Minutes of Meeting  
MSU Staff Senate  
May 8, 2013

The MSU Staff Senate met Wednesday, May 8, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 189, in the Dillard College of Business Administration Building. Members in attendance were Ernest Cooper, Jermaine Causey, Dirk Welch, Dr. Michael Mills, Dawn Fisher, Chris Stovall, Lynn Sosebee, Lucy Davis, Gayla Aldrich, Jesika Fisher, Patricia Lowry, Sue Witherspoon, Jamie Fowler, Michael Deming, Reagan Foster and Peggy Brennan. Dirk Welch, Chair, presided.

Present as guest speakers were Dr. Jesse W. Rogers, President and Dr. Betty Stewart, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Also present was Francis Miller, Kevin Bazner, Dianne Weakley, Julie Gaynor and Antoinette Brown.

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

1. **Approval of Minutes:**
The minutes of the March 27, 2013 meeting were presented. Dr. Michael Mills motioned to approve the minutes, Patricia Lowry seconded; the minutes were approved by unanimous vote (*closed*).

2. **Guest Speakers, Dr. Jesse W. Rogers and Dr. Betty Stewart/University Update**
Dr. Rogers spoke to the Staff Senate regarding the status of the university budget that will be presented to the Board of Regents meeting scheduled for May 9 and 10. He informed the members of all the things that have been done to tighten the budget resulting in forward progress of a more efficient budget. The major objective of a more efficient budget is to have a $1 million pool of funds for the next three years to be used to provide raises for faculty and staff. He further explained how the $1 million pool of funds will be used for faculty and staff as follows:

**FACULTY**
$500,000 of the $1 million pool will be used to enhance returning full-time faculty salaries on an equity basis with the following criteria to be considered:

- quality of service
- years of service
- rank
- salary relative to current market

The Deans will be making the recommendations for increases of faculty salaries to Dr. Stewart. Dr. Rogers explained that some of the faculty pay has been reduced due to the different salary structure implemented for summer teaching. The money from the reduction of pay for summer teaching which is part of the $500,000 will be redistributed in the faculty’s nine month contract to make their salaries more competitive with others in the state. Restructuring the faculty summer salaries is due to the decline of summer enrollment, and the Federal Government no longer offering Pell grants to students in the summer. Approximately 40% of the MSU summer enrolled students have depended on Pell money in the past.
STAFF
$500,000 of the $1 million pool will be put towards the Staff as follows:

- adjust Classified Pay Plan pay grade minimum/maximum ranges by 5% which will raise starting salaries of approximately 80 staff employees
- eligible staff will get a 2% increase in salary or a minimum of $600, whichever is greater
- equity money for non-classified salaries will be available and recommendations will be made by directors based on the following criteria:
  ✓ years of service
  ✓ quality of service
  ✓ salary relative to current market

Dr. Rogers emphasized that he believes in fairness and keeping the university competitive. He acknowledged that means paying staff a fair wage and offering stability.

Considering the university had a reduction in state funds of $14 million dollars in the last two years and additional millions prior to that time, Dr. Rogers is pleased with what has been accomplished. Keeping tuition down to a competitive level and tightening up wherever possible by asking everyone to work harder has had a positive impact on the university. Dr. Rogers is proud of the fact that a reduction in force was accomplished through attrition and not furloughs. He acknowledged higher education is changing, and funding will probably not be restored to the levels we were given in the past.

Dr. Rogers informed the staff that the following will be discussed at the Board of Regents meeting scheduled for May 9 & 10:

a) It will be recommended to the Board of Regents that tuition not be raised in order to keep it competitive with the other same size universities in the state. Raising tuition by 2% does not bring in enough revenue to make a large impact on the university and is not good for the morale of the community and for new or returning students. The plan is to wait until next year when we know what funds the university will receive through state appropriations, and at that time significant changes could be implemented. Additionally, it will allow time to see the status of the university regarding enrollment. It is projected that there will be an increase in enrollment next year. The goal is to eventually increase the enrollment of the university to 7,000.

b) Separate fees charged to students will be combined into one fee. There are three areas at the university that have some very high cost laboratory equipment, and a proposal for an increase in the fee for these labs will be requested.
The budget for FY 14 has not been balanced as of this date, due to waiting for the legislature’s decision on the funding MSU will receive from state appropriations. The House and Senate appropriation bills for MSU are $1 million apart. In the event the House and Senate are not in agreement with the amount in the appropriation bill for MSU, a conference committee will decide the final amount MSU will receive. MSU does have a savings account and permission has been granted by the Board of Regents to use the funds to meet the objectives of the FY14 budget if needed.

Dr. Rogers commented on the controversy surrounding the graduation commencement speaker, Dr. Ben Carson, a world renowned pediatric neurological surgeon. Dr. Carson rose from the slums of Detroit, Michigan, to become the Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University. He is an excellent speaker and his life story could serve as a great inspiration to the students. This spring, Dr. Carson became controversial after he made some comments regarding same sex marriage and used some terms that offended people. Dr. Carson’s major concern was that he did not want to come and disrupt the commencement because it is the students’ day. Dr. Rogers explained the feelings of whether or not to have Dr. Carson as the commencement speaker were strong both ways. Dr. Rogers chose to keep Dr. Carson as the commencement speaker and he has received an overwhelming outpouring of thanks for continuing the invitation. Dr. Rogers made it clear that he respects those who disagree with him, but Dr. Carson is not coming to talk about divisive social issues, he is coming to talk about his career and his accomplishments.

Dr. Betty Stewart wants to assure anyone offended by the comments that the administration’s position is that of respect for diversity and inclusion and they in no way intended to hurt the feelings of the faculty, staff or students with this invitation. She further explained that the administration wants the staff to know that this is an environment where you should be able to feel safe, and you should not worry about your jobs because you have a different perspective. This has come up in conversation that people have felt uncomfortable or worried that if they had a different point-of-view or different position that their job would be in jeopardy. She wants everyone to know that the administration is opposed to any of that in terms of your feeling uncomfortable about your position. We are an institution that believes in the rights of people and this is not a statement to the contrary. The administration wants the staff to know how strongly they feel and support the people who work at the university regardless of your viewpoint and want to make that very clear.

Dr. Rogers gave a special recognition to Dianne Weakley, Director for Human Resources, for being one of the people who initiated the organizing of the MSU Staff Senate. She helped make the Staff Senate a reality, and it is one of the real prides of the university. Dr. Rogers expressed the importance of the Staff Senate as being a way for him to communicate with the university staff.

3. **Correspondence:** The following suggestions/requests/inquiries were received or remain open by Staff Senate:
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- **Suggestion: Hardin Staff Lounge:** Dirk Welch briefly went over the following suggestion received and addressed at the meeting on March 27, 2013: A group of staff in the Hardin South Building have suggested an employees’ lounge be provided in the Hardin Building and be equipped with comfortable couches, easy chairs and a dining area with table and chairs. This lounge would replace the lounge area (room 146 Hardin South) that was utilized in creating The Graduate School office. **Response:** Dirk Welch contacted Kyle Owen, Associate Vice President for Facilities Services regarding space availability and whether or not other lounges for faculty and staff exist on campus. Kyle Owen contacted Rich Frank, Assistant Director of Facilities Services to research whether other lounges for faculty and staff exist on campus. Dirk Welch has not received any further information as of this date. The Staff Senate had further discussion regarding space availability, cost and existing areas available on campus that have seating and refreshments available to everyone. A motion was made by Patricia Lowry to not pursue any further action on the suggestion of an employees’ lounge in the Hardin Administration Building. Lynn Sosebee seconded the motion to not pursue any further action on the suggestion; the motion was approved by unanimous vote *(closed)*.

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

**Executive Committee:** Dirk Welch reported the committee met on Wednesday, May 1 to set agenda and confirm the guest speakers for the Staff Senate meeting on May 8.

**Long Range Review and Planning Committee:** No report. 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:** Dawn Fisher reported the results of the MSU Staff Senate elections for the 2013-2015 Staff Senate as follows *(see attachment 1)*: EEO Class 1: Dirk Welch; EEO Class 3: Treva Clifton and Angie Reay; EEO Class 4: Jennifer Dunn and Jesika Fisher; EEO Class 6: Gary Miller; EEO Class 7: Gary Neal. The following current members will not be returning: Patricia Lowry (EEO Class 3), Peggy Brennan (EEO Class 3), Lucy Davis (EEO Class 4), Michael Deming (EEO Class 6), and Ernest Cooper (EEO Class 7).

**Bylaws Committee:** No Report.

**Scholarship Committee:** No report.

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**Academic Council:** Reagan Foster reported the Academic Council met on April 17, 2013. The following were discussed:

- Catalog Changes
- Recommendations of Core Curriculum Committee

The current and past minutes of the Academic Council meetings are available at [http://academics.mwsu.edu/academicaffairs/minutes.asp?LL=232](http://academics.mwsu.edu/academicaffairs/minutes.asp?LL=232) or contact Deb Schulte at [deb.schulte@mwsu.edu](mailto:deb.schulte@mwsu.edu).

**Faculty Senate:** Chris Stovall reported the Faculty Senate did meet on April 11, May 2 and May 7, 2013. Please see below agenda items discussed at each of the meetings:

**April 11, 2013**
- Report on SACS Visit —Dr. Stewart
- Presentation by MSU Bookstore
- Emeritus Status for Retiring Faculty
- SGA Recycling Resolution—Campus Recycling initiative

**May 2, 2013 — 3:00 PM**
- Faculty Satisfaction Survey Results

**May 2, 2013 — 4:00 PM**
- Election of slate of officers by acclamation to serve in the 2013-2014 academic year

**May 7, 2013**
- Commencement Speaker

For more information, the current and past minutes of the MSU Faculty Senate meetings are available at [http://faculty.mwsu.edu/senate/minutes.asp?LL=1602](http://faculty.mwsu.edu/senate/minutes.asp?LL=1602).

**Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Council:** No Report. A copy of current or past minutes of the Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Council are available by contacting Treva Clifton at [treva.clifton@mwsu.edu](mailto:treva.clifton@mwsu.edu).


5. **New Business:**

**New Proposed Policy/Employee Workplace Bullying** (*see attachment 2*): Dirk Welch introduced a new proposed policy titled Employee Workplace Bullying submitted by Human Resources for review and approval by the Staff Senate. After further discussion, it was agreed the policy was necessary to clearly define bullying in the workplace. Dr. Michael Mills made a motion to approve the new proposed policy, Employee Workplace Bullying as written, Jermaine Causey seconded the motion to approve the new proposed policy; the New Proposed Policy/Employee Workplace Bullying was approved by unanimous vote (*closed*).
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Summer Sizzler: Dirk Welch informed the Staff Senate the following dates were available if the Staff Senate wanted to participate in the Summer Sizzler: July 1-5 and July 8-12. After further discussion, Dawn Fisher made a motion the MSU Staff Senate participate in Summer Sizzler, Lynn Sosebee seconded the motion; participation in the Summer Sizzler was approved by unanimous vote (closed). It was agreed by the members of the MSU Staff Senate to host Summer Sizzler on Tuesday, July 2 from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM. The theme discussed and agreed upon was the “4th of July”. Dirk Welch asked everyone to come to the next meeting with suggestions of location and what we would like to serve at the Summer Sizzler (open).

Meeting Times of MSU Staff Senate in 2013-2014: Dirk Welch requested the Staff Senate discuss and consider changing the regular monthly meeting time of the Staff Senate from 10:00 AM to the afternoon. He had received information from Dawn Fisher, who during the process of the Staff Senate 2013-2014 elections, attended a meeting at Facilities Services. She felt more people in that area would be more inclined to participate/attend Staff Senate meetings if they were moved to the afternoon to accommodate those who do not work the normal 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM work schedule. It would also make it easier to take advantage of attending a meeting to hear a scheduled guest speaker, etc. Dawn Fisher proposed a 1:30 PM or 2:00 PM meeting would work for all the work schedules. Dawn Fisher made a motion to change the time of the regular meeting of the MSU Staff Senate on the second Wednesday of the month from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Michael Deming seconded the motion; changing the time of the MSU Staff Senate meeting from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM was approved by a unanimous vote (closed). Peggy Brennan will follow-up to see if Room 189 in Dillard is available for the meetings in 2013-2014.

Statement of Support: Dirk Welch informed the members of the Staff Senate that the Staff Senate Executive Committee met on May 1 and discussed the three objectives that have been a concern for staff. After further discussion, it was agreed by the Staff Senate Executive Committee that a Statement of Support (see attachment 3) be formulated to address the following three objectives of concern:

- Fifteen staff members are leaving MSU under the Voluntary Separation Plan. What will happen to the savings resulting from MSU staff leaving under the plan?

- Will there be a Staff Salary Enhancement Plan?

- How would implementing a collegiate baseball program impact current and future salary enhancements for faculty and staff?

The Staff Senate Executive Committee met with Dr. Rogers on Monday, May 6 and the three objectives of concern were addressed as noted in the Statement of Support.

Dr. Michael Mills explained that the Staff Senate Executive Committee drafted the Statement of Support with the intent that each member of the Staff Senate could take it to their constituents
and talk about these objectives. Also, this document was drafted to let constituents know that the MSU Staff Senate is interested in these objectives and we have the Staff’s interests in mind.

Chris Stovall made a motion to accept the Statement of Support as written, Patricia Lowry seconded the motion; the Statement of Support was approved as written by unanimous vote (closed).

It was agreed after further discussion among the members of the Staff Senate that the distribution of the Statement of Support should be consistent and delivered as quickly as possible to all Staff. Patricia Lowry suggested that an email be drafted and sent to her and she would be happy to send out the same email with the Statement of Support to each EEO Group with the contact names of the appropriate Staff Senate Representatives for each EEO Group appearing at the bottom of the email.

6. Open Forum:
Ernest Cooper informed the Staff Senate that Moffett Library was open 24 hours during finals week and it appeared that a large number of students utilized the Library during that time. Kevin Bazner, Assistant Director of Student Development and Orientation informed the Staff Senate that students were given 24-hour access to the Moffett Library the week prior and the week of finals for the 2013 spring semester. The idea of giving the students 24-hour access came from the MSU Greek Life community. Staff and student volunteers manned the library during the hours of 2:00 AM and 8:00 AM. The project was deemed a success and will be reviewed for continuation of services for the future.

Lucy Davis asked if anyone knew why updated Campus Phone Directories were no longer available. Dirk Welch will contact Julie Gaynor regarding the status of any updated campus phone directories (open).

7. Announcements:

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 12, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

/SIGNED/

Peggy Brennan
Staff Senate Secretary/Treasurer
Dear MSU Staff Members,

The results of the Staff Senate election have been tallied. The new 2013-2015 Staff Senate representatives, who will begin their term of office on September 1, 2013, are as follows:

**EEO Class 1**
Position 1: Dirk Welch

**EEO Class 3**
Position 1: Treva Clifton
Position 2: Angie Reay

**EEO Class 4**
Position 1: Jennifer Dunn
Position 2: Jesika Fisher

**EEO Class 6**
Position 1: Gary Miller

**EEO Class 7**
Position 1: Gary Neal

**Congratulations** to all of the new representatives and thank you to all staff members who nominated peers, ran in the election, and participated in the voting process!

Thank you!

Staff Senate Membership Committee
Policy XXX Human Resources
EMPLOYEE WORKPLACE BULLYING
Date Adopted/Most Recent Revision: (NEW)

A. Purpose
The university is committed to providing a positive work environment free from intimidation, ridicule, and harassment. Every manager, supervisor, and employee has a responsibility to maintain a work environment free from negative and bullying behavior.

B. Definition
Workplace bullying is the repeated less favorable treatment of a person by another or others in the workplace. Bullying behavior is persistent conduct with malice against another person and has the deliberate intent of causing physical or psychological distress to others.

1. Bullying behavior can include manipulation, spreading rumors, intimidation, belittling remarks, unwarranted criticism, loud or aggressive attacks, shouting, isolation, exclusion, withholding information, and intentionally impeding job performance, with intent to offend, degrade, or humiliate a worker.
2. Bullying does not include occasional differences of opinion, non-aggressive conflicts, and problems in working relations. Workplace counseling, employee performance management, and other management directives by a supervisor are not considered bullying.

C. Prevention
Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all employees understand that bullying is not tolerated in the workplace and for taking early corrective action to deal with behaviors which a reasonable person would consider offensive or intimidating. Every employee has a responsibility to be aware of, identify, and prevent bullying in the workplace.

D. Grievance Procedures
Employees should report instances of bullying behavior to their immediate supervisor, or in instances of bullying by a supervisor, to the managing director or administrator of the department. Employees should follow the university's policies for filing a grievance.

E. Disciplinary Action
Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who bullies another person in the workplace. Discipline will be determined by university policy and may include a warning, transfer, counseling, demotion, or dismissal, depending on the circumstances and severity of the bullying. Retaliation against anyone for reporting bullying behavior is strictly prohibited.

Related Policies:
Policy 3.143 Faculty Grievance Procedure
Policy 3.218 Grievance Procedures for Non-teaching Employees
Policy 3.228 Staff Employee Disciplinary Procedures
Special Statement from the MSU Staff Senate

As the representative voice of 393 staff members from all EEO classes on the Midwestern State University campus, it is one of our core missions to serve as an advisory body to the President on all matters pertaining to the university staff. As such, the Staff Senate has prepared this statement regarding the future of staff raises and other institutional priorities.

First and foremost, the university staff completely understands the financial situation in which not only Midwestern State University has been, but all state agencies. We understand this has been a difficult time, and we are duly appreciative of not only the one-time bonus payments made to university employees in December 2012, but also the administration’s commitment to avoid a strategy of employee furloughs and layoffs during this time of fiscal difficulty. However, speculation as it relates to three objectives routinely discussed in recent weeks by the administration has given rise to notable anxiety on behalf of the university staff, hence the creation of this statement. More detailed information about the position of the Staff Senate is as follows:

1) The first objective relates to three sequential pay increases proposed for university faculty over the next three years. The Staff Senate understands faculty raises will be primarily paid through a change in the manner faculty funding is allocated, particularly during the summer. We also understand the resulting salary savings from faculty members participating in the Voluntary Separation Plan (VSP) will be used to provide faculty raises. **We fully support the notion of raises for our faculty colleagues, but hope savings from staff members participating in the VSP will not be used for this purpose.** After meeting with Dr. Rogers, this concern has been addressed.

2) The second objective has been the issue of staff raises, with the last official raise occurring in 2010. There seems to be varying levels of commitment and urgency to this matter. **The Staff Senate fully supports the administration in its pursuance of this objective.** Employees at this university, both faculty and staff, dedicate themselves to the quality performance of their duties. At a time when a 12% faculty raise is being pursued over the next three years, the Staff Senate requests commitment and responsible urgency as it relates to the provision of staff raises. In an executive committee meeting with Dr. Rogers, he indicated that a Staff Salary Enhancement Plan has been built into the 2013-2014 budget. He indicated that the staff would all receive a 2% raise this year, with additional funding for equity enhancements (a total of $500,000). As part of the Staff Salary Enhancement Plan, the university is raising the minimum and maximum pay grade for classified staff by 5%. This will result in an increase for staff who are currently paid at the beginning pay grade. All other staff who are not at the minimum level, will receive 2% of their base salary with a $600.00 annual minimum. Dr. Rogers also indicated that this was part of a three-year plan, with essentially the same model being applied for all 3 years.
3) The third objective receiving considerable recent attention is the university’s effort to launch a collegiate baseball program. The Staff Senate fully supports the addition of a collegiate baseball program at Midwestern State University as long as it does not inhibit faculty or staff salary enhancements over the next three fiscal years. After our meeting with Dr. Rogers, it does not appear that the addition of baseball will affect either of the aforementioned objectives.

The Staff Senate is proud and optimistic about the future of our institution, and hopeful that all three projects will be accomplished. After meeting with Dr. Rogers, it is apparent that he is taking the necessary steps to enhance university faculty/staff salaries and looking to increase the collegiate atmosphere through the addition of baseball. As long as all of these events come to fruition, the Staff Senate endorses these objectives.

Respectfully Submitted on May 8, 2013,

Dirk Welch
Chris Stovall
Peggy Brennan
Michael Mills
Dawn Fisher
Mike Deming
Ernest Cooper
Sue Witherspoon

Patricia Lowry
Jesika Fisher
Jermaine Causey
Lucy Davis
Lynn Sosebee
Jamie Fowler
Reagan Foster