

Staff Concerns – February 2016

Comment/Concern: An individual submitted a concern they were no longer receiving the Staff Congress newsletter.

Action: Since the concern was submitted, the staff member has been added to a constituent list and was sent the newsletter.

Comment/Concern: Since the BOR is meeting Friday, I went to the BOR page to look at minutes from the last mtg. there are no posted minutes since March 2015. Is this a violation of open meeting guidelines? Are they trying to hide all activity for the past year? these used to be posted quickly after the meeting but that has been stopped. Also, they used to place Cabinet Mtg agendas on the portal. The link is there but there are no agendas shared. Is this the future of shared governance at MSU?

Action: According to Sharon Reynolds, Assistant to the President:
There is no violation of open records. The Board of Regents meets today in a work session, not a quarterly meeting. The agendas for quarterly meetings are shared on the BOR website as the commenter said, but the agendas for work sessions are not because no official actions will be taken. Regarding the minutes—Minutes of the previous meeting are included in each quarterly meeting agenda book, at which they are on the agenda for approval for the Board. For instance, if someone wants to review the minutes from the September 2015 meeting, they simply need to view the December 2015 agenda book. The December 2015 minutes will be on the agenda for approval at the March 2016 meeting and therefore are not available at this time. Therefore, all minutes are publicly available after they have been approved by the Board. I hope this clears up the confusion! Thank you!

Comment/Concern: I would like to know the process of how the anniversary gifts are processed. I got notification to chose my gift six (6) months before my anniversary date. I did so and now my anniversary has come and gone. I still don't have the gift. I contacted HR and was told that they had received anything. So..my queston is if I have to chose it six (6) months ahead shouldn't the gift be here by now? Is this not something that is part of the duties of the HR office to keep up with who has an anniversary and that they receive their anniversary gift in a timely manner? If not, then whose responsible is it?

Action: Senior Human Resources Assistant Cindy Thompson stated:

Human Resources mails letters out to honorees two months prior to the quarter in which the recipient is to be honored. This timeframe allows the individual to place their order in advance to where one should receive their service awards gift by their anniversary date. However, sometimes when the honoree places their order through the Bookstore their gift selection is not available and is placed on backorder. The Bookstore has initially been responsible for notifying the honoree when the gift is on backorder. The honoree at this point has been notified and can either choose to leave their gift on backorder or choose another gift selection. HR keeps in contact with the Bookstore to know the statuses of Service Awards Gift. If you have any questions, just let me know.

Comment/Concern: As the university is in financially hard times, how is the creation of and hiring for five or six new positions in facilities management justified, especially when some of the positions are a duplication of positions elsewhere on campus. For example, a marketing and communications manager, personnel administrator (payroll) and accountant have all been created/hired in the last six months in the Rice Building. Why are they needed? In addition, two architectural positions have been added. Why are they needed? If there is a legitimate reason, fine, but tell the campus. My question is focused on the positions, not the PEOPLE in the positions.

Action: Assistant Vice President Facilities Management Rick Linio stated:

First, – the positions were existing, my office revised job descriptions when the position became open to meet our department needs and servicing the campus community. Second, we only have one architect position – again an existing position. Let’s remember the facilities departments maintains a campus physical plant of over 3m square feet, centralize water and heat plant, managing over \$100m in capital projects along with numerous other services we provide the campus community to provide a safe, clean, living and learning environment. Let me know if you have any questions.

Comment/Concern: Last month, Staff Congress received a concern asking us to address the five currently posted positions in IT, and why the institution would be looking to hire these people amid potentially drastic budget cuts. While Staff Congress never received an official response to this query, Chief Financial Officer Beth Patrick addressed this item at the most recent President’s Leadership Council:

Action: Patrick stated that these positions were posted as a test to see if they would yield any candidates, and what salary ranges might be dictated by

the market. She noted these positions will NOT be filled, and are serving more as an information gathering exercise.