

**THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA**

**STAFF SENATE**

**(NORMAN CAMPUS)**

**Wednesday, April 21, 2021**

Chair Crystal Ary called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

*Officers present* – Crystal Ary, Chair; Justin Daniels, Chair-Elect; Sarah Connelly, Immediate Past Chair; Kristi Wright, Recording Secretary

*Staff present* – Melissa Lane, Administrative Coordinator

*Representatives present* – Hourly Employees Council: Paul Box, Jessica Rossman, Ross Mehl, Judy Estes, Karla Pitre Joe Northcutt, David Kizer, Jen Elsner, Sharrie Sanders; Informational Staff Association: Christine Young, Corey Helms, Leslie Vennoch, Daniel Deering, Elaine Bradshaw; Organizational Staff Council: Rhonda Hill, Jenny Lang, Betty Love, Julia Rouse; Administrative Staff Council: Heather Todd, Andrea Flores

*Representatives absent* — Hourly Employees Council: Minerva Quinonen-Willingham, Will O'Donnell, Terri Smith; Organizational Staff Council: Anjanette Pierce, Steven Hanger

*Guests* — Robin Stroud, Debra Levy Martinelli, Matthew Rom, Diana Fitzpatrick, Katherine McRae, Kelly Thompson, Patrick McClain, Rusanna Hardesty, Amber Williams, Jami Houston, Marilyn Korhonen, JA Prryse, Cynthia De La Rosa, Cindy Clark, Pam Dempsey, Marissa Pierson, Cathy Yeaman, Laney Bailey, Ann Seely, Krista Petterson, Beth Young, Tina Henderson, and Shameka Johnson

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF March 17, 2021**

On a motion by Paul Box, the minutes of March 17, 2021, Staff Senate meeting were accepted by an email majority vote.

**CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

Staff Senate Executive staff met March 24<sup>th</sup>; the proposal of Staff Senate operating procedures was discussed in great length. Each member had input in the proposal and was taken back to the committee for consideration, which was updated. The updated proposal has been distributed to Staff Senate for review. If you have not reviewed the document and would like to please feel free to contact me. Also, if you have reviewed the document and have input, questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to contact me, Justin, or [staffsenate1@ou.edu](mailto:staffsenate1@ou.edu).

The week of April 5<sup>th</sup>, the interview committee for the Sr Vice President & Provost position held a forum + Q&A session for each candidate. I was not able to attend every session, the sessions I was able to attend, the committee had a great pool. The candidates were excellent it will be exciting to see who will be selected for this position.

April 7<sup>th</sup> Staff Senate met with HR concerning the Parental Leave proposal. HR had some input concerning the proposal which has been taken into consideration. The proposal has been updated and we are waiting for some additional numbers before taking the next steps.

Justin, Melissa, and I were able to attend most of the member group meetings this month to help answer any questions concerning the Staff Senate Operating Procedure Proposal. Thank you all for your continued feedback and investment in this process.

Staff Week is next week, April 26<sup>th</sup> – April 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be Staff Week communication coming out this week, if you have any questions, please let me know. Also, please take the time to attend as many events as possible that you can, the committee has put in a lot of time and effort into planning this week.

Staff Merit Award recipients have been decided and notified. Recognition of the Staff Merit Award recipients will be recognized in the OU Info that will be sent out next week.

Scheduled upcoming meetings are:

Staff Senate Executive – April 28<sup>th</sup>

Meeting with President Harroz – May 10<sup>th</sup>

Any questions? If anyone has any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

#### REPORTS FROM MEMBER GROUPS

**Administrative Staff Council and Informational Staff Council:** President Heather Todd and Christine Young reported that they discussed the Staff Senate reorganization proposal.

**Hourly Employees Council:** President Paul Box reported that they started the meeting with the appointments of vacated positions. We also spoke about the various sub-committees' vacated position replacements and brief updates from the various sub-committees. For the remainder of the meeting, we spoke in-depth about the Staff Senate's proposed Constitution and Operating Procedures.

**Organizational Staff Council:** President Rhonda Hill reported that Terri Smith, Chair of Staff Week was the guest speaker. We discussed the Staff Senate Operating Procedures.

#### REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

**Awards Committee:** By email, Chair Liz Cooley reported that they will not meet the rest of the year.

**Communications Committee:** By email, Chair Dalton Brasington reported that they met via email to craft the Staff Week letter/email.

**Staff Initiatives Committee:** Chair Jami Houston reported that they updated parental leave, reviewed bereavement leave policy, submitted a shared leave survey for staff to Exec.

**Staff Week Committee:** By email, Chair Terri Smith reported that Staff Week did not meet in April, but touched base via email. The committee has completed planning and Virtual Staff Week is ready for April 26<sup>th</sup> through 30<sup>th</sup>!

#### REPORTS OF SPECIAL AD HOC COMMITTEES

**Policy Review Ad Hoc Committee:** Crystal Ary reported that the committee has met with all of the member groups to get feedback on the documents.

#### REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY COUNCILS, COMMITTEES, AND BOARDS

**Employee Benefits Committee:** Matthew Rom reported the following:

##### Benefits Update

- **OU Health Physicians/Blue Cross Blue Shield Negotiations:** Still within the 120 day transition period. Services obtained by OU Health Physicians should still be available at the same rates as when the contract was in place. Negotiations between the two entities are ongoing. OU benefits team has asked BCBS to include OU Health Physicians in our current client-specific university plan as being an in-network provider. This action will take some time but should be complete by June when the 120 day transition period ends. The transition should be seamless for those in the OU insurance program (students, retiree, active).

- More information on negotiations available at <https://www.ouhealth.com/about-ou-health/bcbs-info-for-ou-health-physicians/frequently-asked-questions/>
- The negotiations between OU Health Physicians/Blue Cross Blue Shield only impact the Oklahoma City area. OU Tulsa contracts with BCBS separately.
- Connect Your Care – Flexible Spending Accounts: The stimulus package recently adopted requires modifications to the University’s plan. The change states unspent 2020 FSA funds can be rolled over into 2021 and can be spent through December 31, 2021. The maximum age covered through dependent care was increased to age thirteen through December 31, 2021. Someone who terminated service in 2021 can have their FSA funds through December 31, 2021 (for money already deposited). Separated employees are not usually able to claim expenses after the date of separation. Email sent out to OU community on March 8, 2021.
- Dependent care limits can also increase as a result of the American Rescue Plan Act. Any changes will require Board of Regents’ approval. Benefits team requesting to increase the limit to \$10,500 for 2021. This change would only impact 2021, and the annual limit would return to the standard \$5,000 threshold in 2022. If approved, enrollment would occur in June, with new contributions deducted started in July.
- Willis Dashboard: Medicals pending has been under budget since January 2020.
- The benefits team intends to issue an RFP for medical and pharmacy services for active employees and Pre-65 retirees.

#### Retirement Update

- Fidelity “Women Talk Money” on 3/24/2021.
- Discussion on retiree medical insurance
  - Retirees feel they were not informed. More information will be coming from United Healthcare on how to use the system.
  - United Healthcare is an open access PPO plan similar to a Medicare Advantage Plan. The University sponsors the plan.
  - Members of the committee had not heard of any significant issues with using the plan.

#### Wellness Update

- Just finished the FitStart Team Challenge (8-week team challenge). More details on final numbers next month.
- There is currently a plank challenge (March 16-29)
- Continuing to have a wide variety of workshops and activities virtually.
- March is national nutrition month. Working with HSC students to hold workshops for employees. They are only able to talk about general nutrition information. Sessions are held every Thursday at noon from March 25 – May 6.
  - Small group workshops with students April 20 at 10 AM and 11 AM
- Quarter 1 incentive item is a blue duffel bag.

The next meeting will be on April 15, 2021, at 1:30 via Zoom.

#### OTHER REPORTS

*The following reports were linked to the April agenda:*

Staff Senate Foundation account report \$1,285.30

Minutes of Employment Benefits Committee meeting for February 2021

#### OLD BUSINESS

**Paid Parental Leave Proposal:** Crystal Ary reported that the committee is adding some additional numbers that Human Resources asked to be included. Once the document is updated the Senate will be asked to review it again.

#### NEW BUSINESS

**Staff Senate Operating Documents:** Crystal Ary asked if everyone had a chance to look over the attached Constitution and Operating Procedures. She asked if there were any questions or concerns that needed to be discussed that have not been addressed in member group meetings. There was nothing so the documents will move to old business next month where they can then be voted on.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: May 19, 2021

Respectfully submitted,  
Melissa Lane  
Administrative Coordinator

Kristi Wright  
Recording Secretary