
West Virginia University Staff Council Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2017

8:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Mountainlair, Rhododendron Room

| Name | Title | Department | Present |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Baldwin, Joan | Nutrition Outreach Instructor | Extension Services | No* |
| Baldwin, Larry | Trades Specialist Lead II | Physical Plant HSC | Yes |
| Bolin, Julia | Nutrition Outreach Instructor | Extension Service | No* |
| Bremar, Nancy | Nutrition Outreach Instructor | Extension Services | No |
| Crabtree, Joan | Supervisor Campus Services | Facilities Management | Yes |
| Forquer, Burlene | Manager Food Service | Mountainlair Catering | Yes |
| Gill, Yolanda | Administrative Associate | Accessibility & Auxiliary Service | Yes |
| Griffin, Barbara | Developmental Advising Specialist | Academic Degree Programs | Yes |
| Irons, Rusty | Trades Specialist I | Facilities Management | Yes |
| Martin, Lisa | Special Events Coordinator Senior | Event Management | Yes |
| Martinelli, Dixie | Office Administrator | Extension Services | Yes |
| Matuga, Amy | Administrative Associate | Physiology | Yes |
| May, Crystal | Office Administrator Senior | Microbiology | Yes |
| McKinney, Julie | Supervisor Food Service II | Student Life/Mountainlair | Yes |
| Morris, Jim | Assistant Vice President | HR Employee Relations | Yes |
| Musick, Dana | Administrative Secretary Senior | CEHS | Yes |
| Nichols, Melanie | Supervisor Campus Services | Facilities Management | Yes |
| Robinson, Shirley | Administrative Assistant | Academic Affairs Administration | Yes |
| Runyon, Peggy | Campus Police Officer Lead | University Police Department | Yes |
| Stevens, James | PRT Systems Operator | Personal Rapid Transit | Yes |
| Summers, Autumn | Library Associate | Main Library | Yes |
| Torries, Michael | Academic Lab Manager II | Chemistry | Yes |

**Excused*

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

Guest Speakers: Toni Christian, *Director, Benefits Administration*

Sheila Securro, *Executive Director, Talent and Culture*

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the chair, Lisa Martin, and a quorum was established. The sign-in sheet was passed around for members to sign in.

First Business

Approval of October minutes motioned by Crystal. Dixie seconded. All in favor and motion was carried.

Treasurer's Report

By Joan Crabtree, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Joan reported a beginning balance of \$3,752.14 with the following expenses:

-\$3.71 (printing/copying)
-\$21.20 (phone)
-\$10.00 (gas)
-\$29.00 (gas)
-\$171.20 (travel)
-\$357.93 (travel)
-\$19.27 (travel)
-\$34.41 (rental car)
-\$34.41 (rental car)
=\$681.12 total expenses

That leaves an ending balance of \$3,071.02.

Dixie motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report. Burlene seconded. All in favor and motion was carried.

Chair's Report

By Lisa Martin, *Chair*

Lisa wanted to remind the group to RSVP, if they haven't already, to the Holiday Luncheon with the president at Blaney House on December 7 at 11:30 a.m.

We are midway through the 30 day comment period for the Staff Emeritus Status among several other updated Rules.

With regards to the new Reduction in Force (RIF) rule that was approved in September, she knows of four that have recently occurred.

Thanks to the Welfare Committee for coordinating the holiday drive to benefit the Bartlett House.

Advisory Council for Classified Employees (ACCE) Report

By Shirley Robinson, *ACCE Rep.*

Shirley reported there is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow, November 16 at Marshall University Graduate College in Charleston beginning at 9:00 a.m. She is unable to attend but shared some agenda items they will discuss:

- Pros and cons of code revisions to establish a Staff Council; she will provide the link to review that
- Their presentation to the Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) on November 17

If there are any items anyone would like her to address at a meeting, please let her know.

Board of Governors (BOG) Report

By Dixie Martinelli, *BOG Rep.*

Dixie reported they met on October 26 beginning at noon with committee meetings and concluding with a presentation of WV Forward.

On Friday morning, October 27, the board heard all the proposals on the new Rules replacing policies that mainly affect faculty but also had the Staff Emeritus Status proposal presented. There were no objections to the Rule for eligible retirees with at least fifteen (15) years of service. It is now out for the 30 day public comment. Final approval will occur during the December meeting. She thanks Lisa and the other members for diligently working on that.

Most discussions happened during executive session but they did hear a presentation from John Chambers, Executive Chairman and former CEO of Cisco. He outlined how quickly the world is entering into a digital era and how companies are taking over other companies; such as Amazon taking over Walmart sales and how the need to own your own car will become less common with the shared riding.

He also spoke of protein sources and how many of them are not digestive-friendly. He's invested in a better source of protein and hopes it will offered to everyone soon. This pure protein comes from none other than crickets, which he provided samples of sour cream and onion and barbeque flavored crickets for everyone to try.

Guest Speakers

Paid Time Off (PTO) Utilization Statistics

Toni Christian, *Director, Benefits Administration*
Sheila Seccurro, *Executive Director, Talent and Culture*

As of today, we have annual leave, sick leave and holidays as our PTO. Those accrued hours come out on the 15th and the last day of the month. We have twelve paid holidays designated from the governor and additional ones which are sometimes added.

They began reviewing our leave hours a few years ago to ensure we are competitive. Nothing has changed since October 1968.

One concern they've heard numerous times from female new hires is how long they will need to work to pay for their own time off to have a baby; with hopes of not getting sick or needing surgery. They heard from many individuals that we're not as competitive compared to some other industries. They were also told that sick leave usage has increased so they decided to have a closer look at the numbers.

The employees hired before July 1, 2001 that have sick leave conversion, 50% or 100%, to supplement retirement healthcare costs; the 'legacy' group which is comprised of around 1,500 employees, will not be affected. This will only apply to employees hired after July 1, 2001.

They are trying to build something like short-term disability that ensures financial security for the employee. It will likely be based on years of service. This is very common practice in the industry.

The PowerPoint presentation and statistics that Toni provided:

WVU Time Off Program

Employee Leave - Traditional Program

- Annual Leave
- Sick Leave
- Holiday

When was the leave system implemented for the state?

- October 1968

Why?

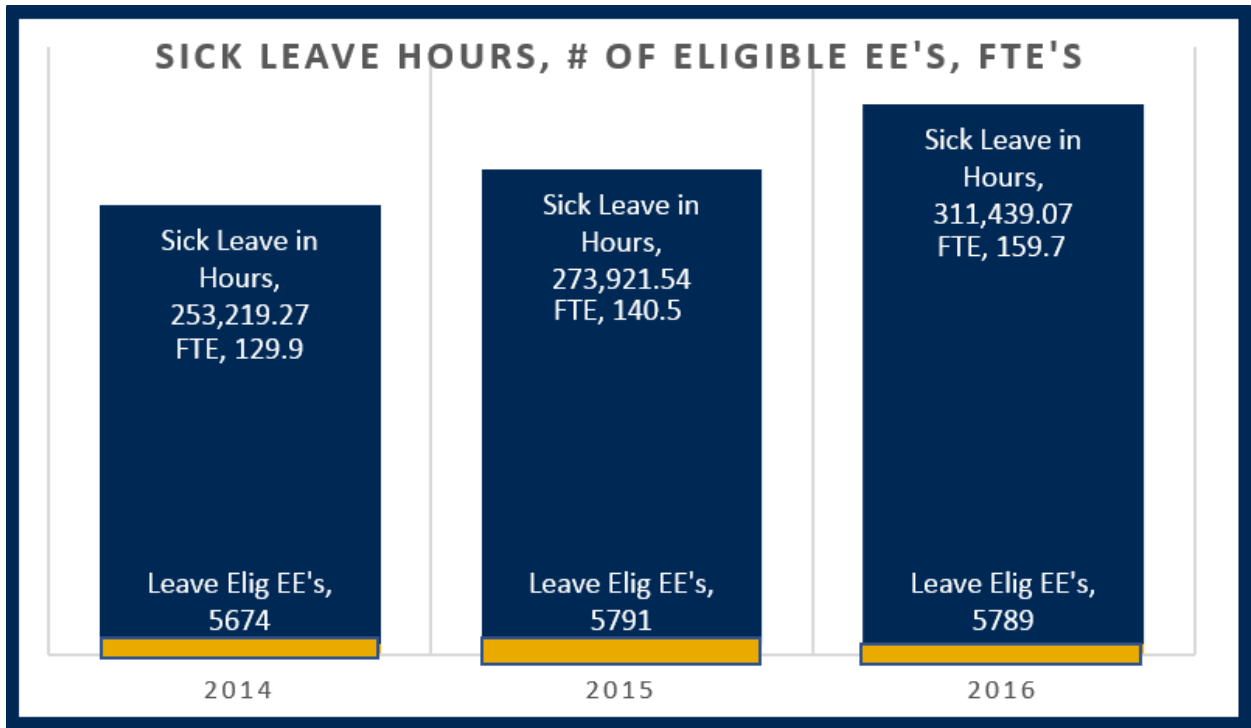
- Not competitive
- Inadequate coverage for extended illness and injury
- Increased cost and utilization

Employees Impacted:

- Employees hired after July 1, 2001

Employees Excluded:

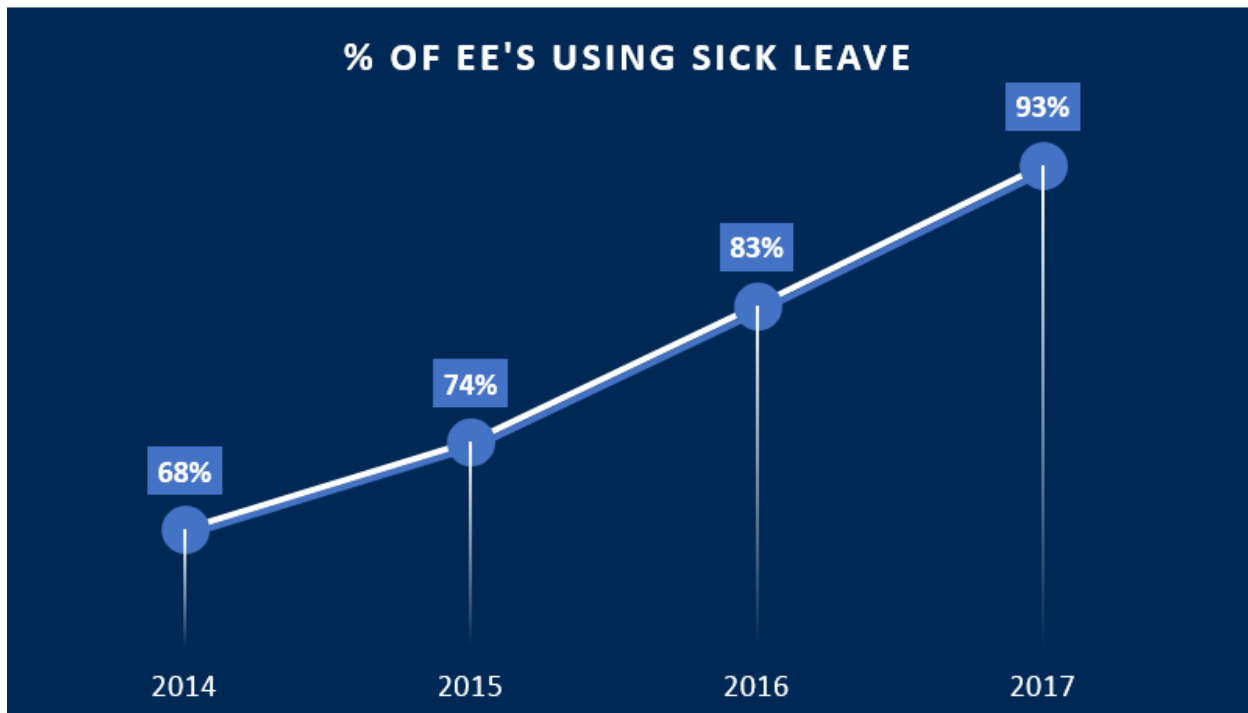
- Employee's that have statutory rights to use accumulated sick leave to purchase retiree PEIA health care benefits and/or retirement service credit (W. VA Code §5-16-13)



How much do we spend on sick leave?

- 2014 -\$6,157,099.20
- 2015 -\$6,645,024.99
- 2016 -\$7,524,746.55





They are looking into ways to convert some of the sick leave hours into something; cashing them in dollar for dollar is not likely but they want to offer a few different choices. They also must look at the tax liability for the employees.

They will be holding some workshops in the near future for employee feedback to get some ideas.

Committee Reports

Legislative Committee

By Lisa Martin, *on behalf of Nancy Bremar, Chair*

Nancy had been corresponding with the chair of Faculty Senate, Matthew Valenti, regarding our shared legislative hand-out. Some items included on it were campus carry, no budget cuts, affordable healthcare options to employees and retention of the \$.01 pop tax to benefit the HSC programs. It has been approved by Rob Alsop, VP for Strategic Initiatives and currently being branded. She will send the draft out to the group before submitting it for printing.

Shirley added she feels the officers at PSC and WVU Tech should also be listed on the hand-out per our One WVU. Lisa did take that into consideration and explained listing the faculty and Staff Council officers took up a substantial amount of space. A consensus of Staff Council agree that listing the leaders at PSC and Tech is preferable and in keeping with the ONE WVU concept.

Jim added that on a federal level, the proposed senate tax bill will affect doctoral granting institutions and their graduate students.

Welfare Committee

By Michael Torries, *Chair*

Mike reported they met on October 24 and discussed employee recognition initiatives. Amy shared a few possible promotional items such as ink pens, lapel pins, magnets, window clings, mouse pads, etc.

They will price out the window clings that display years of service. He spoke with Toni Christian, Director of Benefits Administration, to see if she can provide a rough estimate of employee milestones.

They plan to compile a list of options and present them to the Council.

Special thanks to Lisa Boyles, former Council member, who made up the flyer for the Bartlett House daily living items donation drive that runs November 15 – December 15.

They briefly discussed the ombudsperson for staff but after presenting that during the President's meeting last month, it was determined that the funding isn't there and also that staff have Employee Relations as well as the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Lisa added the issue has actually come up again so she'll keep us posted.

Amy attended the Faculty Senate Welfare Committee meeting but did not bring her notes. Dana will attend the December meeting.

Tuition Assistance

By Barbara Griffin, *Chair*

The Staff Tuition Assistance program will be offered to eligible applicants for the new Winter Intercession that was recently announced. Thanks to Paul Kreider, Associate Provost of Academic Affairs Administration, the Financial Aid office and Registrar's Office for their assistance.

The updated application form is available on our website with more detailed eligibility guidelines.

Old Business

With regards to employee evaluations, Amber confirmed there are less than 100 classified employees that still have not received reviews. They announce deadline dates but keep receiving requests for extensions so they are trying to work with supervisors to ensure that all those employees get a review. They are hoping around the first week of December they can provide a report to the deans and VP's listing supervisors who did not complete their employees' performance reviews, however, they understand some circumstances may have

hindered the process due to someone being on extended leave or employee probationary periods. In the event of a meritorious year, they will be firmer with the deadlines.

Autumn shared that several of her colleagues at Potomac State College received 'exceeds', then their supervisor rescinded them and changed to 'valued'. Amber advised that they should contact her.

Dixie commented it would be nice for HR to be able to see when a supervisor changes something on an employee's evaluation; like an audit trail. Amber explained the system isn't quite that sophisticated. It is software they owned for student evaluations of their professors but this process has proven to be better than the paper evaluations. It is a work in progress.

Amy questioned if our new pay statement would be valid proof of employment because it doesn't have the company header on it. Rusty added he knows someone who was trying to purchase a car and their pay stub wasn't adequate proof of income. Lisa advised you can use your bank statement. Jim said you can always contact HR but understands how that can be an issue.

New Business

Burlene inquired that with many employees retiring this year, if they plan to fill those positions. Dixie said only if it's a critical position. There are several vacant positions in her Extension department and only one got filled.

Jim shared that they've utilized the Voluntary Separation Incentive Plan (VSIP) in the past when reducing staff and faculty. That program expired in July and they are working to get it re-approved by the Joint Committee of Pensions and Retirement in Charleston. That meeting is in December.

Regarding them beginning the RIF process in certain units, Dixie reiterated communication needs improvement. Jim explained they've hired someone to specifically address employee communication.

Lisa suggested they inform supervisors via their supervisor listserv to talk with their employees and give them a heads up once they are aware that a RIF could or will occur. Jim said sometimes supervisors do not know; it could be coming from senior leadership. It is a collaborative effort with budgetary units asking senior leadership to review what positions are critical or non-critical.

Larry said the number of electricians has decreased due to the budget, or they quit, but there are contractors buying materials from their warehouse and doing the jobs right beside them. It seems they'd rather have contractors working to avoid having to provide benefits.

Lisa questions how we justify giving out multiple performance awards, many times to the same person, in lieu of raises in departments as well as these phased retirements. Jim said the award is a one-time cost and it goes along with showing recognition as what they've learned through the culture survey. We must find ways to cut costs and become more efficient if we want to thrive. A few people will be affected by RIFs but overall it's for the greater good.

Autumn asked how much money the University saved from those four positions that were just RIF'd. Jim doesn't have an exact figure but can provide that to her. Amber added there are additional assessments other than the salary such as efficiencies that have accumulated over time that they've not addressed and having the right people to do the right work.

James would also like to know the expense of hiring an outside firm to survey the University's employees regarding how they feel about their employer. Jim believes it was fairly affordable and it's not an ongoing expense.

Peggy shared she's been working with Environmental Health & Safety to address building emergency plans. Communication from them should be forthcoming.

The President's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 27, 2017 beginning at 11:00 a.m. at the Mountainlair, Rhododendron Room. Items on the agenda were determined as follows:

- What did we save in classified staff salaries by the most recent RIFs?
- Contractors are working alongside WVU employees doing some of the same work
- Keeping non-classified employees on phased retirements for upwards of three years
- How many more RIFs should be expected in the near future?
- Is there a numbers goal of how many people will be let go overall?

Adjournment

Dixie motioned to adjourn. Amy seconded. All in favor and meeting adjourned at approximately noon.