

## Marshall University Classified Staff Council Minutes

July 15, 2010, John Spotts Room (MSC 2E37)

**Members Present:** Nina Barrett, Barbara Black, Johnny Bradley, Bernice Bullock, Tootie Carter, Mike Dunn, Carol Hurula, Diana Lewis, Leonard Lovely, Dwayne McCallister, Okey Napier, Jan Parker, Kelly Preston, Kris Standifur, Jennings Stiltner, Mary Waller,

**Members Absent:** Betty Cook, Toni Ferguson, Ronnie Hicks, Jennifer Jimison, Annalisha Johnson, William Lewis, LuAnn South, Joe Wortham

**Guests:** Dr. Kopp

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nina L. Barrett. Nina verified a quorum was present.

### **Dr. Kopp – University President**

**Enrollment** – Fall enrollment is positive and the freshman figures are promising. Based on orientation numbers the number of students registered is comparable to what we had August 3<sup>rd</sup> of last year. The numbers are still soft but it's a fairly safe bet we will see over 2,000 freshmen. Transfer enrollment is on schedule compared to what we had last year and we may see a slight increase. We are a little behind in returning freshmen from last year and we will be making calls to students who were freshmen last year who aren't registered yet.

Dr. Kopp has been monitoring what the Huntington City Council has been doing downtown regarding the **1% Occupation and 1% Sales taxes** the city is trying to implement. Dr. Kopp serves on the Chamber of Commerce Board and the Chamber has been fairly outspoken to virtually every proposal that has come through.

Chamber has been asking repeatedly for City Council and the Mayor's office to do a study and bring in experts to study this issue. There's a lot of concern in the business community and the last proposal to drop the B&O Tax is very attractive to them, but when you impose a city sales tax you have to wonder whether people's shopping habits will change and if they will go to outlying areas outside the city limits to avoid the tax. This would be a big concern for businesses, especially new businesses, and we've started to finally see some significant revitalization downtown. Dr. Kopp would like to see the City look at other city models to see where tax reforms have worked well to stimulate economic growth and business development, which is what we would like to see.

Dr. Kopp then opened the floor to questions:

- ***Would the University be willing to help with some kind of tax study or something for the city?***  
We've offered help but to do this right we really need someone who has done this type of consulting, and they're not cheap. I think the business community would be willing to work together to raise the money to bring in a consultant, or at least a significant part of the cost. But you need somebody who has experience in looking at taxation issues for cities the size of Huntington, and all we kept hearing initially was Ashland. Ashland is nowhere like Huntington in terms of the type of business community.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Approval of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Minutes – motion to accept minutes made, seconded and passed.

Approval of June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Minutes – motion to accept minutes made, seconded and passed.

**Officer Elections:**

- Floor opened to the position of **Vice Chair**, the person who steps in for Nina should she ever be out for any reason. Nomination made for Johnny Bradley. Johnny accepted, no more nominations were made, Johnny Bradley elected to Vice Chair by acclamation.
- Floor opened to the position of **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair**, the backup of the backup, and the person to take minutes if Katie was to be out. Nomination made for Carol Hurula. Carol accepted, no more nominations were made, Carol Hurula elected to 2<sup>nd</sup> vice chair by acclamation.

**Announcements:****1% Occupation Tax and 1% Sales Tax –**

Johnny Bradley began a discussion on the 1% Occupation and 1% Sales taxes the City of Huntington has proposed. District maps of Huntington were passed out for everyone to see who their district council representative is. Johnny is supposed to be put in contact with someone who can help us determine where we stand if we do a petition. The group he is contacting has a petition already but is only for Huntington registered voters. What he would like to do is go district by district in order to show council members how much opposition they have from their own districts. He would like to start a petition at Marshall for staff and whoever will sign it. Johnny would like to have 2 petitions: one for Huntington residents and one for non-residents.

There is a Facebook page called “Call for a Vote” and they want the tax proposal to be put on a ballot and let the residents of Huntington vote on it, which would be a good group to get involved with.

Many Staff Council members will not hesitate to go outside of the city to shop if the sales tax is passed.

Nina Barrett made a motion for Staff Council to go on record that we oppose both taxes – sales and occupation. The motion was seconded and approved. The reason Staff Council opposes these taxes is because it has not been studied, the City hasn’t proved it will gain anything, it will be detrimental to the city and current businesses, and it will hurt new business development.

Staff Council makes the recommendation that the City does a study, preferably of other cities similar to Huntington that are comparable in size and with the same makeup regarding manufacturing and service industries.

Staff Council will also put together a petition opposing the 1% Occupation and 1% Sales taxes and sit in the Memorial Student Center to get signatures. We will check with the Chamber of Commerce to first see if there's a petition already circulating.

Staff Council will write a letter, both collectively and individually, to the City Council Members stating our opposition to these taxes. We will use the Buddy List to encourage Classified Staff to send letters to the City Council as well.

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes taken and prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Katie M. Easter, Program Assistant, Staff Council

Minutes approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nina L. Barrett, Chair, Staff Council

Minutes read by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen J. Kopp, University President