

# West Virginia University Staff Council Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2015

8:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Jerry West Lounge – Coliseum

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Present</b>
Baldwin, Joan	Nutrition Outreach Instructor	Extension Services	No*
Baldwin, Larry	Electrical Technician	HSC	Yes
Bise, Linda	Program Assistant II	HSC	No
Bolyard, Emmitt	Purchasing Assistant I	Facilities Management	No
Bremar, Nancy	Nutrition Outreach Instructor	Extension Services	Yes
Bright, Karen	Nutrition Outreach Instructor	Extension Services	Yes
Campolong, Linda	Housekeeper	RFL	Yes
Campolong, Ron	Trade Specialist	Facilities Management	Yes
Crabtree, Joan	Supervisor Campus Services	Facilities Management	Yes
Eddy, Pam	Grants Resources Specialist	Dept. of Medicine	No*
Fletcher, Louise	Traffic Enforcement Officer	Transportation/Parking	No
Hammack, Diana	Administrative Assistant	Deans Office Arts & Sciences	Yes
Martin, Lisa	Special Events Coordinator Senior	Event Management	Yes
Martinelli, Dixie	Office Administrator	Extension Services	Yes
Martinelli, Paul	Program Manager	Extension Services	No*
McCormick, Beth Ann	Program Specialist	Dept. of Pathology	Yes
Morris, Jim	Assistant Vice President	HR Employee Relations	Yes
Wodzinski, Amy	Program Coordinator	FIS	Yes

*\*Excused*

**Submitted By:** Janelle Squires, *Administrative Secretary, Staff Council*

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by the Chair, Lisa Martin, and a quorum was established. The sign in sheet was passed around for members to sign.

### **First Business**

Approval of May Minutes was motioned by Beth Ann. Diana seconded. All in favor and motion was carried.

### **Treasurer's Report**

By Diana Hammack

Diana reported a beginning balance of \$4,161.57 with only one expense of \$21.33 for the phone. That leaves an ending balance of \$4,140.24.

Nancy motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report. Beth Ann seconded. All in favor and motion was carried.

### **Chair's Report**

Lisa began by welcoming a few soon-to-be Staff Council members, Bill Fry and Allen Flanagan, who attended today's meeting. She also thanked those members who took time out to attend their last Staff Council meeting today and extended gratitude for all outgoing members for their service, dedication and contributions they have made over the last two years for the 2013-2015 Staff Council. She hopes they will continue to advocate for our fellow classified staff and encourages them to attend future meetings as well.

Lisa reported on May 27<sup>th</sup> that she, along with Paul, Dixie and Nancy met with President Gee and Jen Fisher, Executive Officer for Policy Development, to propose a solution regarding the 40 hour work week that would benefit all classified staff and the University. They felt this was their last opportunity to make a final plea.

As many studies suggests, giving employees options makes for happier and more productive employees. Their proposal was simple: allow non-exempt or hourly employees a choice to remain at 37.5 per week or go to 40 hours. Exempt or salaried employees would automatically move to the 40 hour work week as would any new hires. New hires in the last six (6) months to a year could also go to the 40 hour work week. Non-exempt employees would be given one last choice; if they choose 37.5 hours and either change positions or get upgraded, that would bump them to the 40 hour work automatically. The goal at the end of three (3) years, is that all employees be phased into the 40 hour work week.

This would mean that two pay and two leave systems would have to be utilized but she believes it would not be impossible to do. The University currently has pay systems used for Temps, Nine (9) Month, Ten (10) Month, Special Assignment, Part-time, Non-classified, and probably more that she is unaware of.

She noted there are many employees eligible to retire over the next three (3) years and there will be some turnover.

The choice wouldn't affect how annual and sick leave are calculated and used. Those choosing to remain 37.5 hour per week will continue to accrue leave at that rate. Those choosing or forced to move to 40 hours, will have their current leave balances adjusted per being a 40 hours per week employee; it would be based on an 8 hour day instead of 7.5 hour day.

President Gee and Jen Fisher assured them that they would give this serious consideration. At this time, she has no update as they are still looking into it.

Lisa reported she had requested Staff Council have access to create online forms on Wufoo.com. This will be used to replace paper forms for collecting information from Tuition Assistance applications, Tuition Scholarship for Children of Classified Staff applications and award nominations. She and Janelle have created the Tuition Assistance and the Tuition Scholarship for Children of Classified Staff applications and are now available on our website but will leave the paper form link for the time being.

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, they requested to meet with Narvel Weese, VP of Finance & Administration, to discuss how the 3% pool of monies will be distributed meritoriously. It has been tentatively scheduled for July 1. She asked the group for input or suggestions she can relay at the meeting.

Linda added that they didn't have any input on raises before when the 3% was across the board and now they are trying to add merit into it. Lisa confirmed that is correct and the 3% will not be across the board. Linda implied if they have to follow code, SB 330 specifically, then supervisors would've had to do annual reviews for three (3) consecutive years.

Jim added they will be sending communication campus-wide informing supervisors that employee evaluations will need to be done around July to mid-August. They will also offer a training program for supervisors. Joan C. stated there is one online through HR. Nancy suggested if we become a meritocracy institution, then there needs to be mandatory training for supervisors.

Jim stated he would look into the SB 330 regarding the annual reviews as he is uncertain if that is in there. Nancy asked Jim how they know which evaluation to do. Jim indicated there are three forms available online: one for employees who have supervisory responsibility with goals; one for individual contributors with goals; and one standard form which is simplified for employees who may not have goals.

### **ACCE (Advisory Council of Classified Employees) Report**

By Paul Martinelli

Paul was unable to attend today's meeting due to fulfilling his duties as the WVU Classified Staff representative attending the ACCE Conference in Flatwoods, June 15-17.

## **BOG (Board of Governors) Report**

By Dixie Martinelli

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, a Facilities and Planning meeting was held and an Audit Committee meeting along with the regular Board meeting was held on June 5<sup>th</sup>. She had conferenced in during the regular meeting which was held at Glade Springs, WV as she had a previously scheduled appointment.

The budget was approved as it has been reported by Narvel. There are more than 7,000 employees eligible for increases. Narvel had stated the 3% raise will not be distributed across the board but rather doled out based on merit and the need to make an individual's pay more competitive with similar positions at other institutions. This increase is scheduled to be implemented in October.

This concerns her as to how the pool of monies will be given out and how much each person will receive based on what criteria. There are many variables that have yet to be considered, that she truly doesn't believe they are ready to give classified staff raises based on merit. As everyone knows, we have good supervisors and we have bad supervisors. We will have people not receive an adequate increase based on an incompetent supervisor and lose even more valuable staff. She believes we need to have a minimum and a maximum increase rate so everyone can receive a substantial increase since we have not received anything in a couple of years. The evaluations that are currently used – or not used – are not a true evaluator of a person who may go above and beyond what is in his or her's job description.

Everyone is excited about Mountain State University opening soon. The name will change and WVU Tech will eventually move to Beckley. She spoke with Barbara Boyd yesterday, who is the BOG representative there, and she stated she feels sorry for some staff; there are some who walk to work or take a bus which will not be available to them once the campus officially moves. Barbara believes with the deterioration of WVU Tech campus, that it is inevitable they would close if they didn't have this chance to move to this facility. She had mentioned that some staff are on board knowing they will have better facilities to work in. Dixie believes in order to keep Tech viable and open, this is the only way to do that. She hopes that something can be developed for the employees that will not be able to drive the distance.

The 40 hour work week has been approved by the Board and the implementation will begin. She must say that we need to be vocal on the importance to remain flexible for staff, as administration said they would, and make sure supervisors are held accountable for any change that they make in an employee's schedule.

Yesterday, she and Lisa attended the ACCE Leadership Meeting. Paul had also attended as well as Ron and Linda. She is still surprised that out of all 23 institutions, that we are still all over the spectrum. As they were sitting there, Paul had showed her a memo from 1978 and as she read over the memo about classified staff struggles, she felt like she was reading it in 2015. Over 30 years later, we are still struggling to become a valuable part of this institution. It would've been nice to say we had it bad back then, however, we can still say that today.

She thinks some of the charge of Staff Council, along with the new incoming members, will be that we have to remain as we have been – very interested in what staff has to do as well as with less money.

Dixie offered to answer any questions. Linda asked if there was a timeframe in which they expect Tech to close. Dixie stated they anticipate it will be close to five years. Linda had spoken with Barbara yesterday and she had told her they were in a 5.5 million deficit and now they are down to a 1.5 million deficit, so Linda was wondering if that would be taken into consideration to keep it open. Dixie doesn't believe that is likely.

Nancy added that some of the larger cities have the bus system you pay a dollar to ride one way; students and employees could take it morning or night. Lisa added the mega bus isn't that cheap – the first person to book a seat pays a dollar and it goes up from there so it can get costly. Dixie indicated the University provide a bus for down there to accommodate the people for a few years until they can get established.

Lisa added that listening to members from other schools at yesterday's meeting, she doesn't know how they've let it go on as long as it has. Some don't have budgets; they do fundraisers to be able to do things. So, we are pretty fortunate in comparison.

Also, one of the BOG reps (from another school) at the meeting yesterday said they refuse to do a classified staff presentation, as WVU does, to the BOG because they believe it creates a conflict of interest.

## ***Committee Reports***

### **Tuition Assistance**

By Amy Wodzinski

Amy reported the Fall 2015 Tuition Assistance applicant roster was completed and sent to our contact person in the Financial Aid office.

Also, the Staff Council Blood Drive is scheduled for June 29 at 10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and will be held on the third floor at One Waterfront Place this month due to scheduling issues but will resume at the Waterfront Place Hotel in August.

### **Parking & Transportation**

By Larry Baldwin

Larry reported the committee doesn't hold meetings in the summer, therefore, has no formal report to share. Lisa commented she had made a few inquiries to Kim Hartsell, Assistant Director, Parking Management, regarding people parking in non-permitted spaces on downtown campus. She believes those particular spots will be made into ADA spaces.

Larry stated he has not heard any parking complaints at the HSC lately. He still finds that those utilizing the online Parking system through MyAccess who are trying to move to another location, including himself, and who currently possess a parking spot, are still having a difficult time. It will say they are either ineligible or that they do not have any options. Joan C. commented she thinks if you already have a parking spot in the system, it will automatically

bump you out. Lisa stated she knows of someone who doesn't have one at all and it says they are ineligible. Larry will make sure to address that issue the next time the committee meets.

Beth Ann added she is still seeing the same personal cars parked in DPS spaces that are not permit or paid spaces. She had reported it to Clement Solomon, Director of Parking Management. She didn't see them there for three days then they were back.

## **Old Business**

Larry relayed that he has recently learned they will now offer an apprenticeship program for Trades Workers held at the HSC per the new management for HVAC, General Trades and Plumbing. He had been told several months ago that it would not be offered there as it was offered downtown.

Diana questioned what happens to those employees whose supervisors have fallen behind with performance evaluations over the past few years with regards to the meritorious raises in October. Lisa advised everyone to make up a list of their questions/concerns and send to Janelle to compile for them to eventually take to Narvel as she cannot answer those.

Amber Tennant, Interim Director, Employee Relations, added she doesn't believe the merit-based pay will be determined by an average of your last three years as she believes it should be based on your current performance over the last twelve months.

Larry asked Jim how they will compose the evaluations; if it will be choices of excellent, good, etc. Jim stated they are currently working on the guidelines. He is not involved in those discussions but believes it will be along the lines of, 'Meets Expectations'; or a 'Needs Improvement', which if you are in a merit-based group and receive that mark, you probably won't get a raise but reiterated that those details are still being worked out.

Jim indicated there are two parts to consider such as what exactly the merit guidelines are and do you need to be in 'Meet Expectations' or higher to receive a merit increase? If you 'Exceed Expectations', do you receive more? Those are the specifics they are looking into.

The performance evaluations forms have been in place for several years so they are not revising those. A few years ago, 75% of managers were trained, they have slowed down on training since then so now there are some managers who still need trained. It will never be a perfect system and there will always be some supervisors who do not give evaluations as needed or have favorites, however, they can't not do this because of a few bad situations that occur.

Lisa added that if someone doesn't agree with their evaluation, they do not have to sign it. Joan C. stated they give you a place to add your comments as well. Jim added the employee's comments will become part of the document even if it's three pages long.

Lisa asked how it all affects the merit raises. Jim explained the supervisor will evaluate the employee's performance, the employee can sign it or not, the next level supervisor will review and sign it (as a quality control check). You may always appeal to the next level management or even file a grievance. Joan C. added you have ten (10) days to comment before it's official and gets filed in HR.

Lisa doesn't think a lot of employees are aware of this information. Amber added they had employee training sessions when the performance management program was implemented three years ago. Joan C. and Lisa suggested those may need done annually. Jim believes they have two or three training sessions a year for supervisors through Training & Development. He said they could put something together for employees in the next week or two.

Diana asked if everybody will get at least a 1% raise even if you have a bad evaluation. Jim confirmed he doesn't know that. There is no guarantee.

Dixie believes that all classified staff should get something such as a minimum or a maximum. Lisa added they could be a very good employee who may not see eye to eye with their supervisor and receive nothing based on a bad evaluation. Dixie believes if they have that mindset then they will lose many good employees. Jim understands that point of view.

Nancy questioned if there will be one form for all WVU or a separate one for Extension, for example. Jim explained there is one standard form but variations of that form. They work with different departments so if one asks for it to be tweaked for it to apply more to their division, then they usually work with them. The form is a tool that should be used for managers and supervisors to talk to employees about their performance. The form is listed on HR's website and there are three (3) that vary from one another but are standardly alike. Amber added, for instance, that the UPD would have a different form with specific criteria because the work they do is so different.

Nancy would like to see a peer support group for classified staff where coworkers can submit letters of recommendation for one another. Jim explained it would be a more complicated system to administer. These are known as 360 degree reviews, peer evaluations or multi-rater feedback and are more complex and difficult to manage. Nancy believes it has to be difficult and complex to be fair. She had spoken with a Chancellor that has been at several universities across the nation and she explained to Nancy that the problem is if a university wants to be a meritocracy, the supervisors have to invest extensive time.

Karen shared that she has had to take time off for various reasons as well as utilize FMLA and feels that her job performance isn't as up to standard because she wasn't there to do the work. She may be one who doesn't get a performance evaluation, not because her supervisor doesn't want to, but there's always a lot going on at her Extension office. If she does get evaluated based on the past year, then it may not be satisfactory. She feels she may be penalized for having to take time off.

Dixie reiterated that is the reason for a minimum and a maximum; you would at least get something.

Dixie asked Jim if they give each department a set amount of money and who determines who gets how much. Jim is unsure how the pool of money is distributed, those details are still being worked out. It will likely be the director or supervisors of each department.

Nancy feels employees should be allowed to evaluate their supervisors, as she has said in the past. Lisa asked the group again to write these thoughts and questions down to pass on.

Ron brought up the time when Sheila Securro, Executive Director of HR, presented the findings on the market study they did a few years ago and if that has been tossed out. Jim explained that was used for the 40 hour work week, merit component, etc. The market survey determined that classified employees were paid, on average, 97.5% of the market. Ron added

that may be true for paygrades 16 and up as Sheila stated. Jim stated on average, putting all the numbers together, that is what the outcome was. Jim said there are portions that are farther off the market than the average, and those at the lower end of the spectrum need to be brought up. Sheila is working on proposals to get those paygrades up.

Ron added in order to be fair and equitable, everyone across the board needs to be at market, not an average. Jim believes if you are satisfactorily performing your job, then you need to be at market and if you aren't then that's a different case.

Dixie doesn't believe the institution is ready for merit; maybe another year. She thinks for this year, they should give a percentage of the pool to all departments and the supervisor of each unit could acknowledge an employee who has gone above his or her's job description by awarding them an extra hundred dollars. Then explain if it continues, next year they could receive a substantial increase once all the perimeters are in place.

She doesn't believe we should be rushing into this and do it wrong. There will be a lot of disgruntled employees.

Larry brought up a President's meeting a few months ago when the group was discussing the 3% pool with Narvel. He explained how the market study had been done and they had found that paygrades 16 (not all the 16 paygrades, but many) and below were way under market while paygrades 17 and above were more but that everyone would be brought up to market. He just feels that we are told that our opinions matter but then told raises will be given based on merit and it doesn't feel like we are one team.

Linda added everyone thinks they're getting the 3% based on the email that was sent out. Jim stated once the guidelines are in place, they can work on providing examples of how the market study works and how it will affect pay increases.

Nancy indicated the President was open to the group's proposal and she feels he appreciated that they brought a solution to the problem. She feels the group, along with the new incoming members, have to charge ourselves with not only compiling a list of questions but possibly holding a few work sessions to come up with a proposal, or a solution, that we feel would be fair and equitable for everyone. Lisa likes the idea but work sessions may have to be via conference calls.

Larry implied how we all now know we will be getting a performance evaluation and some of us may not receive the increase based on that, and then WVU Hospitals posts 400 new job openings offering janitors a \$2,000 stay on bonus. He feels they're trying to get rid of all State employees. Beth Ann stated HSC will eventually be under WVU Hospitals/Ruby Memorial, which is now a private entity.

Dixie doesn't understand why Lisa, as Staff Council Chair, hasn't been asked by Jim to be on the committee reviewing the merit as she feels that would give a staff perspective on the issue. They have asked numerous times to be involved in the process. Jim explained management hasn't asked but he is not involved in those discussions. He doesn't think they are at that point where they can propose a definite at this time per his conversations with Sheila; she is waiting on a discussion with upper administration.

Lisa explained it can be anyone on Staff Council but is afraid it will be too late, based on previous situations, once they are asked to come to the table.

Nancy has done research on what other higher education institutions do and many do the merit based pay increase but their guidelines are published well in advance. She has called and spoke with staff members at these schools and was told this information is available to them for at least nine months to a year. They know what the program is for the coming year well in advance. Jim asked her to send him that information.

She feels this type of scenario would be beneficial to everyone. If there is a poor performing employee who is made aware of an opportunity to improve without punishment, then they most likely will and if not, then they can seek employment elsewhere.

Jim received a response back from Samantha Burwell, HR Senior Policy Analyst, regarding his question about anything in SB 330 or SB 439 that requires three (3) years of consecutive performance reviews before a merit-based raise is given. She replied that she doesn't remember that detail from her previous reviews of either bills. She completed key word searches within the laws and did not find any language of that requirement. She did note that Relative Market Equity (RME) required that each employee class fall within 5% of other employee classes within the organization for the preceding three year period.

Larry said he hasn't heard any more regarding the Ombudsman Committee but feels it needs revisited as well as go over the Minutes to catch anything that has fallen through the cracks. Larry suggested the new Council members read the minutes to get up-to-date on the issues that we have been discussing.

Jim relayed the Faculty Senate Welfare Committee has also brought up the idea of the ombudsperson and have submitted a proposal to the Provost who is in support of it. Lisa stated they have invited Staff Council to their meetings; Jim relayed they had mentioned that to him as well. They will begin meeting again when the Fall semester gets underway. Lisa will get in touch with Marie Abate, who was Chair of that committee.

### **New Business**

Linda brought up in the past when someone marked five, ten, or fifteen years of service, they would receive a pin or something. Some still do but many have not and thinks that is a thoughtful gesture.

Karen said they used to have an awards assembly for years of service. All the departments would ask for the years of service as a benefits eligible employee and you would attend an awards banquet to receive your years of service pin. At one time, it became overwhelming due to each department calculating different ways and ended up getting abandoned. Some departments still do and some don't but they used to do a whole University ceremony.

Dixie stated Staff Council used to organize it and then HR took it over. Karen said the Office of Institutional Advancement used to oversee it. Amy confirmed they worked along with Staff Council and the President's office funded the event.

Lisa is planning the Retreat and at the time will be appointing members to each committee as well as develop some ad-hoc committees so that may be a good one to create.

Linda shared that she knows of some other schools that have a Hallmark Committee where they acknowledge an employee's birthday, years of service or death of a loved one by sending them a card on behalf of the University family. Lisa will make note of that.

Dixie brought up asking the Foundation for extra funding for the Tuition Scholarship for Children of Classified Staff program. If faculty and staff go in together to ask, they will likely agree. Lisa said Narvel is open to discuss this.

Jim asked Lisa to add employee communications to the agenda for the Retreat as they frequently hear HR doesn't communicate well with employees so they are open to hearing some ways to effectively do so.

Larry asked Bill Fry, an incoming member who attended today's meeting, if his group (Maintenance) get on their cell phone or the computer to check ENEWS or their email. Bill explained they're allowed 10-15 minutes in the morning to get their work orders and get out the door. At the end of the day, you're allowed the same 10-15 minutes to try to put your time in for the day. They are not allowed to go through emails. Larry explained that is what he's talking about; these types of employees don't sit in front of a computer to allow them to check email. Lisa asked to bring some solutions for these issues to discuss at the Retreat.

The President's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 22, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. in the PCR. Items on the agenda are as follows:

- Plans for the merit system raises
- Update on the 40 hour work week

Diana motioned to adjourn. Beth Ann seconded. All in favor and meeting adjourned at approximately 11:30 a.m.