



STAFF COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

December 17, 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	Yes
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	No*
De Leon, Lian	Special Events Coordinator	CCAM Production and Facilities	Yes
Fletcher, Louise	Traffic Enforcement Officer	Parking Management	No*
George-Jones, Tara	Program Manager	Global Affairs	Yes
Joplin, Michael	Manager Physical Plant II	Auxiliary Operations	Yes
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	No*
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:

Sean Manning, University Communications Specialist Senior, UR

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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the chair, Shirley Robinson, at 8:29 a.m., and a quorum was established by roll call.

First Business

Approval of November minutes motioned by Jay. Louise M. seconded. All in favor and motion carried.

Shirley thanked those who were able to attend the ceremony to present the Paul R. Martinelli Classified Staff State Recognition Award to Paul at the Harmony at Morgantown in November.

She also thanked Martin for taking photos. She has shared those photos with Dixie, Paul's wife, and plans to create a photo album to present to Paul from Staff Council.

Treasurer's Report

By Caty Rakowski, on behalf of Joan Crabtree, Secretary/Treasurer

Caty reported a beginning balance of \$640.75 with following expenses:

-\$21.20 (Telephone)

-\$60.00 (Paul R. Martinelli Classified Staff State Recognition Award)

= \$81.20 total expenses

That leaves an ending balance of \$559.55.

Approval of Treasurer's Report motioned by Jay. Dianne seconded. All in favor and motion carried.

Chair's Report

By Shirley Robinson

Shirley reported that she attended the Faculty Senate meeting.

Advisory Council of Classified Employees (ACCE) Report

By Tara George-Jones, Classified Staff Council Representative

Tara does not have a report. The meeting was cancelled due to weather, childcare issues, etc.

Board of Governors (BOG) Report

By Dianne Stewart, Classified Staff Representative

Dianne shared they will meet on Friday.

Committee Reports

Legislative

By Jay Bucklew, Chair

Jay reported that they did not meet this month. The draft legislative brochure is with Travis Mollohan and Dan Kimble in Government Relations to provide action items concerning WVU.

Compensation

By Thea Browne, Chair

Thea shared that they will meet later this morning.

Student Retention

By Shirley Robinson

Shirley has not been able to meet with the SGA representatives. They will be in contact after the new year.

Sustainability

By Martin Chittum, Classified Staff Council Rep.

Martin is awaiting further information from the Sustainability team regarding the meetings.

Staff Council Newsletter

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

Martin and Thea have not met recently. Martin shared a copy of the front page of the newsletter with Shirley.

Blood Drive

By Michael Joplin, Chair

Mike reported that they have tried to do a blood drive challenge again, but the schools they have reached out to have not been able to.

He would like to do an internal blood drive challenge within WVU.

Athletics Council

By Thea Browne, Classified Staff Council Representative

Thea shared they have not met.

Old Business

Shirley provided a reference sheet to each member listing their committee roles and responsibilities.

There was discussion regarding agenda items, when they are to be submitted and the allowance of bringing up an item during the meeting. Shirley asked Janelle to include “agenda items from the floor” to the agenda going forward.

New Business

Item from the floor:

Dianne had someone approach her about the \$20 tag for the front plate that you must purchase if you want to back your car into a space. Council member, Louise Fletcher, who works in Parking, was not present at the meeting to provide more information.

Day of Giving 2026 Ideas and Challenges:

The Day of Giving will be held in March and Thea has some ideas for challenges. One is to approach President Benson to match money that the deans of each college would give. Send letters to deans explaining that staff who work in their colleges use this scholarship to be better employees.

She is corresponding with someone from the WVU Foundation, and they told her not many people know about the Staff Council Scholarship, so this is an opportunity for those who work at the Foundation to ask donors and alumni.

Tara suggested asking the Registrar’s Office for a list of staff who are registered for a class so we can contact them to let them know about the scholarship if they are not aware. Thea will reach out to the Registrar’s Office.

Staff Council goals from the retreat:

Sarah reviewed the list of action items that were determined during the Staff Council retreat in July and where the Council is.

- Increasing staff engagement with council – newsletter in the works
- Setting up tables on campuses to represent Staff Council
- Organize and advertise informal events to build rapport, such as meet and greets, actively encourage new members to participate in meetings, projects, and committees
- Website updated with headshots of new members and member biographies – need headshots of a few new members
- Improving communication and transparency at state and university level – we are monitoring legislative sessions and university policy change; Tara serves as the ACCE rep and Dianne serves as the BOG rep
- Think proactively about potential legislative or administrative changes and their impact
- Organize in-person or email campaigns to share legislative updates and impacts with staff
- Invite local delegates to speak or attend council meetings – Travis Molloy and Dan Kimble in Government Relations meet with the legislative committee – have them speak to the group regularly during monthly meetings
- When speaking about areas of concern with staff, document key takeaways and use those stories to illustrate the human impact of institutional decisions – just discussed parking today
- Take advantage of meetings with the president by preparing key talking points, personal stories, or data – we meet with the president monthly
- Supporting our staff and their career mobility and development – Compensation Committee action item
- Identifying positions that have degree requirements not directly tied to essential job functions
- Conduct a review of job descriptions and qualifications, and researching best practices from peer institutions – Compensation Committee
- Present findings to Talent and Culture to evaluate alternatives to degree requirements – Compensation Committee
- Completed the Strengths assessment with the Purpose Center – using the resources available
- Highlight and promote internal job postings to staff – newsletter
- Conduct a staff-wide survey to determine what non-financial benefits or perks are most beneficial
- Organize and offer engagement activities to build morale, i.e., staff mixers, appreciation events – the ad-hoc STAAF Committee
- Talent and Culture will be bringing new employee orientation back on site – possibly rotating council members to come during the end to represent SC and explaining what classified staff is
- Collaborate with President Benson and leadership to connect student retention efforts to staff compensation advocacy; make the case that improved staff pay supports institutional success and use stories and data to make the connection – provided feedback to Mario Barge, VP of Talent and Culture

Sarah also shared that staff development with the Leadership and Organizational Development offers the Leading Forward Series which is open to everyone. It is two hours and they validate parking.

They are launching a book club in collaboration with the library and with Thea's assistance. Hannah Stillman, Senior Training and Development Specialist, Leadership and Development, is facilitating the book club.

Members broke into working groups to discuss their committees and to review goals from the retreat before having a holiday cookie exchange.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Thea. Jay seconded. All in favor and meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.