
West Virginia University Staff Council Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2018

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	No*
Bolin, Julia	Nutrition Outreach Instructor	Extension Service	No*
Bremar, Nancy	Nutrition Outreach Instructor	Extension Services	Yes
Browne, Thea	Administrative Assistant Senior	Main Library	No*
Crabtree, Joan	Supervisor Campus Services	Facilities Management	No*
Forquer, Burlene	Manager Food Service	Mountainlair Catering	No*
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
Matuga, Amy	Administrative Associate	Physiology	Yes
May, Crystal	Office Administrator Senior	Microbiology	No*
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
Torries, Michael	Academic Lab Manager II	Chemistry	Yes

**Excused*

Guest Speaker: Rob Alsop, *VP for Strategic Initiatives*

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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the chair, Nancy Bremar. Due to road conditions, there were not enough members to form a quorum at the time. The sign-in sheet was passed around for members to sign in.

Additional members had arrived shortly after and quorum was established.

First Business

Shirley had one correction. The ACCE meeting will be held in the Mountaineer Room. The minutes reflected it would be in the Rhododendron Room. Janelle will make that correction.

Approval of February minutes motioned by Lisa with the aforementioned correction. Mike seconded. All in favor and motion was carried.

Treasurer's Report

No report as Joan Crabtree, Secretary/Treasurer, was not able to attend due to call-offs.

Chair's Report

By Nancy Bremar, *Chair*

Nancy reported her first month has been busy and did not realize how many emails she'd receive.

Regarding the WVU main website which has a tab for Faculty & Staff but only provides faculty information, not staff, she had sent a list of links pertaining to staff to University Relations. Someone in the department had replied and said the links are already provided on the website which pertain to both faculty and staff; they aren't sure if staff warrants its own page.

Lisa suggested to reach out to Cathy Orndorff, Director of Digital Services.

She recently attended the HLC (Higher Learning Commission) public forum as well as several other meetings and conference calls.

She encourages everyone to check out the Go Beyond and look around if you haven't already. It is a nice tool for employee recognition.

Neeley Clelland, HR Information Systems Specialist, had emailed her regarding Staff Council having a table at the WVU Benefits & Wellness fair that is scheduled for May 2, 2018 from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. in the Mountainlair Ballrooms. She requested that at least two people staff the table for one hour increments; she will be attending the entire session.

Janelle distributed Staff Council business cards and Staff Council information cards (that we provide to Talent & Culture for New Employee Onboarding) to members to share with their constituents. The updated information cards now feature the list of Council members, their phone number and their sectors.

She feels discouraged about Staff Council learning of items after the fact and decisions are made. We are told we have a seat at the table yet rarely are allowed to taste the food.

She also reported James Stevens and Autumn Summers have both resigned from Staff Council. Autumn took a non-classified position and James has or is leaving WVU. Per Barbara Bodkins, Administrative Assistant Senior, Talent & Culture, there are no other nominees in either of their sectors.

ACCE (Advisory Council for Classified Employees) Report

By Shirley Robinson, *ACCE Rep.*

Shirley was on her way but sent an email to Nancy with the following report:

The group did not meet due to legislation meetings and bills we were tracking. She sent an email out to the group regarding where the bills are in the House.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2018 at WVU in the Mountainlair, Mountaineer Room beginning at 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. She will send the agenda to the group.

There will be a lunch so if you plan to attend, please RSVP via email at least three days prior.

Lisa asked to have them update our Staff Council chair and BOG rep on their website.

BOG (Board of Governors) Report

By Lisa Martin, *BOG Rep.*

Per request, Lisa shared that regarding the 150th Anniversary coins in which the University awarded to faculty and staff a few months ago, there were a total of 135 coins and 36 went to classified staff; she did not count faculty or FEAPS.

Nancy would like the names of the classified staff who received them to send them a congratulatory card on Go Beyond. Lisa suggested to contact Talent & Culture. Jim will get that information.

The Higher Learning Commission was here on March 5th and 6th. She attended the open meetings – all day Monday and the half-a-day meeting on Tuesday.

From what she gathered, they seemed impressed with our efforts for accreditation, which is good for five years.

After Tuesday's meeting, the BOG held a special meeting at 1:30 p.m. for a vote on the new major, Cyber Security in Engineering. The rest of the meeting was executive session.

Jim inquired if the compensation proposal was discussed during open session at their meeting. Lisa does not recall if it was discussed during open session.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 19th and 20th at the WVU Erickson Alumni Center. The April 20th session is when the classified staff presentation is given to the Board. She would like all members to attend and stay afterward for lunch, if possible. She is unsure of what time the

presentation will begin but will find that out and share. Please RSVP to Janelle if you plan to stay for lunch.

She reached to the Staff Council chairs of other divisional campuses as they are usually a part of the presentation and is waiting for their replies.

Committee Reports

Welfare Committee

By Amy Matuga, *Chair*

Amy reported that former committee chair, Michael, had reached out to Rossi Wiles, Deputy General Counsel, regarding vendor sponsorship (likely Coca-Cola) for a classified staff recognition dinner. He had consulted Ethics and they said it was okay for us to reach out to vendors ourselves. The one stipulation is they cannot provide alcohol.

Nancy is concerned with travel reimbursement for Extension staff located in all 55 counties. Lisa advised they don't always need reimbursed for travel if they are willingly coming here for such an event outside of their normal working hours.

Mike looked into Coca-Cola sponsorships and they have an electronic request form. He had begun filling out the form but it asked for the name of a licensed representative in your organization. He will contact Rachel Hays, Associate Director of Purchasing and Payment Services, for further direction.

Jim said our divisional campuses usually hold these types of events of their own so this event should only consist of classified staff on the main campus and Extension.

Amy said she'd like something similar to what WVU Hospitals does. They have an all-day picnic for employees with food and bands in front of the HSC.

They are also pricing employee recognition items. She was corresponding with someone in Talent & Culture who informed her that 239 employees will be recognized with either 5, 10, 15, 20, etc. years of service:

- 75 people with 5 – 6 years of service
- 20 people with 10 – 11 years of service
- 47 people with 25 – 26 years of service
- 29 people with 30 – 31 years of service
- 20 people with 35 – 36 years of service
- 7 people with 40 – 41 years of service
- 1 person with 45 or more years of service

She'd like to just do 2017-2018 together.

Nancy suggested to be mindful of how much time this may take you away from your jobs.

Melanie shared that when she was employed at Ruby Memorial Hospital, they had a gift catalog which listed gifts based on your years of service that you could choose from.

With Autumn leaving and Mike now on the Legislative Committee, if any members wish to assist the Welfare Committee, please feel free. Barbara said the Tuition Assistance Committee has some down-time right now so maybe some of them can help out. Amy shared they meet before the President's meeting each month.

Melanie is concerned that with Autumn leaving and Larry out on Medical Leave, that leaves her, Rusty and Joan C. on the Compensation Committee. With all that is going on with compensation, she's unsure what they should be focusing on.

Jim suggested to meet periodically with Bob Richardson, Director of Compensation Administration, or someone on his team, along with himself and Amber. This will provide them with updates to bring back to Council for input.

Melanie asked if Julie would like to join the Compensation Committee, however, Julie currently serves on the Legislative Committee and wanted to join the Communications ad-hoc Committee but couldn't because of her work load.

Lisa suggested she can be taken off Legislative. She suggested to review committees and re-vamp them so that there are equal amount of members serving on each.

Communications ad-hoc Committee

By Peggy Runyon, *Chair*

Peggy reported they had a good meeting. They discussed their SWOT's (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) to build communication between Staff Council and the rest of the organization.

They compiled a list of items they want to work on. The business cards and information flyers are checked off, which were the top two.

The Facebook Staff Council closed group is up, if you haven't joined yet, please do so.

They discussed starting a classified staff newsletter. She and Thea were gathering newsletters from across campus from different departments to get an idea of what others are doing.

After she had completed a training session the other day, she took a moment to give Staff Council a plug. She and Melanie could not believe how many people had never heard of Staff Council.

She informed them our meetings are open and to attend if they have something they want addressed.

Amy feels our meeting location can pose an issue for some. She has a list of questions from HSC employees; they'd like to come to a meeting but can't get downtown.

Nancy stated that we held a few meetings at the HSC a few years back and only one person outside of Staff Council attended.

Employees can attend to listen on what topics are being discussed but they cannot stand up and ask questions directly. Lisa added if Nancy knows ahead of time of someone's questions, she may then address them during the meeting. Amy asked if they attend, can they hand her their questions on a piece of paper for her to ask. Lisa confirmed yes.

Mike suggested to direct them to our Staff Council listserv, however, it is not anonymous as it will list their email.

Another way to ask a question is to send a letter to the Staff Council office and don't sign it. Then read the minutes from that month.

Nancy and Janelle will discuss other possible locations. Parking at the HSC is an issue for some with no ADA placard as it is a long hike to the building.

Rusty added Facilities Management has a suggestion box. They are never addressed. Amber advised to contact Maria Witt, HR Manager for Facilities and Services. However, it can be difficult to know who to respond to when you are given these inquiries anonymously.

Nancy suggested that since Peggy goes all around campus to talk to others, she can have plenty of the Staff Council information cards to hand out. Some questions we may be able to answer but many of them will likely be HR related in which we will then have to consult Jim and Amber.

Amber suggested to conduct a survey of general topics aimed at classified staff. Wufoo is a good tool as well as Survey Monkey. With the assistance of Talent & Culture, we could obtain a list of classified staff email addresses, although it changes every day. If we know a specific date in which to send out the survey, they can have the list for that day. Janelle may need to contact ITS.

Peggy will craft a survey in the meantime and send out a notice of their next meeting for whoever wishes to attend.

Lisa addressed that we used to have a Transportation & Parking Committee in which a member attended the TPAC (Transportation and Parking Advisory Committee) quarterly meetings to bring back updates. Larry used to serve on that but with him being out, we do not currently have that connection.

Yolanda serves on the committee as well and when she called, there wasn't a meeting coming up. She was advised to contact Jodie Shaffer, Administrative Secretary Senior, Parking Management, for their meeting schedule.

Julie added that before she was elected to Staff Council, she did not know she could come sit at a meeting. She believes there are seeds we can plant, even if a few at a time. The Legislative session is practically over and she's relieved we don't have to wait until June 29th for a budget.

Guest Speaker

Rob Alsop, *VP for Strategic Initiatives*

Budget Update:

The new Classified Staff Compensation Structure, effective March 12, 2018, was determined by taking the results from the studies from 2015 and Cost of Living Adjustments. It can be found at <https://talentandculture.wvu.edu/files/d/eada8e33-4564-4e28-be78-e3bddb3bd47e/classified-staff-compensation-structure-2018.pdf>.

All of the Vice Presidents have been provided a spreadsheet of employees with columns showing where their employees fall in the market; whether they are below 90% of Midpoint or not, and columns for market and critical retention adjustments, along with their pool of money. The VP's must submit their completed documentation to Talent & Culture by March 29th.

Each division/college was given an amount to spend however they see fit. The \$6 million is divided between faculty and staff – around 60% for faculty and 40% for staff. You may ask your dean how much is allotted for staff market adjustments and critical retention.

Midpoint is deemed to be at market; those below 90% of Midpoint will be brought up. Jim added it is what is used to approximate the market rate. If you are between 90-110% of the Midpoint you are considered within the market. The 90% of market is the 25th percentile.

To determine where your paygrade falls under, you take your hourly salary and divide it by the midpoint figure. If you are not eligible for a market increase, you may be eligible for critical retention.

There is not enough money to bring everyone up to the 90% at one time as it would cost at least \$18 million. He believes the merit increase for next year will exceed the 2-2.5% due to the money the state is providing, however, state employees aren't receiving a 5% pay increase. The way that was worded caused a lot of misunderstanding.

Next year, with the merit raises, many employees will receive pay adjustments which will bring them up further in the market. The goal for 2020, is that we reach our cost-saving efforts, little to no appropriations, and increase in enrollment. This will allow us to do another 2-2.5% to keep up with the market.

The VP's are reviewing how they can bring employees who are below the 90% and how they can best distribute the monies. For example, those in the 88% range of Midpoint will likely be brought up to market in FY 2019 so they will focus more on those who are below that.

Critical retention is flexible. For example, an employee is at 75% of market and they only have enough market money to take them up to 82% so they have the choice to use critical retention funds to bring them up to 85%.

Many members voiced that Staff Council should have been informed of this new compensation structure before it became effective. Also, it is confusing trying to read the chart and figure out where you are at market. Rob asked what administration can do to improve communication.

Mike noted this market adjustment is slightly larger than the one for 2012-2015 so that is appreciated.

Lisa suggested a better way to explain to employees how to decipher it and giving visual examples. Also, there are many employees with no access to a computer. Supervisors should be printing this information out and posting near timeclocks.

Melanie questioned how employees will be informed if they will receive a market increase. Rob believes Talent & Culture is working out those details but will find out more information.

Nancy asked who we can direct employees with questions to. Jim advised the HR partners/managers in their units, Employee Relations, and/or Compensation.

Peggy questioned how much performance evaluations are being used, if at all, to determine if an eligible employee will receive a market increase. Rob believes as long as they don't have any 'Needs Improvement'.

Per a past discussion, Amy asked if raises would still take effect April 1. No, we are passed that. He needs to get the specific dateline to determine when raises will take effect for 2019.

Melanie said people keep hearing the "5% across the board" so she asked how can they better explain it to them. Rob explained the Legislature took the average state salary, which is around \$42,000 and took 5% of that, which is \$2,060-\$2,100. For every employee funded by general revenue, they provided \$2,060-\$2,100 for that employee. If you make less than \$42,000, you'd get more than 5%. If you make more than \$42,000, you'd get less than the 5%.

The state did not provide 5% for state employees. They only fund 15-20% of our salaries. Teachers are receiving a \$2,000 raise. Their salaries are set in code, scheduled, based on their level of education/degrees.

Rob continues to serve on the PEIA task force and is hoping to find a better way to provide employees with more a more affordable plan. Their next meeting is April 10th with a presentation from Ted Cheatham, Director of PEIA, giving them more information about the program.

He will work with Erin Newmeyer, Director of Communications and Marketing for Strategic Initiatives, regarding a communication plan and bring it back to Council.

Old Business

With regards to the Staff Emeritus policy, Mike understands it has been approved by the BOG. As he recalls, Staff Council was asked to review it in January. He has not received any suggestions so it appears to be satisfactory as is.

Jim confirmed the President and Staff Emeritus Status, Rule 1.9, became effective February 13, 2018.

Lisa requested to make an exception to the twice a year review of nominees. It was said we would review them in February and August. With February now past, that leaves August. She is asking for an exception to be made for the first application process. The month of May would be a sufficient amount of time for people to submit their recommendation letters.

Amy added with regards to the letter of recommendation from your dean or director, her director has no idea who she is. They only know who they directly work with.

Nancy indicated if you are a 'Valued Performer' then your supervisor should know that and advocate on your behalf.

New Business

Dana said a fellow employee shared with her that she had been pulled into a meeting with the department chair and office manager, and had been informed she was being transitioned from her 12-month position to a 10-month position beginning July 2019. Reason being, there isn't enough for her to do in the summer, even though she's the only one there.

That is a sufficient amount of time to be told but her issue is that during her performance evaluation, there was no mention that there was a problem or that she needed to find more work to do. She then learned they are hiring a whole new position, with a higher paygrade, who will fill in for her when she's not there for those two months.

They did not offer to assist her in finding other work for those two months and told her they understand if she decides to find a job elsewhere. There was no paper work to sign, just a letter signed by upper management in the department.

Also, there was a director, pulled into a meeting, and was told he isn't needed anymore. They aren't replacing him but rather giving the program to another director who oversees a completely different program, is busy enough as it is, and doesn't know how it works.

Another issue, someone in her department is retiring later this year and they don't plan to hire a replacement either. That work will fall back on her and her supervisor. If she is asked to take on an additional program, along with three other programs she works on, she is wondering if she should be, or will be, compensated. Amber said she may ask that her position be reviewed. Volume of work is not a factor in paygrade adjustment; only if your duties significantly change.

Amber and Jim confirmed a move from a 12-month position to a 10-month position doesn't meet the criteria of a Reduction in Force, (RIF). Departmental needs may change. They may decide having someone during the summer isn't the best use of their resources; and they gave her a year's notice.

Nancy inquired if the employee has the option to have their pay and insurance premiums spread out over the course of 12 months. Amber confirmed they do.

Regarding the director's position, employees on an annual appointment typically understand they are subject to reappointment on a yearly basis. The department can decide whether or not to back-fill it based on their budgetary needs.

If Dana has concerns about the program, Amber advised she can speak with the dean.

Barbara, who is an advisor in the RBA program, added she did speak with the dean. She was told there may be other positions available within the college in which she could further explore. She does not want this program to die. There are over 3,000 students in it. They're recruiting employees, firemen, and other types of non-traditional students. An Oakland Raider football player is graduating in May. She's spoken with the Oakland Raiders team and taking the initiative to recruit NFL players.

Nancy shared when she was earning her degree at WVU-P, she had a class with someone who worked on an oil rig and asked him to recruit some of his work buddies.

Peggy added she hopes this program doesn't go away. She and many others have benefitted from it. It's been invaluable.

Jim advised to take their concerns to the provost's office. Amber suggested to obtain letters from alumni of the program who want to continue to see it flourish. Nancy said she knows many graduates of the program that will gladly write letters.

Amy had several questions from coworkers for Jim and Amber:

1. *How do they notify an employee they are being RIF'd?*

Amber explained there is a meeting with the supervisor/manager along with an Employee Relations staff member. They provide information including a copy of the RIF policy. They ask questions and present them with a severance offer. The employee then has an opportunity for a follow-up meeting within five days to discuss if there are any reasons to revisit their initial decision. A final decision is then made.

2. *Which employees will be offered severance packages from WVU? Employees eligible for retirement? Employees in positions eliminated due to the Shared Services? Employees targeted by Reduction-in-Force?*

Any classified employee affected by the RIF will be offered a severance package. There may be instances other than a RIF when an employee will be offered one such as the Voluntary Separation Incentive Plan (VSIP) due to organizational changes. An employee doesn't need to be eligible for retirement to receive any of these offers.

3. *It is understood that severance packages will be tiered. What is the criteria is used to determine what tier and to whom?*

Severance is based on years of service. The minimum is 4 weeks of severance pay. The maximum is 44 weeks based on 20 years of service or more.

4. *What flexibility will be offered for these packages? Remain on payroll or receive a lump sum?*

A severance offer will remain on payroll. A VSIP can be a lump sum.

5. *Will employees receive health insurance and/or other benefits during the severance package period? If so, will it be included in the package or will the employee be given the option of COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act)?*

They are not on the insurance during the severance period. They are during the initial notice period, which is 60 days. Being it's considered a voluntary separation, they will be eligible to continue on their current premium level for three months beyond their separation. They will then be offered COBRA.

6. *During the severance period, is an employee eligible to utilize their sick leave to pay for health insurance at the time of their retirement? Will there still be an option for them after the severance period ends?*

They will likely need to direct this specific question to Benefits Administration. Retirement is separate from the severance package. If they are eligible to retire, they should do it immediately upon termination so there's no break in coverage. Only employees hired prior to July 1, 2001 who are eligible for sick leave conversion will be able to utilize their sick leave for post-retirement benefits.

7. *Is an employee eligible for re-hire if a position becomes available after severance package has been offered and accepted?*

They are eligible to apply for other jobs while receiving severance as long as they did not have any active discipline at the time of the RIF. If they are retired while receiving severance, their severance would cease and they would become an active, paid employee.

8. *Will an employee be able to convert their accumulated sick leave into a pension plan?*

No, but employees can share their ideas with Toni Christian, Director of Benefits Administration. Her unit is currently exploring ideas for sick leave conversion.

9. *With regards to the WVU 150th coins, there will likely be a lot favoritism. Deans and directors don't know all of their staff, only those they directly work with.*

Amber is uncertain what the deans'/directors' criteria is for that. She hopes they ask for input from supervisors. There were several Campus Service Workers who received the coins so she believes they are looking at all levels of employees.

Nancy brought a copy of the *New Employee's Guide for a Successful First Year*, a new handout that is being distributed during New Employee Onboarding.

The President's meeting was scheduled for Monday, March 26, 2018, however, the group could not determine enough agenda items to warrant taking up an hour of his time.

Amy motioned to cancel the President's meeting this month. Mike seconded. All in favor and motion was carried.

Adjournment

Peggy motioned to adjourn. Amy seconded. All in favor and meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.