goal is to have progress to a first-to-second-year student retention rate that exceeds 80%, if possible.

The President stressed the University's need to become more self reliant in the face of future cuts in state allocations. The University can become more self reliant by, among other things, focusing on student enrollment, retention and growing the over-all student body.

The President opened the floor to questions:

What can the Council and the classified staff do to help recruit and retain students? The President stressed that anything the staff can do to improve the experience of the student would be helpful. He encouraged staff to use all opportunities to interact with students to make their University experience a positive one.

You are aware of the problem with two classified staff members and the employee dependent tuition assistance program. The Dependent Assistance Tuition Assistance Program was designed to encourage employees to send their children to Marshall. The two programs involved (Medical Imaging and Nursing) are affiliated with St. Mary's Medical Center. When classes for those programs are taken at Marshall, the tuition is covered. Tuition for classes taken at St. Mary's is paid to St. Mary's; the University does not underwrite St. Mary's courses. That issue is not part of the policy. The President has asked Mike McGuffey to clarify this matter in policy.

What are the chances that employees will be able to take a class without paying tuition? The President would have to study the request and look at the economic impact of it. It makes sense to cover the costs if the course the employee is taking is directly related to the job he/she is doing. He also expressed his belief that a dropped course would result in the employee's repaying the cost of his/her tuition waiver.

Is there any way the University can work out a trade-out with waivers for MCTC? MCTC is now a separate entity from the University. If there is a need, the President suggests Council identify the need, convey that need to him (in the form of a recommendation) and offer possible solutions.

Staff Council Committees

- **Election/Communications Committee** - Joe Wortham – No report
- **Legislative Committee** - Mike Dunn & Carol Hurula (Co-Chairs) – No report
- **Personnel/Finance Committee** - Lu Ann South- The committee is looking into the issue of mandatory overtime.
- **Physical Environment Committee** - Tootie Carter – Tootie has resigned as Physical Environment Committee Chair; but will remain on the committee. Bill Lewis has agreed to serve as chair.
- **Staff Development/Service Committee** - Amber Bentley – One sympathy basket was sent during the month. The committee will meet next month to discuss modifications to the tuition waiver guidelines. Clarity is needed for issues such as paying back costs when a waiver recipient drops a class and the possibility of receiving 2 or more waivers in the same semester.

Faculty Senate Committees

- **Legislative Affairs Committee** – Carol Hurula – The committee is planning a town hall meeting with members of the WV Legislature. This meeting would be planned in cooperation with Staff Council and Student Government. The committee members discussed a revision to the number of MU faculty and staff BOG representatives. The committee will present a resolution to Faculty Senate indicating that the BOG should include one additional faculty and one additional staff member. The Committee also plans to present a resolution to Faculty Senate stating that Article 6, Section 13 of the WV Constitution should be changed and Marshall faculty and staff should be allowed to serve in the WV Legislature.

Announcements – Nina Barrett

Nina announced that House Speaker Richard Thompson will meet with Staff Council from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. on October 8, 2009. This will be an additional Staff Council meeting and will be open to members of the Classified Staff, faculty and student body. After some discussion, it was suggested the meeting time be changes to 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., if possible, to accommodate the schedules of faculty and students with early afternoon classes. Charlene will contact the Speaker's office to see if this change is compatible with the Speaker's schedule. Two rooms have been reserved for this meeting: MSC BE5 and 2W16. Leonard made a motion and Lu Ann seconded, that the meeting with Speaker Thompson be held in MSC 2W16. Motion passed. It was also suggested that notice of the meeting be sent to all exchange users, the Parthenon be contacted for publicity and the possibility of release time for staff be requested.

Mike Dunn thanked everyone who helped with the 5 K Run Walk for PATH (Paul Ambrose Trail for Health) event last Friday.

New Business

In Bernice Bullock's absence, Leonard Lovely made a presentation on behalf of the Constitution Ad Hoc Committee. Johnny Bradley made a motion that the Constitution Ad Hoc Committee have authority to make editorial changes (i.e. grammar, numbering and changes in state code designators) to the Staff Council Constitution By Laws. Darrell Kendrick seconded. Motion passed.

Mike has been in contact with Earl Ray Tomblin's office attempting to schedule him to speak with Council. If the Senator can come to campus, another special meeting will be scheduled.

There being no more business, the meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Minutes taken & prepared by: _____
Charlene R. Hawkins, Program Assistant, Staff Council

Minutes approved by: _____
Nina Barrett, Chair, Staff Council

Minutes read by: _____
Stephen J. Kopp, University President