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*West Virginia University Staff Council Meeting Minutes*

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February 15, 2017

8:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Evansdale Library, Room 234

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Present</b>
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	Yes
Boyles, Lisa	Human Resources Assistant I	Human Resources	Yes
Bremar, Nancy	Nutrition Outreach Instructor	Extension Services	Yes
Campolong, Linda	Housekeeper	RFL	No*
Campolong, Ron	Trades Specialist I	Facilities Management	No*
Crabtree, Joan	Supervisor Campus Services	Facilities Management	Yes
Driscole, Robert	Forest Manager	Forestry	No*
Forquer, Burlene	Manager Food Service	Mountainlair Catering	No*
Friend, Rebecca	Executive Assistant	Office of Global Affairs	No*
Fry, William	Trades Specialist Lead II	Facilities Management	No
Griffin, Barbara	Developmental Advising Specialist	Academic Degree Programs	Yes
Higgins, Mary	Administrative Assistant	Special Education	Yes
Hunt, Lisa	Administrative Assistant	Dean's 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	Yes
McCracken, Judi	Library Associate	Main Library	Yes
Morris, Jim	Assistant Vice President	HR Employee Relations	Yes
Steadman, Sherry	Library Associate	Main Library	Yes
Torries, Michael	Academic Lab Manager II	Chemistry	Yes

*\*Excused*

**Guest Speakers:** Cris DeBord, *VP for Talent & Culture – Human Resources*

*Barbara Bodkins, Operations Coordinator – Human Resources*

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

## **Call to Order**

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

## **First Business**

Approval of January minutes motioned by Paul. Nancy seconded. All in favor and motion was carried.

## **Treasurer's Report**

By Lisa Boyles, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Lisa reported a beginning balance of \$3,152.62. Expenditures are as follows:

- 21.20 (phone)
- 48.00 (stamps & envelopes for Legislative Brochure mailings)
- 4.04 (printing/copying)
- 870.48 (travel)

That leaves an ending balance of \$2,208.90.

Dixie motioned for approval of Treasurer's Report. Nancy seconded. All in favor and motion was carried.

## **Chair's Report**

By Lisa Martin, *Chair*

She, along with Paul, Dixie and Nancy, met with Rob Alsop, VP for Legal, Government and Entrepreneurial Engagement, to discuss legislative items. More on that during the Legislative Committee report.

She and Mike had met with Jim to further discuss the Classified Staff Emeritus Policy proposal. The parking permit privilege is currently being researched. She is uncertain if the tuition assistance will be offered as part of the policy. Janelle has contacted someone at the WVU Foundation to find out if any restrictions would apply. Lisa would like to see Classified Staff Emeritus be allowed to utilize what is currently offered to staff. From what we've been informed, there does not seem to be any issues with that so we would need to revise our bylaws to include this.

Per Lisa's email to the group requesting input regarding the Bumping Rights policy, only one person had responded. She encourages everyone to read up on what exactly it is if they've not already done so. She provided the link in the email. Paul added he had previously sent out that information to the group as well.

Lisa, Paul, Dixie and Nancy are scheduled to visit Charleston tomorrow to meet with legislators.

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

By Paul Martinelli, ACCE Representative

Paul reported they met on January 25<sup>th</sup> at the Pierpont Community & Technical College in Fairmont, WV. James Griffin, Chairman of Pierpont BOG, addressed the group. He gave information about what all they offer there such as aviation classes and a culinary school. Also, their graduate retention rate is close to 100%. Paul found that to be very impressive.

Around 20 members were in attendance that morning and by 3:00 p.m. only 12 remained. It seems the same topics are talked about at every meeting. He and few other members don't understand why they won't allow telephone conference calls.

Bruce Cottrill, HEPC (Higher Education Policy Commission) Director of Classification and Compensation, attended and Paul had noted a few of his comments:

- Market-based data will be used non-stop on all ratings
- Paygrades 7 and above are being paid at market level
- PIQ's (Position Information Questionnaire) must be updated on all campuses
- They still have not paid Mercer the \$15,000 because they did not complete the job they were supposed to do

There was also some discussion about a new company that is being considered for the north central region this summer and will provide 600 jobs.

Paul and Lisa will be leaving early today to attend a Selection Committee meeting for the Order of Vandalia award – the highest honor that is granted by WVU.

The ACCE is scheduled to meet here at WVU on May 18, 2017.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2017 at Marshall University Graduate College in Charleston, WV beginning at 9:00 a.m.

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

By Dixie Martinelli, *BOG Representative*

Dixie reported they met February 9-10. On a side note, she wanted to relay that whoever is elected for this position, there is a lot of reading required. A typical meeting day is usually a Thursday beginning at 11:00 a.m. until almost 8:00 p.m. and it is non-stop. The following Friday is usually from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. It is a very intense two-day meeting process.

As an institution, we must find ways to cut our budget as we cannot continue to receive budget cuts from the state and not cut our own. Several ideas have been discussed and some have already been implemented such as the Mountaineer Marketplace which has reportedly saved a significant amount in credit card purchases.

As Lisa mentioned earlier, they had recently met with Rob Alsop, VP for Legal, Government and Entrepreneurial Engagement. Subsequently, he presented a proposal to the board called the Freedom from Legislation. This will ask the legislature for freedom from the Human Resource legislation. This will "empower the institution with the authority relating to personnel decisions

on their campuses and enable them to facilitate the implementation of contemporary programs and practices to reward and incentivize performance and enhance employee engagement.” The institution would develop its own classification and compensation system; meaning all the mandatory and statutory provisions dictating hiring at the HEPC level would be eliminated. Code provisions will be amended to clarify the HEPC duties and institutional duties.

As of now, 75% of the workforce at a higher education institution needs to be classified staff. As she understands, classified staff will be hourly and everyone else will be non-classified. These proposed changes will affect how classified staff will be hired, retained and managed.

There are also other elements in the bill that will allow us to write our own paychecks. The HSC already have the capability.

This will also mean the Bumping Rights will be eliminated. For example, if a senior employee is laid off, they could be provided with a severance package and not be eligible for bumping. For every person that is bumped, it creates a snowball effect.

Nancy added there was some discussion that new hires after July 1 will have a certain amount of paid time off (PTO) and not accrue sick leave and annual leave. Dixie wants us to be ensured with a statement that we will be grandfathered in with our current sick/annual leave hours.

There is already a substantial amount of support for this proposed legislation in Charleston. We, as classified staff, need to be part of the decision making and be in the know as this directly affects us. We want to be sure that classified staff will be treated fairly because we still are the foundation of this institution.

## ***Guest Speakers***

### **Climate Survey**

*Cris DeBord, VP for Talent & Culture – Human Resources*

The Climate (Culture) Survey was conducted in October 2016. It was distributed to just over 2,000 employees aiming for a 50% return rate from three constituencies: senior leaders; faculty; and classified/non-classified staff (along with all the other types of positions within the University). Cris explained the senior leaders have been given a deck of the results to cover it with their direct reports by the end of February. They hope to have that information available to distribute by the end of March. He has the deck with the talking points that he will be going over today.

Last summer, they had communicated the three strategic pillars: Education; Healthcare; and Prosperity. Culture can affect these objectives. Employee engagement enhances productivity; decreases absenteeism; and produces a higher retention rate which are all factors in students' success. In order to reshape our culture, everyone will need to determine what exactly they want it to be. Culture can either just happen or it can be reshaped.

The strengths and opportunities were identified as the same among all three groups but to varying degrees; such as senior leaders were most optimistic in terms of what the strengths were and faculty was the least optimistic.

The 'Strengths' were:

- Sense of pride – our greatest strength across the board
- Student focus
- Fun to be around – people like their coworkers

The 'Opportunities' were:

- Empowerment
- Appreciation and recognition
- Coaching and feedback

Along with this strategy, there will be three groups who will pilot a recognition platform. With this program, you will be able to send cards online via your smartphone or computer in which you can recognize someone for living our values. They are currently working on shaping our mission statement and values and will hold three more sessions around campus for input. They hope to have that complete by mid-March.

The WVU Recognition Wall will be similar to a Facebook wall in which you can post a card to someone's personal wall and/or a public wall and earn points. This vendor has the ability to track those points in which you can exchange for WVU swag. Your supervisor will be notified when you are recognized/receive a card, however, this will not be tied into merit. Climbing Higher will also be included on this electronic platform.

Lisa would like to invite Sheila Securro, Executive Director of Compensation, to next month's meeting to give more information about this program as she was unaware how much it has progressed. She had only been informed of and attended one meeting; she was unaware of their subsequent meetings and finalization of this. Cris explained Sheila's communication plan included coming back to Staff Council to discuss it.

They've addressed leadership capability (which ties into Empowerment) in areas such as Facilities Management and Student Services/Student Life. Those who held supervisory positions who did not show they possess the capability to lead have slowly been removed from those leadership roles. They've developed a selection tool that is centered on motivational-based interviewing and training those who are hiring. They want the leaders to utilize these tools and take control over their own units.

Lisa gave a scenario of there are those supervisors who are in leadership roles who maybe don't have all the qualities they should have, then there could be some employees, some hidden gems, that just need that opportunity for additional training to take on that role. Cris explained not all supervisory positions require previous supervisory experience; otherwise no one would ever qualify. At some point, everyone was a first-time supervisor.

Jim added it is also the employee's responsibility to educate themselves by utilizing our Tuition Assistance program to earn a degree as well as seek additional job duties for more experience.

Lisa H. added she took all the MLA classes she could but now it is no longer available. It seems if you are not in a supervisory role, your options for advancement are very limited. Cris explained if resources weren't an issue, he would be all for a pipeline program.

Dixie shared that she is tied to a very rigid set of rules as a supervisor of an Extension office in that if one of her employees went above and beyond that week working twelve hour days, she would like to tell them to take off Friday afternoon and not turn in any leave, but she can't; it would be comp time per their HR unit.

Judi mentioned the HR Training & Development site isn't very user friendly. It requires a different username/password, not your WVU ID. Then, you have to call them for your password and it depends on their office hours and you cannot even view what classes are available until you complete your login information. Jim will look into that issue.

The survey was for a baseline and they plan to conduct another culture survey in the Fall.

### **Staff Council Election**

Barbara Bodkins, *Operations Coordinator – Human Resources*

Among her numerous other duties, Barbara coordinates the Staff Council elections. Today is the first day to make nominations for Staff Council 2017-2019 members. The election process is more streamlined now with the allowance of online voting per our revised bylaws. Barbara informed the group of the following:

- Communication went out today in ENEWS
- 120 flyers were distributed to post all around campus
- It is featured on MyAccess homepage
- A button link is displayed on HR's homepage
- The nomination form is featured on the Employee Relations page with the option to download the PDF form to fill out, print off and send to her
- She will be sending out an email to all benefits eligible classified staff that are permitted to be involved in this process (there is a separate listserv for WVU Tech, Potomac State and Charleston HSC classified staff since they are only permitted to nominate/vote on the BOG and ACCE representatives)
- Once she receives nominations, she verifies that they are classified staff employees. (she advised to nominate yourself; it's not necessary to have another person nominate you)
- All nominations are due February 28<sup>th</sup> by 4:00 p.m.

Historically, some sectors are more difficult to fill, such as the Administrative/Managerial sector. If there are only three people in this sector or any other, then an election will not be needed; those three will automatically be on Staff Council. If we are a few nominations short in a sector, she will send out an email blast to those who fall in those job categories. Nancy added we need people who will be an active part of the group and inform their supervisor that per State Code, they are permitted to attend meetings.

A few members suggested to provide a summary of responsibilities once someone is nominated/elected as many will not read through the entire bylaws. Barbara will craft a letter to

add to her confirmation email to the nominated/elected person that will include this information. She and Lisa will work on this together.

The Council determined the election period will begin at 6:00 a.m. on April 5<sup>th</sup> and end at 6:00 p.m. on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

## ***Committee Reports***

### **Legislative Committee**

By Nancy Bremar, *Chair*

Nancy reiterated they will be going to Charleston tomorrow to talk with legislators. Their message will be to look out for WVU; see if anything can be done to help with PEIA (which is not included in this bill); and any decisions that affect classified staff, to please get our perspective. She will provide a copy of the bill once it is introduced to share with group.

### **Tuition Assistance**

By Barbara Griffin, *Chair*

Barbara did not have anything for Tuition Assistance but reminded the group that the blood drive will be held February 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at the Waterfront Place Hotel. Lisa M. and Lisa H. will be sharing the duty of staffing the table.

She is still working on finding parking passes for people coming in to donate blood. Larry advised her to contact Clement Solomon, Director of Parking Management and Kim Hartsell, Assistance Director of Parking Management, as they can issue parking passes for visitors. However, being they will be parking at the Waterfront garage, they will need validations. Jim would like to be able to cover it, but is uncertain with their budget constraints.

### **Welfare Committee**

By Michael Torries, *Chair*

Mike reported they met on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and discussed several items. They are addressing problems with communication. They've invited Erin Newmeyer, Senior Marketing Strategist, to an upcoming meeting to discuss how to reach all the staff at WVU.

They provided the draft of the Classified Staff Emeritus policy to President Gee later that morning during the President's Meeting, which he supports.

He had also attended a healthcare trends in higher education meeting that was given by the Aon Corporation – global provider of risk management, insurance and reinsurance brokerage, human resources solutions and outsourcing services. Some trends in higher education:

- Age and population – 52% of the workforce is eligible for retirement

- Healthcare costs have risen
- Higher tuition
- Impact of social justice on business operations
- Rise of Generation Z – 25% not going to college; 50% said they would not go if they received a good job offer after high school
- Loss of accreditation due to fewer professors
- More talent is moving to other parts of the country with a better economy
- More students taking online courses which affects alumni donations

Aon stressed the need for us to learn our data in order to develop an alternative to PEIA, which is why they were invited here. They are to draw out a plan and use the University of Louisville as a comparable because PEIA will not give us our data although we have tried numerous times. They get around it by saying it falls under HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act).

### **Old Business**

Mary questioned if there was an update for the half-day holiday. Jim shared they are working on it to make it happen and should come to a decision soon.

### **New Business**

Mike requested some clarification of the sick leave rule from 1988. Jim explained they are referring to your accrued sick leave hours to purchase or reduce the cost of post-retirement health insurance. If you were hired prior to 1988, they can use your sick leave to pay 100% of your retirement health insurance premium. For family coverage, it is three days of sick leave per month until your sick leave is exhausted.

If hired after 1988 until 2001, you get 50%. For example, if his premium is \$300/month, he would pay \$150 of it and they would pay the rest out of his sick leave bank until it was exhausted.

Those hired after July 1, 2001 do not have that option as the state code was revised. Therefore, it has no long-term value to anyone hired after that date which in turn has caused frequent absenteeism.

With the paid days off provision, hours are pooled into one bank and you can use as needed. You may be allowed to buy more days off or sell them. Paid time off hours will not be as much as you receive now between your sick and annual leave. He believes you can sell back unused sick leave to the state for \$0.25 on the dollar but leave a minimum amount left in your bank and if you leave the institution within so many years, you have to pay it back along with interest.

Larry spoke about how our insurance premiums are determined by our salary. He pays over \$500 for his family coverage and the University pays more than half of it. They're going to save \$1,500 monthly on someone like him (if his job is eliminated), but will they use those savings to give raises to staff or the administration? It seems they want to give classified staff less time off, less benefits and less money.

Jim indicated they are trying to find ways to run business more efficiently with cost increases and budget reductions. Dixie recalls when they told us that they have to eliminate 118 jobs but would give us all merit increases. Firstly, the raises weren't done right and secondly, we received a small merit increase once. They are still eliminating jobs and we still aren't getting merit increases.

Nancy added one of the main reasons to work at WVU is the benefits. Take into consideration other competitive employers in the area and you're going to have people coming in, working for a little bit, and leaving for a better job.

Lisa B. feels this is set up to benefit the institution only. Jim stated there needs to be a benefit to the institution to allow us be more progressive. Higher education industry is becoming more competitive with more online programs. All schools are facing challenges and trying to recruit students. High school graduation rates and those going to college are declining in our state. This will take authority away from HEPC and given to the WVU's Board of Governors. This opens up a possibility for a flexible benefits plan. If you don't need medical insurance, you can buy more life insurance or more time off. Right now, we're tied to the state system and PEIA.

Dixie added the BOG gives our administration the right to make rules that govern our institution – a consent agenda. They are not reading each line of the bill. They are relying on our administration to do the right thing.

Larry has spoken with 117 classified staff employees. All of them are for keeping the Bumping Rights, as he does. As he sees it, new hires are coming in making more than current employees. These senior employees are training them to do the job and then getting eliminated/laid off/offered the VSIP (Voluntary Separation Incentive Plan). Our mission statement as Staff Council says we are to be involved in every decision making process that pertains to classified staff employees.

With regards to the language of "amending the code", Nancy feels we need a written guarantee that says Classified Staff Council will remain as it currently is and signed by the president. Dixie added that Trades Specialists and those in that area should also have a guarantee that they will be able to do a certain type of Bumping Rights.

Jim read over a few lines of the WV Code §18B-7-3 that pertains to Bumping Rights: <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/wvcode/ChapterEntire.cfm?chap=18b&art=7&section=3>. Basically, it says if a paygrade 15 employee were to be laid off, HR would have to review all their qualifications, experience, training and education. Then, review all paygrade 15 positions for those with less seniority and determine if that employee can do each job, starting with the person with the least seniority and working their way up until they find a job that the employee can do and has more seniority over that person in that position. They would take that bumped person's job, then they start the process all over again. It has a domino effect with the end result being the fairly new employee would be laid off. WVU has not been conducting the bumping process because it is so laborious. It took a group of five people four hours just to go through this process for one person.

He suggested language that would convey that employees not have Bumping Rights if a job were to be eliminated in HSC Maintenance, for example. If they had to lay off a person in this unit, they would first encourage them to apply for any vacancies within the University, then offer the employee a severance check. Or, this new rule only applies to employees with less than ten

years of service or anyone who is grant-funded. Which, if they hire a grant-funded employee with a three-year contract and that funding is cut, they have to find another job for that person. There are variations that apply to this type of thing.

Judi brought up the scenario where the newest employee is a much harder worker than a senior employee and that new employee would be laid off under this rule.

Joan C. feels we all have to meet in the middle. We know what our state is facing. We must hire people and provide jobs to West Virginians to keep this University running so our jobs won't be contracted out.

Jim indicated everyone has a copy of the bill with details of the proposal. Talk with those in your constituencies and get involved with what you are concerned with.

Jim shared the transition from Montgomery to Beckley is moving along quickly. They hope to complete it by June 30<sup>th</sup>. They have an Agreement in Concept with KVC Behavioral Healthcare to buy part of the Montgomery campus which will provide jobs in that area. There is another company interested in buying another part of the campus as well. Dixie added Carolyn Long, President of WVU Tech, gave a report to the board recently regarding the Beckley campus. All summer long, they have camps, such as forensic camps, coming in so the usage of the campus is already booming.

Biweekly pay likely will not happen in April as planned; maybe sometime in fall.

The President's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 20, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. in the Greenbrier Room, Mountainlair. Items on the agenda were determined as follows:

- How can we work together and be part of the solution to ensure Classified Staff is fairly treated amidst the additional budget cuts?
- Will Stansbury Hall employees be provided a new 'home' once that process begins?

### **Adjournment**

Judi motioned to adjourn. Dixie seconded. All in favor and meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.