Staff Senate Minutes
October 28, 2008

The Staff Senate met Tuesday, October 28, 2008 at 2:00 p.m., in CSC Cheyenne Meeting Room. Members in attendance were Chris Gore, Barbara Merkle, Dottie Westbrook, Lori Case, Pam Morgan, Treva Clifton, Linda Knox, Chris Stovall, Joe Mrugalski, Ernest Cooper, Francis Miller, and Danny Lopez. Chris Gore presided over the meeting.

Approval of minutes
Pam Morgan moved to approve the minutes from 9/11/08. Second motion made by Joe Mrugalski. All approved minutes.

Correspondence
None at this time.

Committee Appointments and Reports
The following appointments were set up prior to the meeting.
- Administrative Council – Chris Gore per our constitution
- Academic Council – Barbara Merkle
- Faculty Senate – Pam Morgan
- Student Affairs Council – Sharon Johnson
- Enrollment Management Council – Treva Clifton
- Attend Board of Regents – Chris Gore per our constitution

The following committee appointments were set up during this meeting.
- Executive Committee – Staff Senate Officers – Chris Gore, Barbara Merkle, Dottie Westbrook and Lori Case
- Long Range Review and Planning Committee – Marcus Hill and Francis Miller
- Communications Committee – Pam Morgan and Joe Mrugalski
- Membership Committee – Ernest Cooper and Danny Lopez
- Bylaws Committee – Linda Knox and Lori Case
- Staff Senate Scholarship Committee – Chris Stovall and Dottie Westbrook

Old Business
None

New Business
1. Chris Gore updated the senate on his meeting with the president regarding expectations and goals of the committee. He would like our input and has offered to come to a senate meeting and discuss his intention for the senate.

2. Barbara Merkle introduced the topic of student assistants. Per the Human Resources Department (as relayed by Ms. Merkle) for hiring practices if a student worker wishes to apply for a staff position on campus, he/she has to apply like the general public at Texas Workforce Commission. Because the hiring supervisor has to complete a matrix for applicants, a student cannot apply on campus as if they were already staff. She was told
it was because a background security check was not required. Ms. Merkle stated that there was nothing in the policy manual that mentions background checks in highly sensitive areas. Since this is the case, Pam Morgan asked if the senate can suggest new or amend current policies. Joe Mrugalski asked what the federal and state policies were that HR was referring to.

Ms. Merkle felt that the department would lose a lot of the training put into the student if not hired by the university. Also, if the student is hired as staff, he/she will get his/her past years of services for benefits and TRS. There was some confusion on this issue.

At the point of hire for staff, a background check will be done. If a hiring supervisor wishes to perform a background check before hiring a prospective student employee, he/she can request that a check be processed. However, Ms. Merkle questioned who determines what is security sensitive and who monitors that.

3. Barbara Merkle introduced the topic of staff emeritus status. In academic council, there was a proposal that emeritus status only be presented to faculty and academic administration, that includes the president, provost and deans. Pam Morgan stated that this skips all vice presidents and all staff. However, staff members that have shown great service to the university may be proposed for emeritus status to the president and board of regents. Ms. Morgan also explained that some levels of the staff cannot be awarded the service appreciation either. The staff emeritus topic was to be taken to the Board of Regents in November. Ms. Merkle suggested that the senate investigate other universities’ staff senates to find out how they recognize exceptional service to their universities.

Round Robin
The senate discussed the work week for the summer. The Faculty Senate was allowed to vote on their desired teaching schedule based on pros and cons of the 4 or 5 day work week. The Staff Senate wants the opportunity to vote on this issue as well. The issue that child care could be a problem for the staff was considered. Chris Gore explained that the senators are representing their EEO classification therefore accountable to those groups. The senators need to be aware of the concerns of their represented groups.

Treva Clifton informed the senate about Three’s a Crowd trio to perform on November 5th. Soledad O’Brien is going to speak on February 23rd. The Liberty Bell is coming soon and will be placed in front of the Hardin Building. The Wellness Center should be complete in the Spring 2009.

Joe Mrugalski talked about the Native American Student Association. November is Native American month. There will be a special presentation on November 6th with dancers and speakers. Mr. Mrugalski explained that this group has not received as much support since the MSU mascot was changed. The students in the group sold raffle tickets ($1) for the raffle of a Pendleton blanket.
Barbara Merkle stated that Mustangs Rally will be on November 15, 2008. So far, 150 students and 250 parents have signed up.

Ernest Cooper said that the custodial staff is understaffed. Mr. Cooper informed the senate that Indonesian students are performing in Akin Auditorium on October 28th at 8:00 p.m.

Francis Miller encouraged the senate to make appointments to have their teeth cleaned at the Dental Hygiene department.

Danny Lopez stated that the Fantasy of Lights was moving to campus. Mr. Lopez reinforced that his department had no supervisor. He also encouraged attendance to the soccer games that were held October 29th, 31st, and November 1st.

Our next meeting will be held on November 18th at 2:00 p.m. due to Thanksgiving. The executive committee will meet on November 11th at 9:00 a.m.

Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dottie Westbrook
Secretary/Treasurer of the Staff Senate