

**MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY
STAFF CONGRESS MINUTES
October 1, 2012**

MEMBERS:

Kenna Allen	Craig Dennis	Michelle Hutchinson	Paige McDaniel*	Joel Pace
Sheila Barber	Julie Ferguson*	Travis Jolley*	Tina McWain	Lora Pace
Regina Beach	Aaron Gay	Yvette Kell	Brooke Mills	Clarissa Purnell
Benji Bryant	Shannon Harr	Margaret LaFontaine*	Kerry Murphy	Barbara Willoughby*
Rhonda Crisp	Paul Hitchcock*	Amanda Lewis	Scott Niles	Donnie Willoughby
Jason Dailey	Joe Hunsucker	Patty Little	Matthew Nutter	

*Denotes member was absent.

Guests:	Phil Gniot, HR Director; Todd Thacker, Staff Regent; and Gaylena Cline, Payroll Manager
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Chair Gay called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Motion:	To approve the minutes from the September 10, 2012 meeting	
	Proposed: Rep. Dennis	Seconded: Rep. McWain
Called for Vote:	Motion passed.	

Gaylena Cline, Payroll Manager, attended the meeting to give information about graduate tuition waiver tax issues. This information is in Publication 970. Any employer provided graduate tuition waiver in an amount over \$5250.00 shows on the W-2. She gets her information from Enrollment Services. MSU chooses to hold taxes out because if someone has a large amount showing extra on their W-2 and no taxes have been withheld, it could create a burden for the employee. They hold out Federal, State, Social Security, and KERS (not KTRS). Payroll already has the information from UK and WKU, but is still waiting for the MSU information. She requested it on September 1. She should get the information this week and if she gets it in time, the taxes will be withheld on the October 15-December 15 paychecks. She prefers not to have these taxes withheld from the last paycheck of the year. There is an exception to being charged taxes over the \$5250.00 amount. For example, if you need a class to keep your skill level up, you might qualify for the waiver. This information must be given to payroll by the employee's supervisor. Read Publication 15B carefully, to make sure you meet the criteria. Payroll/HR can answer questions.

Chair's Report	<p>Chair Gay reported that the President's Leadership Council met. Jeffrey Liles presented a PowerPoint that provided unofficial data on enrollment. The overall numbers were down a little, but First-time Freshmen are up. It will be near the end of the semester (November) before the official numbers are reported to the CPE. Staff Regent Thacker provided a document to share at the meeting that showed the numbers presented to the Board of Regents. Rep. J. Pace said he attended a meeting last week and learned that regionals (NKU, EKU, WKU, & Murray) are near the same enrollment as last year. Their first-time freshmen numbers might be down, but total enrollment is near the same.</p> <p>The Executive Committee met on September 28. The Staff Issues Committee and the Faculty Senate are working on an Ombudsman request. Rep. Allen</p>
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	<p>will give more details later.</p> <p>Rep. Purnell developed a new format for the synopsis of the minutes in the form of a newsletter. Please ask your constituents if it was helpful and ask them for feedback. We want the newsletter to be beneficial.</p> <p>The 'Staff Concerns' tab on the webpage is being used. Several items have been submitted and some have been resolved. Rep. Allen will give more details.</p> <p>On the September 27 Professional Development Day, 17 attended the morning session and nine attended the afternoon session. Please encourage people to participate. Talk to your constituents about topics they would be interested in for the spring. UK has 120 options for professional development training so we have many choices for the spring trainings. We might offer some sessions late in the afternoon to accommodate faculty who would like to attend.</p> <p>When we email our constituents, we need to add a disclaimer at the bottom letting staff know that they can 'opt-out' of receiving these updates if they prefer. Also, please carbon Chair Gay on emails that are sent to constituents.</p>
Vice-Chair's Report	<p>Vice-Chair Harr reported that April Nutter had to cancel the new CMS training for the webpage. He is looking at going to a new Portal site which will have a more user-friendly interface.</p> <p>In reference to PD day, if you supervise other employees, please suggest that they attend the Professional Development trainings. We are paying quite a bit of money and would like to meet the 25 cap that UK wants in the sessions.</p>
Secretary's Report	<p>Secretary Crisp reported the supply balance is \$2,316.83. We purchased name plates and Robert's Rules of Order books.</p>

Committee Reports

Benefits & Compensation	<p>Rep. J. Pace reported that the Benefits and Compensation committee had two issues submitted on the 'Staff Concerns' tab. One was a question about vacation days and with the help of HR we were able to respond to that question. There was also an anonymous question about staff salary equity. HR is working on comprehensive study on faculty/staff salaries at this time.</p> <p>Mr. Gniot said MSU's staff salaries are behind the market generally. This varies according to grade. It would take \$5 million to fix the market value issue. He would like to have the study completed and given to the Cabinet before budget planning time so they can include it in their plans for the next year. He will put together a presentation for the next Staff Congress meeting.</p> <p>Rep. McWain asked about the Segal Study done several years ago. Mr. Gniot said that study showed we were 23% behind market for staff. MSU implemented phase one and two, but could not implement phase three because of budget issues. There has been a new study for faculty salaries recently by the Faculty Compensation Committee. Rep. Dailey asked if staff would get a newer study since there has been a new study for faculty. Mr. Gniot said there would not be a new study. They will use the CUPA</p>
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	<p>(College & University Personnel Association) data on benchmark jobs. CUPA surveys educational institutions and use three points of data: size of institution from a budget standpoint, number of students, and type of institution.</p> <p>Rep. Hunsucker asked if there is a correlation between years of service and mid-point salary. Normally seven years would be considered median.</p> <p>Rep. L. Pace asked if number of years of experience is counted towards years of service. If someone worked at another university doing the same job, would those years of service count? Mr. Gniot said we essentially do that now and it is becoming a serious problem for us.</p> <p>Rep. Lewis asked about new people being hired making as much money as someone who had been in the position for three years. This sort of thing is happening at MSU; we do have compression problems.</p> <p>Rep. Dennis asked if the market ever went down and Mr. Gniot said it could, but not usually. It can stall and last year it didn't move.</p> <p>Mr. Gniot said MSU is looking to include a performance factor when granting raises. 20% of employees should be in a superior performance category. Those people would get a one-time non-recurring bonus in addition to their regular raise. Staff Regent Thacker said this affects retirement. It looks good when you get it, but it hurts down the road when you are ready to retire.</p> <p>Parliamentarian Niles noted that this discussion had been going on for 15 minutes.</p>
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Motion:	To end discussion lasting 15 minutes	
	Proposed: Parliamentarian Niles	Seconded: Rep. Hutchinson
Called for Vote:	Passed	

Credentials & Elections	Rep. L. Pace reported that the committee is still looking for someone to fill a Service/Maintenance category position. If anyone knows of a person who might be interested, please let her know.
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Green Committee	Rep. Bryant had no report, but said he would be scheduling a meeting.
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Staff Issues	<p>Rep. Allen reported that five concerns had been submitted on the 'Staff Concerns' tab on the webpage. Two were handled by the Benefits and Compensation Committee. The other three were anonymous. One concern was discussed during the Executive Committee meeting last week and it was decided it should be read to the group. Chair Gay concurred.</p> <p>I am very concerned with the toxic atmosphere some members of administration are letting prevail in units on</p>
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campus. Personal vendettas and communist attitudes regarding the rights and privileges of employees are prevalent and adding to the air of unrest on campus. If some type of check and balance measure is not put into place, I fear what type of working environment will prevail at MSU. The working environment is nowhere near what it was, say six years ago. All staff members that I associate with say the same thing and are actively looking for other employment. It is a shame that one or two people in positions of authority are driving out a competent workforce at this institution.

The individual did not give their name, so we cannot get back to them. However, atmosphere and morale is something that we have talked about multiple times. The positivity across campus is just not there for everyone.

Vice-Chair Harr suggested that members work with constituents to get specific issues addressed. Remind people when they submit issues, unless it is specific, it cannot be resolved.

Rep. Dennis asked if we could send out another email to our constituents explaining about the 'Staff Concerns' tab and asking for specific concerns. Also, this information can be added to this month's newsletter.

Rep. McWain asked if answers to questions could be put in the newsletter, but Rep. Allen said since the concerns are anonymous, they shouldn't be discussed with the general university population because of the privacy factor.

Rep. Allen also reported that she, Chair Gay, Vice-Chair Harr, and Ann Rathbun from Faculty Senate have been meeting to discuss the possibility of an Ombudsman position. This person would be a liaison for faculty & staff to discuss issues/problems and diffuse situations before they turn into lawsuits. The group is preparing a document to give to the President. This was brought forward as a resolution from Faculty Senate to the Provost last year, but it was turned down by the Provost and the President concurred. The new proposal will provide a cost analysis and rationale behind the proposal. Hopefully, the committee will get to meet with the President and the Provost to discuss their reasons for wanting this position to be funded. Rep. J. Pace said he thought Staff Congress should do a resolution in support of this position.

Regent's Report: Staff Regent Thacker reported that the Board of Regents met on September 20. They ratified personnel actions (awarded tenure to three faculty members), approved PAC 27, 29 & 35 (there were no real changes, just wording, etc.), and approved faculty workload and evaluation plans. They approved two new Bachelor degrees: BA in Strategic Communication and BA in Convergent Media and approved the razing of Downing and Waterfield. A group of past students raised \$25,000.00+ to rename the Student-Athlete Learning Lab to the Dr. Earl J. Bentley Student-Athlete Learning Lab at the old Wellness Center, now the Eagle Center. They looked at enrollment figures for the fall and extended the President's vacation time by five days, which took him to 20 days per year. Staff Regent Thacker was at a disadvantage because he had not seen the President's contract, but he asked to see it. The president gave the board his four personal goals for this year:

- Increase private fund-raising as part of a comprehensive campaign
- Conduct a comprehensive employee benefits review and recommend adjustments as appropriate
- Increase stake holder communication and advocacy with faculty and staff, members of the community and region, governor and members of the general assembly
- Fill key leadership positions

If you have any concerns, let Staff Regent Thacker know and he will be glad to voice your concerns to the Board.

Rep. J. Pace said that the budget looks dire, but with 300 new freshmen, there is a very narrow window of opportunity for salary increases. The budget was not built on 1700 freshmen; it was built on a significantly lower number, so there is opportunity now for a significant change in faculty/staff salaries. We need to save for a rainy day, but we are sitting on a pot of real dollars that could be used for salary increases. Staff Regent Thacker said he thought the President was waiting to hear back from HR on the comprehensive study of faculty/staff salaries.

Human Resources Report: Mr. Gniot is planning to talk with Mike this week about benefits for 2013. HR is planning to keep the same health and dental plans and life insurance will not change. As far as increases, the national trend shows an increase of over 6% on health insurance. Ours is looking good and he has a recommendation that is pretty attractive. We will have a positive enrollment this year, online through Datatel. Everyone must re-enroll. By going through Datatel, the university can get data they need, such as names of beneficiaries and dependents. Open enrollment will be October 22-November 9.

Rep. L. Pace mentioned she has been trying to find general job descriptions/grade levels for positions and cannot find it on the web anymore. She is doing a Job Analysis form and needs comparison information. Mr. Gniot said that information had been moved to PeopleAdmin and individuals can get their own (or people who work for them) grade levels/descriptions. He will check to see if anything can be done to allow employees to view all descriptions/grade levels again.

Rep. J. Pace asked the deadline for employees to use XVAC days. Mr. Gniot said XVAC days must be used by the end of December.

Cabinet Report: Mr. Walters was not present. No report.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Rep. Hutchinson said a couple of her constituents had asked if there could be picnic tables placed in the new green spaces across campus. Staff Regent Thacker suggested she email the request to Mike Walters and he can send the request forward to the appropriate person.

Motion:	That a resolution be drafted to support the Ombudsman position co-sponsored with Faculty Senate	
	Proposed: Rep. J. Pace	Seconded: Rep. Bryant
Called for Vote:	Passed	

Rep. Bryant said a constituent asked if there was someone who could consult on the ergonomics of an office space. Mr. Gniot said employees should contact HR about the need and they will get someone from Workers Compensation to evaluate the work space. Rep. Bryant said another constituent had asked about the possibility of getting Spring Break again. Staff Congress has pursued this issue many times.

The Benefits and Compensation committee did a study of benchmark institutions last year and employees of MSU receive as many or more days off as those institutions. Rep. J. Pace will try to find the data and give it to members to distribute to constituents as the need arises.

Announcements:

- Open House, October 6 and November 3
- October Professional Development Opportunities:
 - Basics of Diversity, October 16, 8:30 am-noon, ADUC 301
 - Resolving Workplace Conflict, October 15, 1:00-4:30 pm, ADUC 301
- Diversity Day, October 20
- Homecoming, October 25-27 (Rep. Allen gave out flyers.)
- Next Staff Congress Meeting, November 5, 1 pm, ADUC 301
- Presidential Election Day, November 6-MSU closed
- CFO/VP Forum, 2:30 pm, today, ADUC 312-Beth Patrick
- CFO/VP Forum, October 3, 2:30 pm, ADUC 301-Dana Smith
- Dedication of Dr. Earl J. Bentley Student-Athlete Learning Lab, Saturday, October 6, 10:30 a.m., Eagle Center (Old Wellness Center)

Motion:	To adjourn	
	Proposed: Rep. J. Pace	Seconded: Rep. L. Pace
Called for Vote:	Passed	

Minutes submitted by: Rhonda Crisp, Secretary