Staff Senate
November 11, 2013
2:30pm
Page 1 of 7

STAFF SENATE MEETING
MINUTES
November 11, 2013

Note to Senators: Please share the senate agenda, minutes, and any other enclosures with your colleagues prior to the scheduled meeting. Senate meetings are open to all staff. Agendas, minutes, and attendance rosters are available on the Staff Senate website at http://www.etsu.edu/stsenate/default.asp


EXCUSED: Christy Buckles, Donna Cox, Freddie Hill, Katie Jeter, Helen Jones, Sandra Ritchie, Karen Sullivan [Adv], and Edith Tillman.

I. Call to Order – President Lisa Belcher called the meeting to order at 2:30pm.

II. Special Guest – Dr. Brian Noland, President, ETSU – Dr. Noland was in attendance to present an update on budget, salary equity, parking, capital expenditures/projects, and extended an offer for questions. Dr. Noland expressed gratitude for the efforts of staff members who work with students, and noted that it is everyone’s job to help with retention efforts.

A. Budget – In regard to the equity pay and plan, Dr. Noland noted that 2013 is the second year of the five-year-plan, in which the university was afforded an opportunity to make an investment in equity pay across the institution. The investment was in addition to across-the-board salary enhancements provided by Governor Haslam. It is Dr. Noland’s hope that the institution will be able to continue to make installments on the equity pay plan in years three, four, and five, but fulfillment will depend on state funding and enrollment. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) meets next week and will offer recommendations to Governor Haslam as they relate to the budget. THEC’s budget provides for our institution, and at this time there is no clear confirmation of the budget other than the realization that we are starting from a position of base plus, whereas previously we began from a position of base minus. Dr. Noland shared that this is a good starting point.

B. Parking – Dr. Noland shared that in review of parking flow, patterns, and distribution, it is his impression that there is no parking problem. Twelve-hundred parking spaces will be released when the garage is completed in the spring 2014, and at that time, there will be an opportunity to take a long-scale look at parking. Among other things to be considered are dedicated lots for faculty and staff, and the transition of current lots. In comparison to other state government facilities/institutions, we are fortunate for ample parking opportunities around our campus. The new garage will house food service alternatives (mini-mart and Subway), and new homes for the Welcome Center and Public Safety. Dr. Noland congratulated Dr. Collins and his staff for the great work accomplished in supporting the institution through some major hurdles. Once the garage has been open for a while, an evaluation of the distribution of parking will take place, and in the summer additional conversation will take place in which long-term parking across the institution will be reviewed and discussed.

C. Main Website – Dr. Noland reported that the new website was launched last week. The site is geared toward telling our story. Institution comparison will be easier for perspective students and parents, and it is more user-friendly. Dr. Noland welcomed points of suggestion for the website, and he asked that faculty and staff realize that the student focus was accomplished by design.
There may be an adjustment period for faculty and staff in identifying the location of familiar pages, but this was carried out with purpose in order to support the student population, both current and prospective students seeking to apply to our institution. Student stories will rotate across the front page of the site and are intended to tell the stories of the people of ETSU. Over the course of the fall and spring, secondary webpage changes will take place. Enhancements have begun and will ripple through the entire site. Dr. Noland congratulated Ms. Clements and her team for the work they have completed to streamline the website.

D. Capital Projects

i. Arts Initiative – The Arts facility is a fundraising priority for the university. The initiative will help raise support for the facility as well as scholarships, etc. Approximately 5.7 million dollars has been raised since the commencement of the initiative in February 2013. The total matching fund goal required by the State is 9.5 million dollars which hopefully can be raised by July 2014. Overall, the facility will be a 38 million dollar initiative. Negotiations with external entities are underway. Locations on campus and off campus are planned. The Arts building has been approved by the Building Commission, and a thirty-year dream will shortly be realized by many across the region. It will serve as a wonderful location to showcase our institution’s student performances on our own campus.

ii. Athletic Update - Dr. Noland shared that nineteen home basketball games are planned this year including two exhibitions, which is the largest number of basketball games in the history of the institution. Three of the games will be held at Freedom Hall. The Dome is an amazing facility, but a smaller venue is important in regard to competitive advantage. Dr. Noland welcomes input around the Freedom Hall experience. In spring 2014, access to the Dome will be drastically reduced due to the erection of scaffolding in preparation for reroofing of the facility. In the event of a rainy summer, consideration of external basketball venues is necessary as a back-up plan in an effort to be prepared for the 2014 fall basketball season. The proforma for the football program is transparent. Dr. Noland shared that the football program is self-sufficient through the end of the decade unless there is a significant change in State support or enrollment. The football program is about bringing people to campus and creating points of engagement across the institution.

iii. Lamb Hall – Dr. Noland shared that major renovations to Lamb Hall are being planned. Fund raising efforts, in the next four to five years, will begin for support of the institution’s portion of the cost of the renovations. Classrooms and lab spaces are sorely needed on campus.

iv. Location for the Football Facility – President Noland shared that there are two final locations for the football facility being considered; both are on the backside of campus. Geological work is being performed currently to one of the sites. Dr. Noland does not expect to make a final announcement on the facility any time soon.

v. Culp Center Changes – President Noland shared that once the Welcome Center moves from the Culp Center to its new location, there will be prime real estate available in the Culp Center. The current Welcome Center will become the New Multicultural Center. The Multicultural Center is another goal dating back more than 20 years. The center will provide a venue for students to come together in a safe and supportive environment. An even larger goal will be to transform the Culp Center into a Student Union with availability 24/7. The goal is to make the location a one-stop-shop for student services. Student body conversation will, most likely, occur throughout the fall and into the spring in regard to a potential student fee to support debt service, renovate, and put an expansion on the Culp Center. It is hoped that these changes will support an increase in enrollment. At one point, there were 15,500 students enrolled; currently, this fall, there are students 14,957 enrolled. Deliberate actions need to be taken in order to increase enrollment.
Putting some numbers in context, $650,000 is in the queue from the state in terms of new operating revenue, and last year there was a little more than $700,000 of new operating revenue. These numbers are equivalent to approximately 100 students. Instead of a mindset of trying to obtain additional State funding, we need to focus on what we can do through student support activities, advising activities, financial aid activities, and through other departments, to obtain new students and retain current students. The institution’s ability to grow, build new buildings, and fund equity pay, is not found in the State, but lies with our ability to retain more of our students and attract new students.

E. Who We Are and Where We Are Going – Current changes on campus are being made to help build our student base and these changes will help differentiate our institution from competitors. Green space, the revised website, capital projects, our logo, etc., will all help to differentiate us, and will help provide a consistent message of who we are as an institution and will help draw students to our university. In looking at the 125 outcomes, one of the primary emerging themes is that we have a world-class institution, and we are one of the best kept secrets in the State. Our challenge is to do a better job of telling our story of excellence.

F. Questions/Discussion

i. Argos Data System – Senator Hoyle suggested increased access to the Argos Data System which would greatly enhance retention efforts and provide intervention for at-risk students. Dr. Noland noted that he would share the information with Dr. Mike Hoff, Director of Institutional Research.

ii. Living/Learning Communities – Senator Morin noted that it would be beneficial for students to have mentors early on in the campus life in order for them to become acclimated to campus life. Dr. Noland shared that this topic was consistent with feedback from students with whom he met last week, and the need for additional advising support services was discussed.

iii. Dome Weight Room – Senator Raines inquired regarding examining the need for improvements and renovations in the weight room at the Dome. Dr. Noland shared that there are plans to examine renovations and improvements in the Dome in conjunction with football related activities, associated Title IX related activities, as well as U. S. Olympic training activities.

iv. Lab Renovations – Senator Roberson inquired regarding lab renovations. Dr. Noland commented that lab upgrades on the VA campus are close to being complete, as well as some major renovations in Building 60 which would provide a Center for Interprofessional Health, as well as Lamb Hall renovations would impact labs.

v. Website – Senator D. Smith inquired regarding future plans for departments following in the steps of the main website upgrade. Dr. Noland shared that updates on the remaining web pages will occur sequentially. Ms. Clements and Dr. King are working through the websites and have a time-framed sequence. The departments will also be a part of the web page updates.

vi. Advising – Senator Myrick inquired about training for academic advisors so that they are also part of the consistent institutional message. Dr. Noland shared that work is being developed under the umbrella of the Access to Success Committee (A2S) who are examining interventions to be put in place to improve retention rates.

vii. Access to Campus – President Belcher inquired regarding a comment she received about safe access to and from campus. Dr. Noland shared that an additional traffic light is needed. The institution has been fairly pointed in conversations with the City about the safety issue on State of Franklin Road. In the heavily traveled area, by foot and automobiles, the pace of traffic needs to be reduced.
Considerations are additional congestion at certain times of the day, and cost, so there is no simple answer. Dialogue with the City regarding this issue has been ongoing.

viii. **ROTC Update** – Dr. Noland shared that our institution was identified by the Army as one of the thirteen programs in the country slated for closure; three of the programs were within the State of Tennessee. The reason provided was that we have not produced the required number of commissioned officers on an annual basis. Our mission, as prescribed by the Army, is eleven. The Army’s new mission for our institution may be fifteen. The threshold that we were held against in the closure decision was fifteen. Dr. Noland shared that he received a call from Senator Alexander, late last week, informing him that the Army was providing a two-year extension. Later that evening, the extension was approved. The announcement allows us to recruit freshman for the 2014 class. We are on target to commission more than twenty officers in 2014, and twenty-three officers in 2015. These numbers more than surpass the criteria.

III. **Approval of Minutes** – President Belcher called for corrections to the minutes of October 14, 2013. There were no corrections; the minutes were approved as distributed.

IV. **President’s Report – President Lisa Belcher**

A. **Staffing of the Senate Office** – President Belcher shared that the Staff Senate office will be open every Wednesday from 12:30pm-1:30pm. Staff members will be notified by email informing them of the open hours. Senator Chamberlain has noted the Staff Senate office hours on the website. It is hoped that staff members will drop by the office during that time. President Belcher inquired regarding Senator interest in helping to staff the hours. Depending on Senator interest, increased hours may be possible.

B. **Notification of Absences** – President Belcher reminded Senators that intended absences from Senate meetings should be forwarded to Senator Eargle, with a copy to President Belcher, prior to the meeting in order to receive an excused status for that period. Otherwise, the absence will be regarded as non-excused. In accordance with the Constitution, Senators accumulating more than three consecutive unexcused absences or six total absences in a twelve-month period, defined as September through August, will be terminated from Senate membership.

C. **Committee Chairs** – President Belcher shared that committee chairs who plan to present a report to the Senate must notify Senator Eargle prior to the meeting.

D. **Johnson City Christmas Parade** – President Belcher shared that the Johnson City Christmas Parade is scheduled for December 7th and the parade will end on campus. Details are still unfolding, but President Belcher noted that there may be an opportunity for Staff Senate to assist in the festivities at the end of the parade. President Belcher noted that the event is an opportunity for the community and the campus to join efforts for a festive celebration.

E. **Main ETSU Website** – President Belcher reported that the redesign of the main ETSU website is active. Comments or questions about the website can be forwarded to Ms. Jennifer Clements, Director of Marketing, University Relations.

F. **Director of Admissions, Mr. Brian Henley** – President Belcher reported that the Executive Committee met with Mr. Brian Henley, Director of Admissions, last week. He has been invited to visit a future Senate meeting as a guest speaker to provide an overview of the Office of Admissions and help determine possible ways the Senate can help increase enrollment.

G. **Meet and Greet with Coach Torbush, Coach Ezell, and others/VA Campus** – President Belcher reported that the Meet & Greet on the VA Campus on November 5th was a success. Senator Burton facilitated the event. Carl Torbush, Head Football Coach, Brittney Ezell, Head Ladies Basketball Coach and their staff presented information on both programs.
Although the group was small, it is hoped that as additional events are planned on the VA campus, participation will increase. This measure is the first of many to come which will, hopefully, help to incorporate the two campuses. The athletic staff shared information regarding various ways to purchase tickets for game events. The purchase of flex tickets allows for ticket purchase in bundles of different amounts. One hundred dollars buys 50 tickets, can be used for any game on any date, and distributed in increments of the purchaser’s choice. An anonymous donor has contributed funds for the purchase of 50 tickets. The tickets will be distributed among staff members, and President Belcher asked Senate members to forward ideas for distribution to her. More than likely, tickets will be distributed in pairs.

H. **Thank You From Custodial Staff** – President Belcher shared that the Senate has received a thank you card from the custodial staff as appreciation for the part the Senate took in the discussion regarding outsourcing custodial services.

I. **Parking Garage Update** – President Belcher reported that upon the opening of the parking garage there may be an opportunity to revisit the parking initiative in reference to lots, etc. An anonymous inquiry has been received regarding parking fees in reference to tiered parking, etc. At this time, there are no changes and no plans to revisit parking fees.

V. **Treasurer Report** – Senator C. Massey reported the general account balance as $6,919.51; the Holiday Drive account balance is $1,667.04; and the balance of the Community Benevolence account holds a balance of $4,481.25.

VI. **Report on Standing Committees**

A. **Committee on Committees** – Senator Warner, chair, shared that Senator Chamberlain is stepping down from her position on the International Advisory Committee. The committee meets the second Tuesday of the month at 3:00pm in Yoakley Hall. Senator Chamberlain shared that the committee reviews and approves all ETSU classes all over the world. Additional committee specifics can be found at the University Governance on the website. Senator Warner requests that any Senator willing to serve on the committee can send her a statement of interest (why interested and qualifications), via email to warnerc@etsu.edu by November 18th. Senator Warner shared that there is a Salary Equity Committee which has reformed. Staff members representing the staff body are President Belcher, President-Elect Whitlock, and Mr. Chuck Patton. Senator Myrick is the representative for Staff Senate on the Service Learning Community and Public Service Standing Committee, a new campus committee.

i. **Sustainability Fee Advisory Committee Report** – President Belcher reported that the committee met for the first time on November 8th. The committee is chaired by Ms. Kathleen Moore, Director of Sustainability, consists of four students, and three faculty or staff members, the appointment is for one year, and they meet 2-3 times a year. The committee reviews submitted projects, determines which projects should be taken on for the year, and how much funding should be allocated to the project. The total budget for all projects is $130,000 which is derived from student fees. Sensor light switches, LED lighting for five major classrooms, smart belly station (eco-friendly trash compactor), and automatic hand dryers are a small sampling of the projects. There are a total of twenty-seven projects submitted. The committee, as a whole, will determine which projects will be funded.

B. **Committee on Elections** – Senator Bennett, chair, shared that the committee met on October 29th to discuss goals and direction for the remainder of the year. Since the last meeting, there has been a resignation from the Senate. The vacancy is in EEOC7, and there are no alternates from which to choose. Providing the Senate has no objections, Senator Bennett made a motion for a special election to fill the seat. There was no objection from the Senate.
The committee will move forward with the special election. The term extends through 2015. The Committee on Elections will meet immediately following today’s Senate meeting.

C. Communications and Website – Senator Chamberlain, chair, shared that the committee met on October 28th and discussed adding more images to the site, as well as the addition of campus and community informational links to the website. Some additional considerations for change are the navigational buttons, and staff member listing, vision for future activities, an archive feature, and Facebook and Twitter links to increase communication. Senator K. Sullivan (adv) will be working on some articles which will increase Senate communication. A drop-box will be created to store photographs. Suggestions for increased communication via the website are always welcome. The next meeting of the committee is November 25th to finalize some of the considerations.

D. Community Benevolent Committee (CBC) – Senator C. Collins, chair, noted that the committee met, sent Holiday Flyers via email and posted them throughout buildings. There is an increased need for help this year. Senator Collins shared that she has received close to 90 requests for food baskets. Washington County Department of Education has requested 100 baskets. November 12th will be a pick up day for food donations. Volunteers are needed in all areas. The Equipment Room of the CPA is prepared to receive the donations. The room has also been reserved for November 20th for food sorting; food will be boxed on November 21st; and the baskets will be distributed on November 22nd.

E. Liaison Committee – No report.

F. Staff Awards Committee – No report.

G. Staff Concerns – Senator C. Massey, chair, shared that the committee met on October 30th and discussed committee goals. It is hoped that a procedure can be created for complaints and concerns. In addition, the committee is discussing a form for the committee to use for reporting purposes.

H. Staff Development and Evaluation – Senator Raines, chair, shared that the committee met to familiarize themselves with current availability for staff development and training.

I. Visibility Committee – Senator Murphy, chair, shared that the committee met on October 28th. The committee members will assist with the Food Drive and hopes to be able to include some Friends of the Senate as well. Goals for the year include increased awareness of Staff Senate, and hope to involve Staff Senate Alumni in some form. Some of goals are to create a distinctive and consistent flyer, partner with SGA and Faculty Senate, and possibly host round-table discussions to determine accessibility for students, inform staff on various campus events, and develop an application for Friends of the Senate.

VII. Report on Project Committees

A. Blood Drive – Senator Roberson, chair, noted that the committee has not met, as a whole, but Senator Roberson has spoken with Ms. Joy Fulkerson who plans to meet with the Red Cross and Blood Assurance. Senator Roberson will participate in that meeting. A target date for the drive is still June 2014.

B. Staff Picnic – No report.

C. Bylaws/Constitution (Adhoc) – President-Elect Whitlock, chair, shared that the committee met a couple of weeks ago and picked up where the former committees left off. President-Elect Whitlock noted that he requested committee members to visit the Archives of Appalachia to sift through the constitution in order to identify changes and to determine how it has evolved into the document it is today.
Some of the goals for this year include clarification on special election protocol, and guidelines for changes of EEOC categories in the midst of a term.

VIII. **Old Business** – There was no old business to discuss.

IX. **New Business**

There was no new business to discuss.

X. **Announcements**

   **A. Coat Drive** – Senator Hill shared that the coat drive was a huge success. More than 300 coats were distributed. The only remaining items were a few children’s coats and a couple of women’s coats. The remaining items were taken to the Salvation Army. Any questions about the drive can be directed to Senator Jones.

**Adjournment** – There being no other business to discuss, a motion was made to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00pm.

Submitted by Senator J. Ann Eargle

_____________________________________
Secretary