

Draft

Support Staff Council Minutes
Thursday, January 8, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anita Adams, Debbie Brothers, Edy Fitch, Kelly Hall, Karen Harris, Nancy Hauger, John Keegan, Ellen Knoblett, Leslie Krockenberger, David Lofton, Tracy McDaniel, James McKittrick, Gary Neese, Theresa Ortega, Margaret Pearman, Roxanne Torrence, Wilma Turetzky, Patsy Weltich, Debbie Woolard

ABSENT EXCUSED: Jennifer Brewer, Tom Everett, and Rebecca Stinnett

ABSENT UNEXCUSED: Lauraly Dubois

EX-OFFICIO: Wil Downs

GUESTS: Whitney Davidson, Dana Hancock

Meeting called to order at 11:05 am

Downs began the meeting by introducing two new members of his staff. Dana Hancock is the new Employee Relations & Immigration Coordinator. She will be working with the Support Staff Council on grievance issues and her extension is 4120. He also introduced, Whitney Davidson, who will be on campus on Mondays and Thursdays from 8am - 4:30pm. Whitney is not an ISU employee; she is a Spectrum Wellness employee who will be assisting with the new wellness program. She will be starting smoking cessation classes very soon.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The November 13, 2008 minutes were approved with changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The November 13, 2008 treasurer's report was approved with no changes.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Strategic Planning - Torrence reported that STRATUS will be here next week to meet with different groups. STRATUS is working on ISU's 5 year strategic plan. They will have open sessions and everyone is encouraged to attend.

District 7 vacancy - Torrence stated that there is still an opening in District 7. The Executive Committee is proposing we hold an at-large election to fill this vacancy. The process would be similar to the at-large election held in September 2007. The representative that gets elected would need to understand they would represent District 7. Pearman made a motion to hold an at-large election, motion was seconded. Adams questioned if we want to hold a special election with the annual elections only 3 months

away. Harris agreed we should hold off as the Election Committee is currently working on getting everything in place for the upcoming election. After discussion, Pearman withdrew her motion to have an at-large election and made a motion to leave the seat vacant in District 7 seconded by Harris. Motion passed.

Torrence noted that we really need to re-organize the geographical locations of some districts as some departments have moved and some districts are harder to fill vacancies. The by-law committee will be looking at the district organization.

Faculty Senate - Torrence announced that Faculty Senate has approved a speaking seat for Council at the Senate meetings. Torrence will represent Council at these meetings and if she is unavailable, McDaniel will attend on her behalf. A motion was made by Turetzky to offer the Faculty Senate a chance to present at our meetings seconded by McDaniel. Motion passed.

Meetings with President Bradley - Torrence noted that the meetings that the Executive Committee are having with President Bradley have been effective. He is listening to our concerns. An example is that we mentioned that we were hearing many issues from Facilities Management and within a few weeks a meeting was set up with Kevin Runion to discuss these issues. The main topic was Facilities Management sick leave policy. Torrence and Downs both felt the meeting was productive and Runion promised to investigate and get back with them.

Distinguished Staff Award – Torrence reported that we also discussed staff recognition at the university level. There are faculty awards but currently no staff awards. After the meeting was over Torrence was contacted by Diann McKee asking the Executive Committee to come up with criteria and submit it to her and she would forward it to President Bradley for review. The proposal was handed out to the Council representatives. There was a monetary value attached and we suggested that we contact the Foundation office to see if they would sponsor the awards. If approved, the awards would be presented at the July Staff Service awards.

ISU Portal - Torrence stated that the Support Staff has a “channel” on the portal that we can use to post announcements and other information. It will not replace the website or sending global emails. It adds an additional source to get our information out.

By – Laws – Torrence noted that the By-Law committee will be meeting one more time to look at reorganizing some districts. They hope to have the final draft to the Council representatives within a week for review before the next Council meeting. The draft is being reviewed by Melony Sacopulos for any legal issues.

HUMAN RESOURCE REPORT:

Downs noted that the non-smoking task force has proposed to have 8 different sites around the perimeter of campus to be designated as smoking areas. He has not received an update since the proposal was submitted. Aimee Janssen-Robinson will provide smoking cessation training. The cost for this training will be \$25.00 and HR hopes to

donate \$10.00 toward this charge. Downs feels employees need to pay a portion of the fee in order for the training to be effective.

Downs mentioned that the proposed performance review form will be presented to the President's Council in the next two weeks for review. He is hopeful that we can still meet the implementation goal of Spring, 2009.

Fitch asked about the vesting of pension for support staff. Downs commented that Human Resources have investigated this concern, but it is a state mandated decision, and the university has no control over this. Turetzky mentioned that SEBC is looking into legislature to change this policy. Concerns were discussed about the state cutting back on expenses by making the vestment period longer. Downs noted that since the state is cutting budgets, it will probably not shorten the vestment period. Turetzky asked if Human Resources could check into TIAA-CREF visiting campus. Downs noted that he would have his staff work on arranging a visit and having appointments available. It was suggested to see if they could come to our annual meeting or rep sessions to better explain their program. Turetzky mentioned that appointments fill up very fast.

McKittrick asked Downs why same sex couples are covered under ISU insurance, but a man and woman living together that aren't married do not qualify. Downs informed that there are strict guidelines for the same sex couples. He offered to bring Candy Barton to a meeting so that she may explain the process.

McDaniel asked Downs if there were going to be any lay-offs due to budget cuts. Downs stated that there are no plans for lay-offs at this time. All positions that become vacant are being evaluated to determine if the position will be filled. This issue has not been discussed with him.

Fitch asked if the budget cuts will affect raises. Downs noted that the university will need to look at the financial future. He believes there is a desire to give raises, but with insurance costs going up as well as the budget cuts, we will have to wait and see.

Krockenberger asked if the 15 hours maximum could be waived for staff if they are taking all distance courses. Downs informed that he would check with Staff Benefits and get back with us. Torrence asked Turetzky to have SEBC look into fees charged to employees that are taking courses.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Election Committee: Karen Harris, Chair

The committee met yesterday and started the process of the electronic elections.

Turetzky asked why no one announced who won the District 3 election. Torrence stated that it was posted to the web and sent to Council and to her knowledge; the only globals that were sent announcing new representatives were after the Council elections. Harris voiced her concern that she, as Election Committee chair, was not notified that Rebecca

Stinnett filled one of the vacancies in District 7. McDaniel stated that an email was sent out to the Council reps and Stinnett was introduced at the last Council meeting. Harris noted that her email was not working. Torrence explained that the Election Committee had tried to fill the vacancies with a special election but was unsuccessful, and the Executive Committee was responsible for filling the vacancies at that point.

Employee Relations: Kelly Hall, Chair

The committee met and discussed two items. Adams and Harris attended their meeting to discuss training for the upcoming electronic election. They realize some staff will be resistant, but they will have to adjust. With performance reviews and the electronic election coming up it is important that we provide some training to the staff. The dates for training will be March 4th – 6th and 9th – 11th. They will be in four locations across campus - HHP, CoB, Library, and Student Computer complex. The committee will meet again on the 21st to finalize the training.

Hall mentioned that she is trying to set up a “biggest loser” contest for staff through Facebook. McDaniel asked if this was a personal group or something the committee has worked on. Hall stated that it is a motivational site since Weight Watchers is no longer on campus.

Public Relations: Jennifer Brewer, Chair

Torrence reported that the “Cookies with Santa” was a huge success. There were approximately 60 children at the event and everyone had a great time. The committee is also planning a Sock Hop for February 11th. There is also a blood drive planned for February 11th in Dede II. Everyone is invited to attend both. Several contests are planned at the Sock Hop and the money raised will be donated to the American Red Cross.

Torrence noted the annual meeting is scheduled for May 14th in Tilson Auditorium.

Salary and Employee Benefits Committee: Wilma Turetzky, Chair

The Committee has not met yet this month.

Scholarship Committee: Toni Bolinger, Chair

Torrence reported that Bolinger had a prior commitment and was unable to attend the meeting, but did want to inform Council that the committee raised \$500 from the jar sales in December.

DISCUSSION:

Time did not permit discussion.

Next meeting February 12, 2009 in HMSU.

Meeting adjourned at 12:35 pm