

# Staff Congress: At-A-Glance

March 7, 2016

## Chair Report: Craig Dennis

**Chair Dennis** gave a report on the Budget Task Force work. Chair Dennis directed everyone to The Source on the Portal. The Source is where minutes from the Budget Task Force will be posted for employees to read and keep up-to-date on the Task Force work efforts. Chair Dennis stated the three guiding principles of the Task Force are: MSU needs to be as strong or stronger at the end of the process as we are right now; MSU needs to continue to be a liberal arts university; and every recommendation that is brought before the Task Force needs to be taken into consideration during the decision making process. Chair Dennis assured representatives that there is a lot of data being looked at and decisions will be data-driven. The Self-Studies that were conducted previously are being reviewed, as well. There have been recommendations to eliminate vacant positions and even restructure current entities on campus. At this point, elimination of positions will be the last choice at this point. Chair Dennis stated he feels good about the process that is being used to make decisions. He reiterated what President Andrews said when he addressed employees, MSU will hope for the best but plan for the worst. Chair Dennis stated President Andrews is spending a lot of time in Frankfort. Chair Dennis reported the Task Force members are being asked to not discuss specifics at this point because things discussed may not come to fruition and it would only create panic and rumors among employees. MSU employees need to concentrate on doing their job of helping students succeed. As soon as the Task Force knows the budget that has been approved, information will be shared with employees in a timely manner. Chair Dennis reiterated there were no sacred cows in the decision making process and at this point everything is on the table for consideration.

## Vice-Chair Report: Scott Niles

**Vice-Chair Niles** reported the portal site was up to date. There was a Staff Salute submitted (see Salute, below). Vice-Chair Niles and Representative Esposito have been working on a Resolution that will be addressed during New Business. Faculty Senate drafted a Resolution that was aimed toward an internal audience, while the Resolution Staff Congress drafted is toward an external audience (legislature). Chair Dennis asked if Annie Adams had touched base with Rep. Pace regarding a joint resolution between Faculty Senate, Staff Congress, and SGA. At this time, Staff Congress has not been approached regarding the joint resolution.

### STAFF SALUTE

**Bill Redwine**

**AVP Auxiliary Services**

*Congratulations to Bill Redwine for his recent election as national president of the National Association for College Auxiliary Services (NACAS).*

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## Committee Reports

### ***Benefits & Compensation: Committee Chair Jerel Benton***

\* **Committee Chair Benton** reported the B&C committee had been invited to attend a meeting with Sibson a few weeks ago. Sibson in the company MSU contracted to help negotiate our health benefits this past fall. Sibson representatives talked about what they did and the processes they used to obtain our health benefit rates for the current year. Sibson will be back on campus in April or May to meet with the SC subcommittee and standing committee members about their progress. Sibson will be handling the RFP and looking at the advantages/disadvantages of MSU becoming self-insured during the next benefit enrollment cycle. Sibson was hired because they are well positioned within in higher education. Their main goal is to help MSU keep costs down. Jane Fitzpatrick and Harold Nally are working to draft a letter to send to employees who were affected by the KTRS decision to not recognize the market shift MSU implemented in their retirement calculations. Because the market shift (compensation plan) was not across the board, KTRS is only looking at what the employees received as a whole. If the market shift was not available to all, then it is not considered towards retirement. An example that Harold Nally gave was the following: If everyone received a 2% increase and some individuals received 3% or 4%, then KTRS is only looking at the 2% that everyone received.

### ***Credentials & Elections: Committee Chair Lora Pace***

\* **Committee Chair Pace** passed out the election guidelines to representatives for review. If people are displaced this year due to construction, they will be counted as being in their home building (such as those employees in ADUC who will have to move this summer), as they will not have moved from that building during the election time (April). Each area represents a similar number of staff. Everyone whose term will expire will be notified by email by Committee Chair Pace.

### ***Staff Issues: Committee Chair Paige McDaniel***

\* **Committee Chair McDaniel** reported the following concerns had been submitted:

**CONCERN:** An individual submitted a concern they were no longer receiving the Staff Congress newsletter.

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

**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?

**RESPONSE (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! Sharon

**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 question 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?

**RESPONSE (Cindy Thompson, Senior Human Resources Assistant):** 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. Thanks, Cindy

**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.

**RESPONSE (Rick Linio, AVP Office of Facilities Management):** 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.

NOTE: All submitted Staff Concerns may be seen in their entirety, along with the corresponding response, on the Staff Congress Portal site. Login to the Portal site, go to Employee Services, select Staff Congress, and then choose the Past Staff Concerns button. There will be a listing by month and year of the Staff Concerns from which you may choose to review.

### ***Sustainability Committee***

\* **Representative Niehoff** announced MSU is certified Bee Campus, USA. The Kentucky Tree Recovery campaign will be handing out free seedlings during March and April at various events. There is no limit to the number of seedlings you can get, it is just asked that those who take the seedlings plant them. March 22<sup>nd</sup> will be the Town and Country Event at the Rowan County Senior High School. March 30 is Sustainability Day and will be observed on the lawn in front of ADUC. Also on March 30 the Environmental Eagles will have movie night and the film “Vanishing Bees” will be shown in Reed Hall 111 at 6:00 p.m. On April 1<sup>st</sup> there will be an Arbor Day tree planting event at the new outdoor classroom behind Normal Hall and at a restoration site along Triplett Creek. April 16<sup>th</sup> is the Earth Day Film Festival at the Morehead Conference Center in conjunction with the Kentucky Proud Expo. April 22-24 will be the Earth Day celebration with a Pride clean-up at Lockegee on April 23. Details on all the events can be found on the /earthwise/ website.

## Other Reports

### ***Staff Regent Report: Shannon Harr***

**Staff Regent Harr** reported there was a work session in February and the next BOR meeting is March 18. The work session contained a lot discussion on the budget crisis. There will be BOR retreat in April. The BOR was asked to contact the legislature about the budget cuts. PAc-22 and PAc-26 were discussed. One PAc had to do with separation of faculty from the University and the other PAc was regarding disciplinary. The wording of the disciplinary PAc will be voted on the way it was written during the March meeting. This PAc has been under discussion for approximately a year. Officers will also be elected during the March meeting. Staff Regent Harr indicated he would have more information to share after the March meeting.

### ***Human Resources Report: Harold Nally***

**Harold Nally** reiterated Sibson will be back in April or May for another meeting with the committees. The focus on what our strategy is going forward with our health benefits will be a big part of the discussion when Sibson comes back to campus. Mr. Nally stated he met with the Compensation and Benefits committee and discussed a draft of UAR 324.02 that eliminated wording regarding the 2% lateral raise. This is a draft and has not been voted on by the Cabinet.

### ***Cabinet Report: Beth Patrick***

**VP Patrick** was not present and no report was submitted.

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CONCERN

**Guest Speaker: Russ Mast, Director of Recreation and Wellness Center**

Mr. Mast started work at MSU on January 4, 2016. Mr. Mast has 28 years’ experience in higher education and retired from a VP of Student Life position. Mr. Mast stated he hopes to bring new ideas with social media and marketing to the Recreation Center. Enrollment at MSU is approximately 60% women and 40% men while the usage of the Recreation Center is approximately 60% men and 40% women. Mr. Mast hopes to change the dynamic and get more women into the Recreation Center. Due to the budget cuts, the Recreation Center has lost quite a large portion of their budget and there are no funds for replacement equipment at this time. Future plans for the Recreation Center include growing the Outdoor program. Recently, the first water aerobics class was held at the pool. There are approximately 1,000 members outside of students who pay for a membership to the Recreation Center. There were approximately 225,000 visitors to the Center this past year. Membership options include a Silver Sneakers walking membership, Eagle Swim Buddy, Alumni, Spouse, and community membership. The community membership is \$400/year. The Recreation Center has been approached regarding corporate memberships. Corporate memberships would be a way to generate revenue, but it is on hold for now given the amount of usage the Recreation Center is currently experiencing. There been a request for a shuttle stop in front of the Recreation Center. Some of the services the Recreation Center provide for the community include using the pool for aqua therapy, the Rowan County Senior High School swim team uses the pool for practice and meets, and anyone can rent the outdoor equipment. Mr. Mast said he would be willing to look at free group fitness for employees but would have to discuss this with VP Weathers, as the Recreation Center has revenue numbers to meet and group fitness revenue is part of the overall budget that has to be met. Mr. Mast welcomes any new activities or ideas faculty and staff have—he is open to all ideas submitted.

**OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Motion:	To open discussion on the Resolution drafted regarding the budget cuts to higher education.	
	Proposed to Vote: Vice-Chair Niles	Seconded: Rep. Pace
Called for Vote:	Passed	

**UPCOMING EAGLE EVENTS**

- Tuesday, March 1: New Employee Orientation (9:00 a.m., 307 Howell McDowell)
- Tuesday, March 15: PD—Presenting Effectively (Part 2, 8:30 a.m., Rader 112); Problem Solving for the Efficient Workplace (1:00 p.m. Rader 112)
- Wednesday, March 16: New Employee Orientation (9:00 a.m., 307 Howell McDowell)
- Friday, March 18 – Wednesday, March 23: Various outages and construction going on across campus during Spring Break (mass email sent)
- March 18 – March 27: Recreation & Wellness Center CLOSED. Facility will be closed starting at 2:00 p.m. Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup> and will reopen Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.
- Saturday, March 19: Power outage from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. (West End of Campus)
- Monday, March 21 – Friday, March 25: Spring Break (Students) & Unpaid Furlough for Faculty and Staff
- Monday, April 4: Next STAFF CONGRESS meeting (Riggle Room, ADUC) 1:00 p.m.
- Thursday, April 21; Friday, April 22; Saturday, April 23: SOAR
- Summer SOAR programs will be in Button Drill Room and on the ground floor of the Library. Housing will stay where they are at during SOAR.