



STAFF COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2025 | 8:15 a.m. – Noon | Mountainlair, Rhododendron Room | Zoom

Staff Council promotes a positive work environment for all Classified Employees through effectively advocating for our peers in the University’s decision-making process.

Name	Title	Department	Present
Barner, Sylvester	Supervisor Campus Services	FO Operations	No*
Browne, Thea	Administrative Assistant Senior	University Libraries	Yes
Bucklew, Jay	Administrative Associate	Research Integrity & Compliance	Yes
Chittum, Martin	Program Assistant III	College of Creative Arts and Media	Yes
Crabtree, Joan	Manager, Physical Plant II	Auxiliary/Operations	Yes
De Leon, Lian	Special Events Coordinator	CCAM Production and Facilities	Yes
Fletcher, Louise	Traffic Enforcement Officer	Parking Management	Yes
George-Jones, Tara	Program Manager	Global Affairs	No*
Joplin, Michael	Manager Physical Plant II	Auxiliary Operations	No*
Lemine, Matthew (Brett)	Trades Specialist Lead II	FO Maintenance	Yes
Leshner, Ryan	PRT Electronics Specialist I	AUX Personal Rapid Transit	No*
Michael, Louise	Campus Safety Officer	University Police	Yes
Moore, Valerie	Academic Lab Manager II	SOM Pathology Anatomy & Lab Med	No
Rakowski, Caty	Program Assistant II	Libraries	Yes
Lautar Rhodes, Brooke	Administrative Associate	SOM Physiology & Pharmacology	Yes
Robinson, Shirley	Administrative Assistant	Academic Affairs Admin.	Yes
Seime, Sarah	Director, HR Partners	T&C, Employee Relations	Yes
Stewart, Dianne	Administrative Associate	Engineering & Mineral Resources	Yes
Toothman, Brandy	Program Specialist	SON	Yes

**Excused*

Also in Attendance:

Priscilla Minter, Administrative Assistant, BE Finance and Administration
 Tara Robbins, Program Coordinator NC, AS Geology and Geography

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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the chair, Shirley Robinson, at 8:28 a.m., and a quorum was established by roll call.

First Business

Approval of December minutes motioned by Thea. Caty seconded. All in favor and motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

By Joan Crabtree, Secretary/Treasurer

Joan reported a beginning balance of \$559.55 with the following expenses:

-\$21.20 (telephone)

-\$20.00 (name plate for Paul R. Martinelli Classified Staff State Recognition Award)

= \$41.20 total expenses

That leaves an ending balance of \$518.35.

Approval of Treasurer's Report motioned by Thea. Louise M. seconded. All in favor and motion carried.

Chair's Report

By Shirley Robinson

Shirley reported that she attended the Faculty Senate meeting. She shared her notes concerning legislative updates from Travis Mollohan with the group.

She spoke with Jason Gross, Advisory Council of Faculty member, and he will be one of our main contacts for the Legislative Committee along with Travis Mollohan and Dan Kimble in Government Relations. Travis sent an email update from his visit to Charleston. Jay will provide more information under the Legislative Committee report.

Board of Governors (BOG) Report

By Dianne Stewart, BOG Classified Staff Representative

Dianne shared their next meeting is February 20.

Committee Reports

Legislative

By Jay Bucklew, Chair

Jay reported that Travis sent an update from the Legislature:

- He, along with President Benson and their team, had great conversations on the first day of session.
- Governor Morrissey introduced its budget to the legislature from last year's final appropriation numbers – WVU is receiving \$4.8 million more.
- The governor decreased all state agencies by 2% but also provided a 3% pay increase, adjusted line items for PEIA employer cost increases, and provided the funding formula performance appropriation.
- WVU is in an excellent starting position.

Jay reported the Legislative Committee identified their top three charges:

- To review, research and inform Staff Council on issues that are pending executive legislative action that could affect staff and employees (led by Travis Mollohan, Dan Kimble, and Jason Gross).
- He is working on getting a link to the key members of the executive and legislative branches of the state government.
- He will work on the updates to the legislative brochure and share with the committee.

Compensation

By Thea Browne, Chair

Thea reported she and Lian discussed talking to HR and Compensation regarding reviewing the degree requirements of certain positions; maybe a point system based on WVU years of service/experience.

Staff Council Scholarship Committee

By Brandy Toothman, Chair

Brandy reported there aren't any changes and those who qualified received the award.

Thea is hoping to do a targeted letter regarding the scholarship program before the Day of Giving.

Welfare

By Brandy Toothman, Chair

Brandy reported some ideas they discussed:

- Cook dinner for families staying at the Rosenbaum Family House
- Helping to distribute food at Empty Bowls
- Staff Council table at a Wellness Benefits Fair

STAAF Welfare Ad-hoc Committee

Tara Robbins, Program Coordinator NC, AS Geology and Geography, serves on the STAAF ad-hoc committee and provided an update on the Staff Council cookbook, "Savor the Flavors of WVU". All proceeds will be donated to the fund for the Staff Council Scholarship Program.

They have received five entries thus far. Janelle has sent out an email to our sector listservs and Shirley plans to discuss with the deans and to share on the faculty listserv.

Sarah offered to assist with the cookbook design and branding.

Shirley shared they also plan to have a staff day at the WVU Baseball game against Houston. The first fifty individuals to purchase tickets will receive a Mountaineer towel. More communication will be forthcoming.

Shirley added that the coat drive was a success. Those who applied were able to receive new coats, gloves, and hats. They donated the leftover items to St. John's Parrish.

Student Retention

By Shirley Robinson

Shirley reported the Student Government Association representatives will join us next month.

Sustainability

By Martin Chittum, Classified Staff Council Rep.

Martin shared that he is waiting to hear from the Sustainability team regarding meetings.

Staff Council Newsletter

By Martin Chittum, Editor and Thea Browne, Co-Editor

Thea reported Martin designed the cover and they will now discuss content.

Blood Drive

Shirley shared that Mike is going to contact Ben Wilson regarding his idea about a blood drive.

Athletics Council

By Thea Browne, Classified Staff Council Representative

Thea shared they have not met.

President's Meeting

The meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 26, 2026 beginning at noon, via Zoom. Agenda items were as follows:

1. We've been thinking about our hiring and retention challenges, especially in areas like Facilities where we're losing good people to the private sector. It seems like we're spending a lot on external recruitment while overlooking talent we already have.

We're wondering if you'd be open to piloting some internal-first strategies? A few things we've discussed: Could we revisit degree requirements for roles where they might not be necessary—where equivalent experience could count instead? Could we create some upskilling tracks so current employees can train for the next level here, rather than leaving to grow elsewhere? Could we start a mentoring program? And would you consider letting us form a small working group—maybe pulling in folks from IT, Facilities, frontline staff—to identify the actual bottlenecks in our hiring process?

We think addressing wage compression and investing in the people already here could save us significant turnover costs and build stability. Would you be willing to try something like this as a pilot in one division to see if it works?

2. In regard to the activities of the Sustainability Committees at WVU, we would like to ask you to consider the formation of a centralized mechanism with the purpose of facilitating the communication and coordination of ideas, proposals and projects of said committees with the appropriate institutional entities, such as the Facilities Planning Group.

This would also serve as a "meeting point" for the Student, Faculty Senate and Staff Council Sustainability Committees to communicate with one another, as well as with Facilities Planning, et al. As it stands now, there isn't a formal mechanism for a Sustainability Committee to coordinate projects with Facilities Planning, which leads to potential situations such as a recent one where the Student Sustainability Committee received grant money to install solar panels on campus, but pursued this without having any place to install them, and as of now, have yet to secure permission for a suitable place.

Our hope would be that this would avoid such situations, which seem inevitable, given that most ambitious sustainability projects would necessitate coordination with the Planning Group.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Thea. Brandy seconded. All in favor and meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.