

Staff Congress: At-A-Glance

June 04, 2018

Guest Speaker: Tonia Socha-Mower, Interim Director Counseling & Health Services

Interim Director Socha-Mower spoke about MSU's dental clinic services, particularly with regards to employees either losing or having to pay for dental insurance beginning July 1. Her experience began at MSU as grant-funded work to educate people on the importance of oral health. She expressed fear that dental care will become too expensive for employees to afford.

Employees may sign up for the clinic's Smile Plan for dental services. For \$199 per year, employees and their families can receive 2 dental cleanings, 2 fluoride treatments, oral cancer screenings, and other preventative services. Employees may want to consider the Delta Dental plans if they are at higher risk for cavities but the Smile Plan may be the better plan if they are at higher risk for gum issues.

While the Smile Plan is not payroll-deductible, you can use your flex card funds to pay for the services. The Smile Plan can be purchased at any time, not just during open enrollment. Employees may have the easiest time scheduling 6-month check-ups during the summer and winter months, as students returning during the regular semesters tend to fill up the clinic schedule.

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Chair Report: Clarissa Purnell

Chair Purnell reported Dr. Morgan informed the members of the President's Leadership Council that a group working on the film, *London Calling*, would be housed in Normal Hall. \$57,450 will be paid to the University for housing and cleaning services.

Chair Purnell presented framed certificates of appreciation to outgoing Staff Regent Harr and outgoing Staff Congress Representatives Paige McDaniel, Barbara Willoughby, Sheila Barber, Staff Regent Elect Craig Dennis, Louise Cooper, and Josh Taylor. Chair Purnell thanked them for all the work they did in service of the staff of Morehead State University.

Chair Purnell thanked new and returning representatives Tina McWain, Karla Hughes, Krista Utterback, Gabria Sexton, Sharon Cooper, Gardner May, David Litteral, Garrick Ratliff, Jamey Carver, and Rhonda Ferguson for being willing to serve on Staff Congress.

Thanks to our outgoing Staff Congress representatives!



Paige McDaniel, Area 1



Barbara Willoughby, Area 1



Sheila Barber, Area 2



Craig Dennis, Area 2



Louise Cooper, Area 3



Joshua Taylor, Area 4



Outgoing Vice-Chair, Margaret LaFontaine, Area 5



Outgoing Staff Regent, Dr. Shannon Harr

Vice-Chair Report: Clarissa Purnell

As Vice-Chair LaFontaine has retired, Chair Purnell reported there was one Staff Salute:

Staff Salute: Angela Kelsey

Angela is the embodiment of grace under pressure. In the last few months she's had triple her normal workload and she always manages to find time to get things done and on time. She is the glue that holds our office together and I want her to know how much we all appreciate her in UB/UBMS.

Benefits & Compensation: Committee Chair Craig Dennis

* **Committee Chair Dennis** reminded staff that open enrollment for Delta Dental plans was June 1 through June 13. Delta Dental representatives were available for information on Monday, June 4, and will be available on Tuesday, June 12 in Howell-McDowell.

Tonia Socha-Mower added employees are able to enroll in the Smile Plan at any time. Coverage runs from July 1 – June 30.

As an update on the policy website clean-up project, Dennis reported many of the changes the Benefits and Compensation Committee proposed have been made by Karen Napier in OHR.

Credentials & Elections:

* **Representative Dennis** made a motion to elect by acclamation Clarissa Purnell as Chair of Staff Congress and Laura Rucker as Secretary/Treasurer for the 2018-2019 term. Representative Thompson seconded the motion and it was passed by the members of Staff Congress.

Representative Murphy conducted the election for Staff Congress Vice-Chair. Representatives Shana Savard-Hogge and Lora Pace each spoke to their strengths as candidates for the Vice-Chair position and, after a vote, Representative Pace will be Vice-Chair effective July 1.

Sustainability Report:

* **Representative Niehoff** reported a grant has been received to purchase recycling bins for ADUC.

Niehoff also has 20-30 small plastic recycling bins to distribute to any offices or areas on campus. Employees may pick one up in Mignon Tower or contact her for delivery information.

Staff Issues: Committee Chair Louise Cooper

* **Committee Chair Cooper** reported the following staff concerns were submitted since the May 2018 meeting:

****CONCERN (originally submitted 5/10/2018)****

It indicates in PSE-1 Position Responsibility, that 37 1/2 hours a week is a minimum requirement for Exempt employees, and that many assignments may require longer weekly work schedules. My question is, if an Exempt employee, through the course of their job duties or just because they choose to, exceeds 37 1/2 hours during a week, are they entitled to carry that time forward and use it when they choose?

RESPONSE (from Harold Nally):

Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime. For example, an exempt employee who works five (5) hours beyond the normal 37.5 hours will not be paid overtime. Nor is the exempt employee entitled or eligible to bank any hours worked over 37.5 hours.

****CONCERN (submitted 5/14/2018)****

I've noticed a ton of greenery/flowers being planted across campus, which all look great initially. However, after a few days they look neglected and dead. Is anyone responsible for watering flowers after they are planted? The ones directly outside my office looked so terrible I have started watering them myself.

RESPONSE:

Not yet received.

****CONCERN (submitted 5/14/2018)****

If the Board of Regents approves the suspension of our HRA accounts, what would the deadline be for using that money? Would our balances disappear or would our HealthEquity debit cards continue to work until the HRA funds are exhausted?

RESPONSE (from Harold Nally):

If the Board of Regents approves the suspension of monies going to employees' HRA accounts, it will not affect their current HRA balance. The employees' balances will remain in their accounts for use, but future contributions would be suspended.

****CONCERN (submitted 5/16/2018)****

After reading the May SC Newsletter, I was disappointed to learn tuition waivers for MSU employees will only be accepted at MSU. I was hoping to begin a Master's program at ECU this fall (the program is not offered at MSU). I would like to suggest that universities within the state work together towards an employee exchange system so employees are not penalized when trying to obtain a degree not offered at the institution at which they are employed.

RESPONSE (from President Morgan):

Yes, there is some beginning discussion of reciprocal agreements (there are a few already just for the summer of 2018). However, no definitive agreements have been agreed to yet – at least in writing. I am hopeful that over the course of the next month or two that something begins to take shape.

****CONCERN (submitted 5/19/2018)****

I believe that IT should require those holding MSU accounts to change their passwords on regular intervals. This is commonplace at other Universities and workplaces.

RESPONSE (from Chris Howes):

An account management and password policy has been developed and is currently under review. The policy, in accordance with industry best practices, establishes a framework for the MSU account management lifecycle — including regular password updates.

****CONCERN (submitted 5/22/2018)****

With all the layoffs, position eliminations, forced changes from KERS to KTRS and staff being asked to teach as part of their normal load without extra pay why does the President still get \$1600 a month for his vehicle expense and then fill it up with gas at Facilities? Does that help us with performance funding?

RESPONSE (from Staff Regent Harr):

President Morgan's travel expenses on behalf of MSU are covered as part of his employment compensation contract. Also, much of the information submitted in the anonymous concern is inaccurate.

Other Reports

Staff Regent Report: Dr. Shannon Harr

Staff Regent Harr reported the Board of Regents will meet on Thursday, June 7 for a quarterly meeting. The President will recognize several employees for their service. The Board will adopt resolutions of commendation for Regents whose terms are ending, including Paul Goodpaster, Rachel Malone, and Shannon Harr. The Board will vote to approve the awarding of the Founders Award for University Service to retiring English professor Dr. Frances Helphinstine. There will be recommendations to approve operating budgets, the personnel roster for 2018-19, a policy on budget reserves, the financial policy audit, the naming of the practice area at Eagle Trace, the naming of various spaces in ADUC, and a recommendation to raze Butler Hall. There will be reports on Spring semester enrollment numbers as well as on the Kentucky Folk Art Center.

Discussion:

Representative Alan Rucker asked about a vote on the changes to employee HRA accounts. Regent Harr reported the President may ask the Board of Regents to approve a proposal of the Healthcare Taskforce to reduce employer contributions to HRA accounts and discontinue FSA contributions temporarily as a cost-saving measure beginning in January 2019. Representative Rucker expressed the concern that this proposal was not discussed amongst staff or Staff Congress before being presented to the Board, pointing out that the healthcare taskforce, Harold Nally, the President, and now the Board of Regents were the only ones to have seen it. Chair Purnell, who was a member of the taskforce, pointed out the taskforce was made up of both faculty and staff. They were given the specific goal of finding 1.5 million dollars to save. If it was not found in healthcare costs, it may have to come out of personnel. The members of the taskforce were required to maintain strict confidentiality and were asked to return documentation after the work was concluded at the end of each committee meeting. Representative Rucker understood the reasons for finding the savings, but indicated that the continuing cuts to employee benefits with very little communication would only drive more employees away. He fears MSU's ability to recruit and retain high quality employees is suffering, which will affect our students and the future of the University.

Regent Harr reported that other members of the Board of Regents expressed concern about the proposed changes to healthcare benefits. The Board of Regents will not be taking action on the recommendations of the Healthcare Taskforce at the Thursday June 7 meeting. The University has put out an RFP for healthcare insurance to see if the premiums can be lowered. More information will be available in mid to late July. The Board of Regents would not necessarily need to take action on this as it would be left up to administration to decide the best course of action.

Representative Savard-Hogge agreed with the sentiment that better communication with staff is important and that Staff Congress should be in front of the conversation not behind it.

Chair Purnell added that Staff Congress's Executive Council had reached out to the President and Director Nally to get more information about these proposals in order to distribute the information in the May newsletter but that request was denied because the proposals had not been finalized. In mid-May, the Benefits & Compensation Committee, the members of the Staff Congress Executive Council, and Faculty Senate Chair Tallichet were invited to discuss with Dr. Morgan and Director Nally proposed changes to UAR 324.03 (Staff Compensation and Classification) and were subsequently provided an update on dental plans and health insurance.

Representative Pace reminded the group that, in addition to cuts in benefits, staff are also facing increased (and fractionalized) workloads, fewer coworkers to support departmental work, and no raises. She pointed out that some staff being asked to teach are excited about getting into the classroom but some staff are not, which will not be good for our students. Also, changing staff job descriptions so radically without a consistent method of reviewing them seems like a questionable practice.

Faculty Senate Chair, Sue Tallichet pointed out faculty are facing these same issues and expressing similar concerns. She reiterated that staff who are expected to teach courses should contact her or other members of Faculty Senate or faculty in the departments in which they will teach to get support and mentorship.

Representative Collins wondered why there was not an organized training or introduction put into place for these staff. While there will be a mandatory series of training for FYS instructors, there is nothing in place for staff who will teach for academic departments. Tallichet agreed there is reason for concern that department administrators may not provide enough support or guidance to these staff teachers. Chairs Purnell and Tallichet hope to obtain a list of staff who will be teaching for departments in order to more effectively lend support.

New member Karla Hughes questioned the definition of "fractionalized load", pointing out that staff being asked to teach will still be responsible for completing all of their regular duties, with no extra pay. Chair Purnell said it was up to supervisors and divisional vice presidents to decide how the duties would be fractionalized. Doubts and concerns were expressed that supervisors could fairly and consistently

fractionalize someone's work into duties and teaching when the expectation is that all of the work needs to be completed.

There was discussion of a joint resolution between Staff Congress and Faculty Senate to address these issues.

Human Resources Report: Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources

Director Nally was not present to give a report.

Cabinet Report:

No report.

Committee Selections:

Representatives met with their committee groups and new members to elect new committee leadership. Committee membership for 2018-2019 is as follows:

Benefits & Compensation Committee:

Shana Savard-Hogge, Committee Chair

Sabra Lowe, Committee Vice-Chair

Tina McWain

Karla Hughes

Laura Rucker

Jessica Thompson

Gardner May

Andrea Fryman

Clarissa Purnell

Credentials & Elections Committee:

Krys Lynam, Committee Chair

Sherry Surmont, Committee Vice-Chair

Kerry Murphy

Alan Rucker

John Haky

Lora Pace

David Litteral

Jarred Hunt

Amanda Holbrook

Richard Fletcher

Staff Issues Committee:

Mica Collins, Committee Chair

Susan Maxey, Committee Vice-Chair

Joe Hunsucker

Krista Utterback

Gabria Sexton

Garrick Ratliff

Sharon Cooper

Holly Niehoff

Jamey Carver

Rhonda Ferguson

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business to report.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business to report.

CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Monday, June 4: Summer 1 courses begin.
- Friday, June 8: The Star Theater will present the *Cosmic Colors* planetarium program at 2:00 p.m. and the *Laser Zeppelin* laser light show at 3:00 p.m. Show your Eagle ID for free admittance. Enjoy different shows each Friday through June and July at the Star Theater.
- Saturday, June 16: MSU employees, friends, and families are invited to enjoy MSU Day at King's Island. Tickets can be purchased through the Alumni Association online community.
- Friday, June 29: Summer 1 courses end.
- Monday, July 2: Summer 2 courses begin.
- Wednesday, July 4: MSU will close in observance of Independence Day.
- Monday, July 9: The next STAFF CONGRESS meeting will be in Combs Building 413 at 1:00 p.m.
- Don't forget to check www.msueagles.com for upcoming MSU athletic events.

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