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Staff Senate, March 10, 2020

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Staff Senate

March 10, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Note: The remarks of the senators and others are summarized and not verbatim. The recording of this meeting is available in the Staff Senate Secretary's office.

PRESENT: Sandra Baldrige-Adrian; Shaun Bannon; Carolyn Bender; Jean Bennett; Michael Cruise; John Dooley; Cecilia Dockery; Mark Garrison; Sandra Hatcher; Dawn Hitchcock; Meg Hurt; Judy Johns; Sharon McCants; Ebony McCray; Melanie McKeefery; Ashley Nance; Justin Poindexter; Wendy Singleton; Bryce Skipper; David Yancey; Travis Youngblood; Bobbi Yurkin

SUBSTITUTIONS: Jessica Handy for Amanda Darden; Christi Rippy for Lynn Fox

ABSENT: Dwayne Beam; Allison Crandell; Michele Varga

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Brian Alwine; Dan Lawless; Eric Rivenbark; David Frost; Amanda Craddock; Lori Cox; Rein Mungo; Debbie Connor; Carlos Johnson; BJ Landrum; Dr. Atiya Stokes-Brown; Russell Tyler; Travis Overton; Dan Ennis; Dr. David DeCenzo

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approval of the December minutes were moved by Dawn Hitchcock, and seconded by Jean Bennett. One correction, remove Meg Hurt from the Present list. **The minutes passed (24 in favor, 0 not in favor, 0 abstain).**

SENATE PRESIDENT REMARKS: none

PRESIDENT AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

President DeCenzo:

- We are watching the Corona Virus as this is something new to us. There is a conference call about it at 1pm today. There are confirmed cases in South Carolina. We're at the mercy of the governor's office and DHEC. At this point we plan to be open after spring break unless the governor deems otherwise.
- Our last budget presentation will be this Thursday (3/12/20) in the state Senate. The House of Representatives budget looks favorable, but the numbers from the House budget do not allow for an increase to in-state tuition and with other items in the budget, we are looking at a deficit. Hopefully the Senate budget will be more favorable to us but we won't know the final numbers until the budget is passed.

Provost Ennis:

- We are not planning to close after spring break. We are preparing for all scenarios. There is not a template or model to go on at this time. We don't currently have any confirmed cases of

corona virus. With our students away on spring break this week, we are preparing to re-open on Monday with no suggestion that we shouldn't but we know the conference call with DHEC may change that.

Chief of Staff Overton:

- Presidential Search update: The Presidential Search Committee will leave campus tomorrow (3/11/20) to travel to an off-site location to conduct interviews with candidates to finalize the candidates that will then be presented to the Board of Trustees. The Board will then inform the search committee how they will go about finalizing the selection of our new president. The timeline still looks like a May or June announcement from the BOT regarding who will be the new president. At that time, a timeline will be released outlining the new president's start date and Dr. DeCenzo's new duties through June 30, 2021. The candidate backgrounds are as follows:
 - 16% are current presidents
 - 37% are current provosts
 - 11% are current Vice Presidents
 - 29% are current deans
 - 8% are other (do not fall into any of the categories above)
- Hwy 544 update: We are moving forward with our partnership with SCDOT to add a raised median beginning at Founders Drive and going up to the Y (curve just past the dorm entrance). The goal is to have a median that will eliminate the ability to cross Hwy 544 unless at a designated crosswalk. The median will be a fence-type structure that individuals will not be able to scale. We expect public meeting on this construction to begin before this semester (spring 20) is over and construction to begin by the end of this calendar year. Construction is expected to last one year.
- Combined Faculty/Staff Meeting: The responses that we received through the surveys were overwhelmingly positive. The main concern was the length of the meeting.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

In an effort to streamline Staff Senate meetings, but also continue to collect valuable employee feedback data, the Senate will begin referring Topic Suggestions that relate to specific areas of operation to the appropriate person in those areas. The Senate will continue to collect these submissions and will review them in total each semester to determine if there are organizational patterns that should be addressed by the Senate as a whole.

- Employee submitted concerns around specific trainings offered by the Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion through the Department of Training, Development and Service Excellence. **Action** – Concerns were forwarded to Eileen Soisson, Director of TDSE.
- Employee submitted an idea for a 360-degree evaluation process for supervisors, similar to EPMS, but evaluating the supervisor instead of the employee. **Action** – forwarded to HR for consideration. **Notes** – Currently, academic administrators have an evaluation process that is undertaken annually, but this is a limited number of individuals. The suggestion indicates a broader idea of a 360-degree evaluation, which would be applicable to all supervisors.

- Employee submitted concerns regarding sanitation of multi-bins in light of COVID-19. **Action** – Forwarded to Sustainability for consideration.
- Employee highlighted that the Q/A answers for the faculty/staff meeting were never released as stated in an email 1/14/20. “Answers are being developed to the questions that were submitted through Mentimeter during the meeting. The responses will be sent with the final reminder for the survey.” **Action** – Forwarded to Travis Overton for response.
- Employee suggested allowing employees to buy athletic apparel at cost. **Action** – Forwarded to Athletics for consideration.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Student Pay Ad Hoc Committee – no report

Take Your Child to Work Committee – no report

Policy and Welfare Committee – motion to be made

Membership Committee –

Communication Committee – Concerning the Staff Senate Retreat, since the senate seems to be divided in discussions on when to have the retreat we want to vote today on whether to have the retreat with current senators or wait and have the retreat with new senators. Senate voted to have the retreat with the new senators (70% voted for retreat with new senators, 30% voted for retreat with current senators).

OLD BUSINESS: none

NEW BUSINESS:

- Motion from the Membership Committee, seconded by Bryce Skipper – changes to the current timeline for senate officer elections, the specifics are stated below:
 - **Section 4B**
 - **Current** – The nomination and election cycle shall be held in June and July of each year. The Membership Committee will call for nominations, vet nominees, prepare ballots, and handle the election
 - **Proposed** – The nomination and election cycle shall be held immediately upon completion of the State Senate Member elections in May. The Membership Committee will call for nominations, vet nominees, prepare ballots, and handle the election.
 - **Section 4D**
 - **Current** – Candidates will have the option to give a brief speech to the Senate at the July meeting in support of their candidacy and/or place a statement on the ballot.
 - **Proposed** – Candidates will have the option to give a brief speech to the Senate at the June meeting in support of their candidacy and/or place a statement on the ballot.
 - **Section 4E**

- **Current** – Elections will take place at the July meeting via paper ballot.
- **Proposed** – Elections will take place at the June meeting via paper ballots or clickers, if available.
- **Section 4F**
 - **Current** – Candidates, supervisors of the elected officers and the Staff Senate at large will be notified of the election outcome by the Membership Committee no later than July 15th.
 - **Proposed** – Candidates, supervisors of the elected officers and the Staff Senate at large will be notified of the election outcome by the Membership Committee no later than June 30th.

The new senators will be invited to the June meeting even though they will not take office until the July meeting. **The motion passed (17 in favor, 0 not in favor, 7 abstain).**

- Motion from the Policy and Welfare Committee, seconded by Meg Hurt – Concerns had been raised through Staff Senate about situations where a full-time student had attempted to become a full-time employee, or when a full-time employee had applied to be a full-time student. Anecdotal information was presented where employees and/or students had been denied the ability to transition into the additional role. Based on that information, the Policy and Welfare Committee conducted a study of peer and aspirant and other South Carolina universities to determine how other schools address these situations. The findings of that survey indicated that none of the universities addressed these issues through policy. Staff Senate requests that HREO examine the existing policies with these issues in mind and determine the best way to address these situations should they arise in the future. Additionally, Staff Senate requests that HREO provide updates on this matter as it moves forward. The motion passed (12 in favor, 0 not in favor, 12 abstain).
- Motion from the Executive Committee, seconded by Jean Bennett – Amendment to Section 2 of the Staff Senate Bylaws.
 - **Current** – The Senate will include, as an ex officio nonvoting member, the Vice President for Human Resources or their designee.
 - **Proposed** – The Senate will include, as an ex officio nonvoting member, the Vice President for Human Resources or their designee, the Chair of Faculty Senate or their designee, and the President of the Student Government Association or their designee.

After there were no questions, amendments, or discussion, the motion passed **(12 in favor, 0 not in favor, 12 abstain).**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- John Dooley congratulated our HREO ex officio member BJ Landrum on her upcoming retirement at the end of March.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:42 am