

STAFF SENATE MEETING MINUTES

Zoom Virtual Meeting

September 14, 2020

PRESENT: Yaritza Abdelnour, Gwen Bays, Lisa Booher, Vanessa Canter, Tim Dills, Chasity Drew, David Finney, Joy Fulkerson, Cody Greene, Suzy Hooven, Kathi Horne, Kimberlyn King, Trish Lowe, Barbi Ly-Worley, Ronald Mann, Candy Massey, Crystal Maupin, Jennifer Mayberry, Don McCarty, Cathy Metcalf, Jessica Miller, Kim Miller, Skylar Moore, Amanda Mowell, Stefanie Murphy, Emily Redd, Veronica Roberson, David Robinson, Hazel Robinson, Christie Scaf, NaKeisha Talley, and Liz Thomas-Joseph. **EXCUSED:** Anthony Johnson, Debbie Marsh, Evelyn Roach, Tory Street, Brian Thompson, and Yvette Whittemore. **UNEXCUSED:** None. **RESIGNED:** Becky Birdwell, Cathy Carty, Kathleen Moore, and Libby Tipton.

- I. **Call to Order:** President Candy Massey called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** Past President Stefanie Murphy moved to approve the August minutes as presented, and Senator Hazel Robinson seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- III. **President's Report:** President Massey welcomed the new Senators. She reminded everyone of the recently announced incentives for those wishing Covid-19 testing. She reported that 74 staff members had been approved for the early retirement incentive. She commented that ETSU's enrollment was 449 students below last year's figure, which was within the budgeted range of decline. President Massey asked that Senators who have not expressed a preference on committee assignments please contact her soon, as she is working on the committee listings.
- IV. **Guest Speaker:** Bill Rasnick, former director of the Physical Plant, shared details with the Senate of the campus' precautions and planning to provide as much safety from the Covid-19 virus as possible. He mentioned that the number of cases on campus has been lower than what was predicted, and he expressed appreciation to everyone for their cooperation and compliance. He reported that the university has plenty of PPE on hand, and he explained how custodial crews are cleaning over 300 classrooms per day as well as many common areas. Over 250 plexiglass partitions were distributed across campus. Mr. Rasnick reported that he expects additional requests for larger group events to be received as the semester continues, but he cautioned that larger events must have safety plans and that inspectors will be present to make sure those plans are followed. Vice President Fulkerson asked if Spring 2021 is expected to be similar to Fall 2020; Mr. Rasnick expressed his hope that it might be better, especially on the student engagement side, as the university is better prepared on how to handle issues. Senator Mowell asked if any misinformation exists and how we as Senators can help correct it; he answered that

some confusion has existed on the differences between isolation, quarantine, and testing, particularly on the individual's responsibility on how long to remain out of contact. He referenced the university's website as a consistent source of correct information. Senator Mowell asked if the university is using contact tracing; Mr. Rasnick replied that those affected by the virus are contacted once per day, but he stated that the local Health Department is charged with contacting those outside of the ETSU realm. He expressed his belief that the decision to change to single-occupancy housing greatly helped ETSU control the virus. If Senators have questions or concerns, they may contact Mr. Rasnick directly by email (rasnick@etsu.edu).

- V. Vice President's Report: Vice President Fulkerson shared information from the University Council meeting earlier in the day. She forwarded reports on the Equity & Inclusion Action Plan, the Out-of-State Enrollment Strategy, and the new Alumni Director (Whitney Goetz) to Secretary Dills, and he will distribute them to the Senate. She reminded Senators that they may watch the Board of Trustees meeting this Friday, and she announced that Melissa Steagall Jones will be joining the Board upon the resignation of David Golden. She mentioned that SGA has asked the university to consider using Pass/Fail again this fall, given that the majority of classes are online again. She shared that the Counseling Center and other offices are offering additional support for our students during these unusual times. Additional Zoom storage is being sought, as the campus is at 81% of storage capacity, and 27 new wireless connections have been installed on campus. Athletic Director Scott Carter reported that ETSU is awaiting decisions from the NCAA on the Basketball season and how the fall sports which were moved to spring term will function. Vice President Fulkerson mentioned that ETSU was down one-third in international enrollment (decline of 150 students), but increases in the number of transfer students were tempered by declines in freshmen enrollment. The second phase of the Committee of 125 should soon begin its work. Dr. Noland expects that the fall term will finish as planned, and he expressed his appreciation to everyone for their efforts. In addition, Vice President Fulkerson shared that an additional two days of vacation are being considered to thank faculty and staff for their hard work. Senator McCarty asked when those days might be; she replied that a Thursday/Friday combination had been mentioned, but that hopefully more information would be addressed at this week's Board meeting.
- VI. Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Crystal Maupin reported that the balance in the Main Account is \$10,071. The CBC and Holiday Drive balances are \$2,681.25 and \$819.91, respectively.
- VII. Special Report: Senator Mayberry, who is an officer in Public Safety, shared details of the recent incident on campus from the NOWHITEGUILT group and their distribution of 3000 flyers on campus vehicles and in other local parking areas. She shared photos of the three individuals involved on campus, and she reported that the FBI and Homeland Security had been contacted on this case. One of the suspects entered Ball Hall and was

attempting to interview members of the campus community, identifying herself as an independent journalist. Senator Mayberry instructed Senators that it is recommended that no one provide permission for their comments to be recorded, and Senator Mowell of University Relations commented that their office should deal with reporters and would notify staff or faculty if authorized reporters were being sent to their offices. Vice President Fulkerson said the group is not a registered campus organization, and Senator Mayberry noted that none of the three individuals are or have been students as far as Public Safety can tell. Senator Mayberry stated that the group can be barred from campus for placing the flyers on cars, but they are not considered dangerous or threatening. Senators were encouraged to share information with their colleagues, but no mass email will be sent to the campus community, as that might further provoke the group. It is recommended that everyone avoid them if possible, but if they are seen again on campus, please contact Investigator Bowen at Public Safety (439-5223).

VIII. Old Business – none.

IX. New Business

a. Confirmation of Anthony Johnson as Parliamentarian - President Massey recommended that Senator Johnson continue in his duties as Parliamentarian. Secretary Dills moved that he be confirmed for the 2020-21 year, and Member-at-Large Booher seconded the motion. The motion passed.

b. Discussion of Officer Vacancy and Upcoming Election - Secretary Dills announced his upcoming retirement at the end of October and the need for a new person to serve as Staff Senate Secretary beginning in November. He asked that interested persons email their nominations to him; nominations will close on September 28, and the last date to vote in the election will be October 9.

c. Staff Senate Website Discussion - Senator Redd reported that updates on the Senate membership and the committee listings will be made on the website. She asked for input on whether Senators wished to have their photographs added to the membership list. Several expressed approval of this idea; Vice President Fulkerson suggested that to maintain consistency the university photographer be asked to take the photos. Senator Horne volunteered to contact Charlie Warden to determine when he might be available to schedule the photos.

X. Announcements – Senator Mowell reminded Senators that the restrictions on campus parking have been relaxed, so anyone with a current parking pass may park anywhere on campus.

XI. Adjournment – Senator D. Robinson moved to adjourn the meeting, and Member-at-Large Booher seconded the motion. The meeting concluded at 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Dills, Secretary