

Washburn University Staff Council Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2022

Members Present – Leah Brown, Carissa Schmidlein, Meagan Smejdir, Christa Smith, Blaine Smith, Matt Busey, Nancy Province, Jackie Askren, Gayla Sarkesian, Jennifer Bixel, Jan Martin

Members Not Present – Drew Liggett, James Scotti

Guests – Chloe Chaffin & George Burdick (Voting Resolution Presentation), Jim Fosdick, Molly Pierson, Lacey Roberts

- I. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Matt Busey at 3:05pm.
- II. Roll Call
 - a. Attendance was taken by Zoom chat.
- III. Guest Speakers, Chloe Chaffin & George Burdick, Loud Light
 - a. Loud Light – working to provide more voting opportunities for students
 - i. We would like to have Washburn as an official voting site; we did this temporarily in 2020, but are looking to have Washburn as a permanent voting site
 - ii. We want to expand this initiative so that Washburn is a site for early voting
 - b. Permission granted from WU administration, resolution through WSGA and Faculty Senate – now asking for a resolution of support from Staff Council to expand voting rights for Washburn as a site; then they will present this to Shawnee County
 - c. Shawnee County will consider the proposals at any time, but everything needs to be submitted 6 months ahead of the next election; it would be ideal to have everything up and running by fall mid-term elections, but will continue to work toward these goals whenever the proposal is ready
 - d. Will Washburn Tech also be a voting site? We are considering this, but we have focused on Washburn’s main campus first; if things are approved for the main campus, then we would focus on the Tech campus
 - e. Matt brought this up to Dr. Farley – he is very supportive of this initiative, and is grateful that they have brought the issue to Staff Council
- IV. Approval of November 9, 2021 Minutes (Motion)
 - a. Voting
 - i. Motion – Blaine Smith
 - ii. Second – Jackie Askren
 - iii. Votes
 1. Yay – 11
 2. Nay – 0
 3. Abstain – 0

V. Committee Reports:

- a. Chair Report – Matt Busey
 - i. Met with Dr. Farley on December 13, 2021
 - 1. Discussed some initiatives that are being brought to Staff Council
- b. Board of Regents Meeting Update – Matt Busey
 - i. December
 - 1. Single audit report approved
 - 2. Luther Lee is new VP Administration & Treasurer
 - 3. Henderson remodel – budget approved
- c. All Faculty/Staff Email/Posting Committee – Jackie Askren, Christa Smith
 - i. Planning to meet on Jan 24th to review options – ITS is uneasy about using Share Point in place of Work Place because people can delete posts from other people
 - ii. If you have feedback about the replacement of a Work Place product, please send that to Jackie and Christa before the next committee meeting on January 24th
- d. Benefits Committee – Jennifer Bixel, Emily Schneider, Matt Busey
 - i. No meeting yet, so no updates
- e. Food Advisory Committee – Jan Martin
 - i. Please see attachment for updated hours for dining services during the spring 2022 semester
- f. Parking Ticket Committee – Leah Brown and Blaine Smith
 - i. No meeting, no update
- g. Safety Committee – Jackie Askren
 - i. Met in November 2021, no December meeting
 - 1. Heather/Chief Enos updating WU emergency booklets that are posted in classrooms and offices – if you want one, or need an updated one, please contact Heather
 - 2. Request for a sidewalk installed on 19th Street to Washburn Avenue
 - 3. Eric Just reminds to submit a Facilities work order if you need anything
 - 4. New Law School Building – project is going smoothly; location has not seen any traffic flow issues; the courtroom will be a hardened room to serve as a tornado/severe weather shelter
 - 5. Jo Hunt from the Law School will be retiring and stepping away from the Safety Committee

VI. Old Business:

- a. Voting Resolution
 - i. Would Washburn help with volunteering/staffing for in person voting dates? Does the state/county provide election officials? Hopeful that students, faculty, and staff will volunteer, but will still need officials to be in the space during voting.
 - ii. Christa Smith volunteers to start working on the resolution letter on behalf of Staff Council

VII. New Business:

- a. Staff Council Vacancies
 - i. Non-Exempt B & Non-Exempt H

1. Non-Exempt B – Still vacant
2. Non-Exempt H – this will be open after Jan retires/steps away from Staff Council; this group is quite small, so we may want to consider absorbing this group in to another group that is already represented on Staff Council
3. Non-Exempt J – Barbara Evans
- ii. Food Advisory Committee
 1. Volunteers to serve on this committee? Nancy Province volunteers to serve on this committee. Matt will send Janel an update to include Nancy on committee information/contacts.
- b. Matt will send instructions for how to find your constituent list
- c. Discuss major initiatives for current session
 - i. Feedback from constituents:
 1. Additional staff professional development opportunities
 2. Expansion of Employee Educational Assistance
 - a. Looked at the educational assistance programs from some peer institutions in KS to explore new ideas
 3. Bereavement Leave
 - a. Currently does not exist; we need to take sick leave for this
 4. Payment for a portion of unused sick leave after certain years of service requirements are met
 - a. This could help encourage longer tenure for folks to continue working at Washburn
 5. Donor Leave: eligible employees could receive paid leave to donate organs, tissue, marrow, or blood
 - a. Idea – modify the shared leave pool to include these activities
 6. Seeking better coverage for hearing aids through insurance
 7. Expanding the coverage for fertility treatment through insurance
 8. How will BCBS cover the 8 at home COVID tests per month? If you have questions about this, please contact benefits@washburn.edu.
 - ii. Matt will set up a meeting with Teresa Lee to evaluate the feasibility of these changes, and discuss potential changes
 - iii. If you are interested in helping with these initiatives, please contact Matt!

VIII. Informational Items:

- a. Next Meeting: February 8, 2022, 3:00pm-4:00pm via Zoom Video Conference and in the Lincoln Room, Memorial Union

IX. Adjournment (Motion)

- a. Motion – Christa Smith
- b. Second – Jan Martin
- c. Vote
 - i. Yay – 11
 - ii. Nay - 0
 - iii. Abstain – 0

Minutes submitted by Staff Council Secretary Meagan Smejdir.