



## STAFF SENATE

Thursday, September 14, 2023

GAC 401 - Boardroom

**Members in attendance:** Frank Bowen, Rachel Faust, Joe Benyish, Steve Blankenship, Jennifer Ellis, Isabella Chow, Megan Raymond, Lisa Gray, Shannon James, Tabitha Pilchard, Tony Sampson, Candace Henry, Dave Gutowski, JJ Remo

**Guests:** Eli Modlin, Michelle Stokes, Christine Benoit, Lynn Adkins

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of August Meeting Minutes

a. *Motion to approve: Shannon James*

b. *Second: Tabitha Pilchard*

III. President's Office

a. VP for DEI- Same search firm that did the Admin and Finance Job will also be doing the VP for DEI (This title has not been decided on). It hasn't started but it's in the works. It's an important position. The President's office is dedicated to making it right. Making sure the language is correct on what the role of this position will be doing.

\*ODI- has moved to GSU first floor.

b. Human Resources- Michelle has been working with HR since mid-summer. HR wants to get moving on new hires and fill positions. Priority is also taking care of the people who are already here who are waiting on a reclassification.

c. Cabinet is approving the pins. Cabinet isn't approving classification or salaries. If it's approved by the Cabinet doesn't mean its bypassing HR.

d. HR Assessment has been Finalized and has been presented to the president. She has been in contact with the VP-AF and they are working on what steps they are going to take moving forward. 120 people responded to the request for feedback. Deloitte was happy with the turn out. They feel they made a wholehearted review of the HR Department. Working on policies making sure they are up to date and compliant with what our practices are. 55-page report. Recommendations that we are interested in and some that we are not. VP-AF will be a big part of the decisions. Shared governance will be presented with communications about the results of findings.

e. Staff morale is a continuing process. This is not an overnight thing. It starts from the top and making it clear it's a priority. HR is to support people and the culture.

f. Summer hours- they have only heard positive feedback. There had been some hiccups. Making sure there are certain people here while the campus is open. Talking with the VP about certain areas that couldn't take full advantage. Will keep in contact with Staff Senate to help better the program.

g. Homecoming- we are going to try to replicate last year. Spirit in the square. Last year when we did the night shift dinner it was a great percentage of staff that came to the dinner.

h. Two searches for Dean's CHHS and Perdue. They are in the process of interviewing search firms. More will come out when the search firm are picked. Using search firms due to the market is becoming the norm and is very helpful and beneficial to HR and the campus.

- i. Commencement- looking to see what possible options are. Is it possible to hold the may commencement in the stadium. December 2023 will be still at the Civic Center. What is the logistics and what departments who currently don't work commencement would be involved. Do we have the staffing to do it. Do we have the facilities to do it. The civic center has limitations. Making the experience for the student better. The regalia is going to change to Marron instead of black. Working with Jason C. about legacy students.
- j. 40.1 percent of the class of 2027 is self-identifying as first-generation students.
- k. Work Day- The change management piece. We must make sure the level and understanding is across the board/campus.
- l. Marching Band- Reestablishing a marching band for the university after a few decades. Working with the faculty and dean in the music department. Very excited about bringing it back.

IV. Staff senate Liaison- Lynn Adkins

PAT as part of the 2025 budget submission. Over the target asks. They must align with the Governor's plan. Usually, the system requests this information. Support administration but support campus life.

V. Human Resources Updates – Christine Benoit

- a. USM professional development week coming back for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
  - i. Hopeful that people can take a break from work and take advantage of the opportunity.
- b. Final approvals for the new SU Leads cohort coming soon and starts next Friday. Diverse mix of departments and tenures.
- c. Director level and above & Chairs needs to get training on ethics every 5 years.
- d. October 30<sup>th</sup> Benefits Fair to be held on campus.

VI. New Business

- a. Initial report back from Deloitte. The issues that stood out were HR's lack of strategic planning, poor infrastructure, and lack of transparency, clear processes, and innovated thinking. Michelle Stokes will be addressing these issues with the new VP of Admin & Finance.
- b. SU will not be holding COVID-19 vaccine clinics but will be partnering with community partners to hold flu vaccine clinic.
- c. Faculty member brought up HR roadblocking the hiring of admins and the discussion of the position reclass. Faculty stressed to the President these positions need to be filled.
- d. Strategic Innovation Fund Council- made up of people from difference area. Shared governance reviewed the packets and have now passed them onto the cabinet.
- e. VPAF Aurora starts in early October.
- f. Trying to schedule a Town Hall for fall.
- g. Recommendation about the Handbook- Town Hall- Survey on Summer Hours.
- h. Deciding what groups everyone will work with. HR, Events and Elections.

VII. Old Business

VIII. Staff Senate Reports

- a. *Staff Senate Chair – Joe*

i.

- b. *CUSS Update – Lisa/Shannon/Dave/Megan*
- c. *August Meeting*
- d. *Snack & Chat*

IX. Other Topics-

X. Adjournment

**HR-  
Bella, Lisa, Shannon, Frank, Tony and Dave have a recommendation to review.**