STAFF COUNCIL
APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the Meeting Held November 11, 2008
(Approved December 9, 2008)

PRESENT: Katherine Alford, Diana Barbee, Chris Bledsoe, Erin Carpenter, Bob Charlebois, Lou Ann Church, Kathy Deas, Catina Debord (representing Jenny Ware), Thomas Dedge, Peggy Eller, Peggy Ellis (representing Julie Huffman), Jane Fitchlee, David Freeman, Sali Gill-Johnson, Tony Grant, Monica Harless, Sandy Hicks, Natalie Hill, BR Hoffman, David Jamison, Candice Jones, Kim Jones, Loretta Link, Kathy Mann, Andrea Marsh, Denise Marsh, Patrick McCoy, Jackie McInturff, Seth Norris, Carol O'Saben, Chris Popoola, Tanya Randall, Monica Rose, Amy Sanders, Barbara Scarborough, Cathy Scott, Stacy Sears, David Shervington, Janice Smith, Krystal Stewart, Jamie Tedder, Marlena VanVliet, Janice Voss, Charles Wallin, Lisa Watson, Angel Wood, Laura Young, Vickie Young, Cathy Ziegler

EXCUSED: Elaine Berry, Judy Cereghino, Kay Clark, Monique Eckerd, Laurel Elam, Alice Gryder, Wanda Hamilton, Julie Huffman, Edward Hyle, Tami Johnson, Jennifer Maxwell, Kathy Ray, Janet Seatz, Shelley Wainscott Wallin, Jenny Ware

ABSENT: Carol Anderson, Wes Berry, Michelle Boisclair, Sarah Chapman, Pam Cline, Betsy Craft, Donna Davis, Debbie Gragg, Susan Hisle, Kathy Howell, Kristin Hyle, Sharon Kincaid, Diane Lowenberg, Mark Lunsford, Clinton Marsh, Carolene McGlamery, Dee Pelliccio, Rob Robertson, Jamie Seay, Jeff Tickle, Lori Tyler, Robin Waters, Ezell Williams, Todd Williams, Fran Wilson

GUESTS: Alyson Ebaugh, Mariella Gonzalez, Molly Kadyk-Branch

1. Stacy called the meeting to order and welcomed all new members and guests.

2. Presentation by Greg Lovins, Interim Vice Chancellor, Business Affairs
   Construction Update:
   - Dining Facility – The upper level of Welborn Cafeteria will be closed after Thanksgiving and the Food Court will close over Christmas Break to begin moving equipment to the new facility. January 6 is the goal for part of the new facility to open and full operation by January 12. The next step will be to demolish Welborn, begin Phase II of the new food court with the possibility of being moved into the new food court by January 2010.
   - The new College of Education building is still in the design phase. Site preparation is happening now while design is being finalized. Completion goal is Fall 2010 but will more than likely be Spring 2011.
   - Once the College of Education has moved, Edwin Duncan will be used as a “swing” space for other office personnel when other buildings are being renovated. Eventually, the space will be converted to green space and parking.
   - Presbyterian Church will be used as is for the time being.
   - The University is in the process of repairing the steam distribution system. A lot of steam was being lost. With the new system, we have new tunnels and pipes and are capturing escaped steam for reuse.
   - Kidd Brewer Stadium – East stands were completed right before the start of the 2008 football season. Mr. Lovins thanked all the staff involved in helping to
complete that project. Field House expansion project is expected to be completed Fall of 2009.

- Old Depot Building will be converted to a broadcasting facility named after ASU Board of Trustee member George Beasley. The University is currently in the process of re-zoning the property from business to university.

Campus Master Plan

- ASU last completed a Master Plan in 2000. The purpose of the plan is to prepare for future growth and look at parking and transportation, sustainable design, academic buildings, infrastructure and utilities, growth, and land use.
- The Town of Boone and the University are working collaboratively with the Lawrence Group. This helps the University to work well with town as they update their land use plan and ASU works on its facility plan.
- Next step for ASU – ASU’s established an advisory committee comprised of staff, faculty, alumni, business affairs, and people from the community. This committee will meet approximately three or four times to go through the feedback from the workshops held on campus with the Lawrence Group. They will then give additional feedback to the Lawrence Group for them to continue creating a plan with the hopes of having a master plan approved by the Board of Trustees by March 2009.
- More information can be found at masterplan2020.appstate.edu.

Budget & Economy

- We’ve already experienced a 4 percent cut to the allotment (equates to about $5 million). We could experience a 5 percent cut.
- No official hiring freeze in place at this time. All open and new positions will be scrutinized in an effort to preserve jobs.
- Administration is focusing on the following: to preserve jobs and to protect the classroom as best we can.
- The State of North Carolina is fortunate that our legislators planned for an economic shortfall. The State had not only set aside a “rainy day” fund of nearly $1 billion but also had a budget with realistic revenue projections.
- ASU may see some reduced travel and reduced equipment budgets.
- The university is looking at many ways to save on utility usage and make us more sustainable including:
  - Turn the lights off when you’re out of your office for a length of time
  - Turn the thermostats down
  - Turn the computers off when you leave for the day
  - Work with the Physical Plant to try to implement an energy performance contract and replace existing lighting with more energy efficient fluorescent lights

Questions

- Two questions were asked – (1) Will the university go to a four-day week? and (2) Will the university completely shut down over the holiday break? Mr. Lovins commented that neither of these issues were decided at this time.

3. It was moved (Cathy Ziegler) and seconded (David Jamison) that the minutes of the October 14 meeting be approved. Motion carried.
4. Janice Voss briefly reviewed the budget and mentioned that it is likely each child participating in the Children’s Shopping Day will receive $175 this year. This is up slightly from previous years. It was moved (Cathy Ziegler) and seconded (David Jamison) that the November’s Treasurer’s Report be approved. Motion carried.

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*109130: No budget allocation (plus encumbrance of $1,284 for Updates)

**Note: $2,455.22 was beginning balance 7/1/08; deposits to date of $10,424.22

5. Old Business
   A. Give a Child a Coat – Janice reported we currently have a little more than 50 coats (39 have already been turned in). Some hats and scarves have also been collected. This drive runs through December 12.
   B. Membership and Committee Update – We have 12 new Staff Council members this month, which brings the total membership to 84. Fifty-one departments are still not represented. The Membership Committee will also be sending letters to those members who miss two consecutive meetings (unexcused) and three consecutive meetings (unexcused). Denise Marsh also sent around committee sign-up sheets primarily for new members, but also if someone wants to change committees.
   C. Chancellor’s Advisory Meeting – Charlie Wallin reviewed the highlights of the November 6 meeting which included discussion on the flexible schedule and budget reductions. (See Chancellor Advisory meeting minutes for additional information.)
   D. Staff Appreciation Breakfast – More than 800 staff members participated in the breakfast which sets a record. Patrick was thrilled with the turn out and there really seemed to be a positive buzz throughout the room. He requested if anyone has any feedback with regard to the updated service awards to please e-mail him.
Question: When will staff award recipients receive their awards? Service awards will be mailed to recipients once Human Resources receives and sorts the gifts. We are currently waiting on two of the custom-created awards.

6. New Business
   A. December Meeting – Stacy announced we will have a brief business meeting in December and then take the remaining time to celebrate and socialize. We will have heavy hors d’oeuvres and a White Elephant gift exchange. Staff Council Members will not be asked to contribute money.
   B. Smoking Task Force – Charlie said the task force has met and the Chancellor has a proposal for enforcement. A decision on the ashtrays has not been made. Housing has purchased some ashtrays for the residence halls. Chris and Charlie both have maps that show, as best as possible, 50 feet from all buildings.

7. Human Resources Update – Patrick gave a brief report on Career Banding. It is coming to a close. All positions descriptions will be reviewed by Human Resources by December 1. He thanked everyone for their patience while completing this process. In addition, Human Resources is piloting an automated Performance Management System with ITS and depending on the outcome of that pilot program, the automated system could be rolled out for everyone in July 2009. Patrick expressed disappointment that because of obvious budgetary concerns there would be no funds received from the salary adjustment fund. He will, however, continue to advocate for these funds on a year-to-year basis.

8. Kudos – Stacy gave Kudos to Eddie Hyle for all of his hard work on the Staff Council web site for a number of years. He is stepping down from this role, and Kay Clark will be transitioning into the role of webmaster.

9. Council Concerns – No new concerns were mentioned. Stacy mentioned that work behind the scenes is occurring with the previous concerns that were brought before the Council.

10. Announcements
    Membership was reminded of the following events
    • November 15: Faculty and Staff Appreciation Football Game – Photos of the Staff Award Recipients will be displayed on the scoreboard during half time.
    • November 21: Children’s Shopping Day – more shoppers and a few back up drivers still needed
    • November 24: Chancellor’s Cabinet Open Forum, 3:30-5pm, Blue Ridge Ballroom
    • December 10: Chancellor’s Open House – time TBD, Solarium, Plemmons Student Union
    • January 10: Faculty / Staff Appreciation Basketball Game – January 10 - $5 tickets are buy one get one free, up to six tickets; this game is a double header – both men’s and women’s basketball game

11. The meeting was adjourned.
Flexible Work Schedule

1. You mentioned the four-day work week would be reviewed. Where is the university in this process? Will we be able to implement this on a permanent basis? When will staff receive a final decision and the justification for that decision? Would you like for Staff Council to research how Western Carolina and other UNC systems are able to implement this across their campuses?

RESPONSE:
- The University is currently in the process of reviewing the possibility of a four-day work week.
- Patrick McCoy has established a working committee to develop a Work/Life Balance Policy. This policy will address flexible scheduling along with other situations where supervisors might feel they need additional guidance in making flexible scheduling decisions. The committee is contacting other institutions to see if they have a policy in place, if they offer flexible scheduling, and, if so, how it works for their institution.
- Some departments tried a four-day week over the summer with mixed results. The Chancellor believes this is a change in culture and will require an adjustment for some to a new way of thinking.
- The Chancellor has no objection to it if an office can work it out and make sure the work gets done.
- One concern is that it fits well in some offices but not in other offices. We need to get around the culture where one size fits all. We need to come up with a plan that can balance both those offices that can and those that can’t, and a plan that does not make the offices that cannot offer flexible scheduling feel slighted in any way.

Budget Concerns

2. When you spoke with Staff Council you mentioned the upcoming Board of Governors meeting and the potential for additional budget cuts. Can you tell us more about those including the budget, hiring freezes, future increases, etc.?

RESPONSE:
- The budget situation is a serious one and unlike any we’ve seen before.
- We still don’t know the seriousness or the amount of the budget cut. Our first two allotments were reduced by 2 percent. The last allotment we received was reduced by 4 percent. We don’t know if we will continue with a 4 percent cut or if the cut will continue to increase.
- ASU has not received the official word as to final cuts.
• At this time, a hiring freeze has not been established. We are looking carefully at all open positions to determine if we can wait to fill those positions. All new positions will be carefully reviewed to determine need.
• We’re looking at all areas to save money and reduce costs. Administration is working hard to avoid losing jobs. They are looking at various cost-saving factors such as simply turning off computers every night and lowering the thermostats to 68°.
• Administration is reviewing other cost-saving measures such as closing the University down a few extra days during the holiday break.
• It is still undetermined if ASU will receive the $4.2 million in planning money for a new College of Health Sciences and Allied Professions Buildings.
• Chancellor Advisory Committee members present encouraged communication as soon as it’s made available to help reduce the fear among employees.

Quality of Life Follow-up

3. After having time to review the breakdown of the questions on the Staff Survey that you requested, do you have any follow up surveys or support that we can help you with to find the answers you need? In addition is there anything that you need from us or that we can help you with? We have a Quality of Life committee and the survey capabilities to do more research in any area you need.

RESPONSE:
• Patrick McCoy discussed the possibility of contacting the Office of State Personnel resources to conduct a follow-up survey concerning employee engagement.
• The OSP contracts with the Corporate Leadership Council to conduct surveys for state agencies.
• Corporate Leadership Council will conduct the survey and then compare our results with other institutions and provide benchmarks and strategies for the institution to improve.
• Mr. McCoy asked the Staff Council review the possibility of conducting this survey as a follow up to the Quality of Life Survey.