Minutes of Meeting  
MSU Staff Senate  
November 14, 2012

The MSU Staff Senate met Wednesday, November 14, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 189 in the Dillard College of Business Administration Building. Members in attendance were Mike Deming, Ernest Cooper, Sue Witherspoon, Jermaine Causey Dirk Welch, Dr. Michael Mills, Dawn Fisher, Chris Stovall, Jamie Fowler, Lynn Sosebee and Peggy Brennan. Dirk Welch, Chair, presided.

Also present was guest speaker, Dr. Jesse Rogers, President, Dr. Betty Stewart, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Philip Mundine, Student Government Association Representative, Naoma Clark, Dianne Weakley, Julie Gaynor, Gary Neal, Valarie Martinez, Leah Vineyard and Jeana Brunson.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Dirk Welch.

Approval of Minutes:
The minutes of the October 10, 2012 meeting were presented. Dr. Michael Mills motioned to approve the minutes, Dawn Fisher seconded; the minutes were approved by unanimous vote (closed).

Guest Speaker, Dr. Jesse Rogers, President
Dr. Rogers informed the Staff Senate that he has been meeting with Dr. Betty Stewart, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dr. Marilyn Fowle, Vice President for Business Affairs and Finance, regarding budgetary issues. He explained that they are dealing primarily at this time with faculty budget issues, but assured everyone that they are also working on plans for the MSU staff as well. The good news is the Board of Regents has approved the retention payment of 2% of staff/faculty salary or $500 if the 2% doesn’t equal $500 to go forward on December 15. The Board of Regents made the commitment and thought it was important to keep the commitment to show their appreciation to faculty/staff. A company or university that can give a 2% or 1% retention payment/bonus/raise in this day in time is quite an accomplishment. Dr. Rogers encouraged any staff member who would like to thank the Board of Regents to send a letter. In order to save money, faculty/staff with an annual salary of over $100,000 per year, with the exception of two people who are sitting right on the line agreed to give up their 2% retention payment. This will result in a savings of $55,000.

Dr. Rogers further explained to the members of the Staff Senate that a large part of the current financial status of the university is a distinct product of the nation’s and state’s economy. The average family incomes of the nation went down $4,000 per household since the recession hit. We have lost financially so far in this recession, and it will take years for us to catch up. The state’s financial difficulties started with the recession. The cost of Medicaid continues to increase with the increasing number of people living below the poverty line. The state has not paid their Medicaid matching bill for the last two years. The state is still about $17.5 billion dollars down. Our hope is that the next State Legislature will fund the university as they did the last time.

Dr. Rogers informed the members of the Staff Senate about the loss of income to the university as follows: The last legislative session cut $1 billion dollars from the higher education budget. The university’s share of the $1 billion dollar cut was $3 million dollars. In addition, the Hazelwood Act was expanded to include the spouse and children of veterans. The cost of the program to the university
increased from $200,000 to over $1 million dollars (approximately $800,000 loss). Also, the Department of Education restructured Pell Grants and no longer pays grants to students in the summer. The Pell Grant recipients at the university range from 34% to 40% of the student body. Last year’s enrollment at the university dropped by 4% and the summer term was down by 10%. The money the university received from students paying with Pell Grant money dropped from over $1 million dollars to $200,000 dollars resulting in another loss of approximately $800,000.

It’s statistically a fact that in the United States, the incoming college students have less and less financial means to pay for their education. The states are putting more pressure on the universities to raise tuition fees to make-up for those differences. Enrollment in colleges and universities statewide either has gone down or stayed level. The enrollment at MSU has dropped by 500 students in the last two years. In one year, that equals a loss of $1.7 million dollars in tuition and fees.

In summary, the loss of the previously mentioned income to the university adds up to over $7.2 million a year. We did not plan for the $1.7 million loss in tuition and fees. To make-up for some of the loss we have made reductions in operations, pushed back projects and cut back in some areas of the university that did not affect our faculty or staff. This has accounted for approximately $1.1 million of the $1.7 million loss. We have avoided furloughs or a reduction in force. We are taking some really serious steps to raise our enrollment. MSU is a great university and a great option for students. We will get our enrollment back, and when we do it will solve a lot of our problems.

Also, we are modestly restructuring the payment model for faculty teaching a class in the summer and modestly cutting summer school. Dr. Rogers emphasized that we need to stay competitive in the faculty salary structure. Our summer enrollment is down by 28% over the last four years. This means we do not need as many courses or faculty in the summer. We are trying to move money out of the summer school into the faculty’s nine month’s salary. The faculty’s loss of income from the summer is very unequally distributed to the summer salary payment. The plan is to put approximately 4% into faculty’s nine month salaries for the next three years. There has been some opposition regarding the restructuring of the summer payment model by faculty and that’s the reason you may be hearing some background discussion, and we do understand their feelings about it.

Dr. Rogers explained that he will discuss a plan for staff salary increases just as soon as the university works its way through some really difficult financial issues. He emphasized that the increase in salaries will be modest. He informed the members of the Staff Senate that we are going to slow things down; we have no option at this point. The future of the university is the growth of our enrollment. There are good and strong plans to increase the enrollment, we are a great university. “So keep this place looking great, functioning great and we are going to be okay.”

Dr. Betty Stewart addressed the Staff Senate as follows: “We appreciate what you are doing and we know that this is a very difficult time for all of you, we don’t want you to be worried about your jobs. We are working hard to get you an increase for next year and I just want to say how much I appreciate you guys for supporting us and supporting this institution, and more specifically for me, the academic program. So thank you.”
The following questions were asked by a Staff Senate member/guest and were answered by Dr. Rogers and Dr. Stewart:

- **Question asked by Philip Mundine, Student Government Association Representative:** How will the restructuring of the faculty summer pay and summer school affect students? **Answer (Dr. Rogers):** We hope the students won’t even notice. That is the whole idea, that the underlying idea with all plans, is that you will have the courses that you need to graduate on time and they will be offered in sequences that you need, and I have huge confidence in Dr. Stewart that she will plan accordingly. Philip Mundine thanked Dr. Rogers and on behalf of the students told Dr. Rogers he is doing a wonderful job.

Dr. Betty Stewart requested that if students run into an issue where they need a class that’s not being offered to please let her know. She explained that one of the things that we want to do as an institution, which has not been done very well in the past, is when students declare their majors and set their degree plans, we want to look more carefully at what courses they planned out during those years, so that we can make sure that those courses are being offered. In the past, we were able to offer everything we thought the student needed. If we have to trim back a little bit, we will have to go to the degree plans. For example, if you are a junior and you need a class, we want to make sure that a section or two of that class is offered. Therefore, we are going to align our scheduling more with the degree plans of our students.

Dr. Michael Mills thanked Dr. Rogers for coming and giving the update on the current events on the university. Dirk Welch thanked Dr. Rogers and Dr. Stewart on behalf of the Staff Senate for focusing on staff and understanding our concerns and making them a priority as well.

1. **Correspondence:**
   The following suggestions/requests/inquiries were received or remain open by Staff Senate:
   - **Inquiry: How will part time staff be impacted by the one-time retention payment?** Dirk Welch consulted with Dianne Weakley, Director of Human Resources and Valerie Maxwell, Director of Budget and Management regarding the inquiry. **Answer:** If you are a part time, benefit eligible employee you will receive 2% of your annual salary or $250.00, whichever is greater.

2. **Staff Committee/Council Reports:**

   **Executive Committee:** Met on Wednesday, November 7, 2012, to set agenda for Staff Senate meeting on November 14, 2012.

   **Long Range Review and Planning Committee:** Dr. Michael Mills reported that the Committee had met. It was noted that there had not been any recent nominations to the “You Make a Difference” website. It was suggested that a note be placed in the MSU Update reminding and encouraging staff to submit a nomination. Ernest Cooper volunteered to take pictures of future nominees when presented their certificates at the Staff Senate meetings. The picture of the nominee would then be placed on the “You Make a Difference” website. Current and past nominations for the “You Make A Difference” website can be found at [http://www.mwsu.edu/staffsenate/difference.asp](http://www.mwsu.edu/staffsenate/difference.asp).
Communications Committee: No report.

Membership Committee: Dirk Welch reported that Marilyn Brown, Staff Senate Member for Class EEO-4 has resigned from Staff Senate due to personal issues.

Bylaws Committee: No report.

Scholarship Committee: Lynn Sosebee reported they had received two applications as of this date for the two $250.00 2013 Spring Semester Scholarships to be given by the Staff Senate.

Administrative Council: Dirk Welch reported the Administrative Council met October. The following items were included on the agenda:
- Approval of Changes to Housing and Residence Life Policy
- Approval of Changes and Additions to the University Councils and Committees
  - Student Allocations Committee
  - Student Conduct Committee
  - Student Insurance Committee
  - Distance Education Committee
- Presentation on the Contract Administration Process
- Protection of Minor Children on Campus
  - Texas Education Code Section 51.976—Sexual Abuse and Child Molestation Prevention Training

A copy of the current and past Administrative Council minutes are available at http://welcome.mwsu.edu/president/administrative-council/minutes.asp?LL=82.


Faculty Senate: Chris Stovall reported the MSU Faculty Senate met on October 11 and November 8, 2012. The current and past minutes of the MSU Faculty Senate meetings are available at http://faculty.mwsu.edu/senate/minutes.asp?LL=1602.

Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Council: Dr. Michael Mills reported the only thing on the agenda were the following:
- Housing Policy Changes
- Updating Titles for Student Insurance Committee

Please contact Treva Clifton, Assistant to Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management at Treva.clifton@mwsu.edu for current and past copies of minutes.

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3. **New Business:**  
Dirk Welch reported he had a request from Robert Steflik for a representative from the Staff Senate to attend Campus Portal training from November 26 through December 21. There will be a total of 12 training sessions. Dirk Welch asked if there were any volunteers. Peggy Brennan volunteered to attend the Portal training sessions (information only, no vote required).

Dirk Welch reported there was not anything on the agenda so far for the scheduled MSU Staff Senate December 12 meeting. If we have no submissions for the agenda an email will be sent notifying the members that the next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, January 9, 2013. There was no further discussion (information only, no vote required).

4. **Old Business:**  
Dirk Welch reported at the meeting in October it was suggested by Ernest Cooper for Staff Senate to have a Facebook page. This was discussed at the Staff Senate Executive Committee meeting and it was the consensus of the committee that it would be a lot of work to have a Facebook page and we felt it would not be a good fit for Staff Senate. Dirk Welch asked if anyone had any opinions to the contrary to please come forward. There was no further discussion (closed).

5. **Open Forum:**  None

6. **Announcements:**  None

7. **Adjournment:**  The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 9, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

/SIGNED/

Peggy Brennan  
Staff Senate Secretary/Treasurer