

Staff Concerns – November 2015

Comment/Concern: Amanda Lewis sent the following concern:
Will you please ask them to fill the pothole that is located in the parking lot of the ESB? That is the Education Services Building located next to the jail. Thank you.

Action: Via e-mail, Director of Campus Services Jeremiah Gallegos informed the Staff Issues Chair that MSU grounds had fixed the pothole.

Comment/Concern: I greatly appreciate that someone replaced all the clocks in Ginger Hall. It is unfortunate that they were all replaced right before time change as all clocks are now 1 hour fast.

Action: Via e-mail, Assistant Vice President of Facilities Management Richard Linio stated that a work order is the method to address such an issue.

Comment/Concern: I know the University and President Andrews is all about saving money to better the campus, but a Holiday Bonus would be wonderful this year. I can't explain how much this bonus helped my family and I. Just doesn't seem fair to give it to us for two years straight and then take it away. I know tons of employee's who wished this would happen this year. Don't mean to complain because I'm very thankful for my 15+ years here at MSU and all the wonderful incentives but a bonus sure would be nice. Thank you for reading my comments and your consideration would be appreciated. Thank You.

Action: Via e-mail, Executive Director of Budgets & Financial Planning Teresa Lindgren stated:

There are no plans to provide a mid-year pay supplement this year. Prior to implementation of the salary compensation model that began in fiscal year 2013-14, a mid-year pay supplement of \$750 was provided in December 2010 and again in December 2011. The decision to provide those supplements was based on no recurring salary increases being provided in fiscal years 2009-10 and 2010-11. Additionally, the decision to provide the supplements in each year was contingent upon exceeding enrollment projections for the fall semesters.

Given that recurring salary increases have been provided for the past three years with a cost of over \$6.2 million and that we have experienced enrollment declines in the past two years, a mid-year pay supplement is

not being considered at this time. Please let me know if you have other questions or concerns.

Comment/Concern: HR has announced that there is a 9.9% increase in our health care costs but my monthly payment for health care has increased much more than 9.9%. Can you please have them explain what the actual increases are?

Action: In the December 2015 Staff Congress meeting, HR Director Harold Nally stated that the 9.9% increase reflects Anthem's increase to MSU. Everyone who attended a meeting had the opportunity to ask questions about the increase. We had a \$750,000 deficit from the beginning because that money was cut out of the budget, which created a 10% increase before considering the increase Anthem mandated. This is also a stabilization year—our increases could have been worse. You also have to factor in the 75/25 split implementation in the final overall increase of health care premium costs.

Comment/Concern: As a staff person with kids I had planned to send to MSU, can anyone explain the new \$200.00 MSU Housing application fee?

Action: Director of Housing & Residence Education Chris Summerlin stated via e-mail:

The change from a housing deposit to non-refundable application fee was made based on a number of different concerns which have been identified over the last several years. The purpose of changing from a deposit process to an application fee serves several functions.

1. The deposit refund process will no longer be a concern or issue for applicants/students in whether or not it will be returned based on date of rescinding application or status of room at check-out. Every year there are numerous complaints from parents and prospective students regarding wanting the deposit refunded despite canceling the assignment after the published deadline date or room condition. The fee should eliminate or at least reduce greatly the opportunity for additional charges or fees to be incurred thus reducing potential complaints from those we serve.
2. The application fee will show that applicants are more committed when completing the process of applying for housing. Every summer housing receives approximately 150-200 cancellations after housing assignments have been made for new applicants. These applicants often have no commitment to attending MSU and removing their assignments causes other students to often not get the assignment or

roommate they desired. The assignment pool will now be more concrete and less likely to include students who are just using the housing application as a back-up plan for other options.

3. There will be less opportunity for applying small fees for damages, as part of this fee will cover minor wear and tear to apartments/rooms. Residents have often complained when small repairs need to be made, such as painting, slight holes in walls, etc. The fee will cover most small repairs excluding any major damages which may incur substantial costs.
4. The billing of late cancellation fees will no longer be an issue or added step in cancelling a housing assignment. Likewise, if a prospective student never enrolls then there would be no outstanding bill following their withdrawal. This will allow the billing office to no longer have to refund hundreds of students deposits every summer nor keep students accounts held if small charges need to be applied to accounts. The billing process will be much smoother now for MSU and the students.
5. No late cancellation fee will be needed with change to new application fee. In the past, students who cancelled their assignment lost their deposit and also were charged a \$250 late cancellation fee after the deadline. Under this new application fee, a late cancellation would not be incurred thus leading to less of a financial impact should a student need to not attend MSU.

While the change from a fee may cause some applicants to delay in submitting their materials; it should mean that when applications are received they will be likely new students of MSU. This will assist greatly in projecting actual enrollment and resident occupancy for each term rather than trying to estimate the number of withdrawn applications which may occur every year. The fee will ultimately improve processes for multiple MSU offices and reduce complaints from customers from past processes which often included charges to student accounts.

Thank you,

Chris