

**Mississippi State University
Staff Council**

March 9, 2011

10:30 a.m.

Present: Linda Perry Babcock, Amanda Bell, Keith Daniels, Mary Dikes, Sherry Fisackerly, Penny French, Barbie Hampel, Debbie Huffman, Dinah Jenkins, Jane Lewis, Anthony Lowe, Sarah White Melland, Mandy Netadj, Tedrick Ratcliff, Cade Smith, Faye Smith, and Mary Vaughn.

Absent: Robbie Black, Allen Cooperwood, Patricia Cox, Missy Hadaway, Marie Jeffries, Sam Manning, and Jessica Northcutt.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES. Minutes of the February 9, 2011, meeting were approved as submitted.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Mary reported that two candidates have been interviewed for the Human Resources Director position. The last and final candidate to be interviewed is Judy Spencer. There is an open forum to meet with her on Thursday at 9:30. Everyone is encouraged to attend if possible.

Three candidates will be interviewed for the Internal Audit Director position. These interviews will be scheduled for the last week of March and first week of April.

The Information Security Council is considering two issues: 1) Email security enhancements. ITS is working to stop phishing emails before they reach the person's mailbox. They hope to have this in place by the fall semester. 2) Since it has been approved for student workers to have access to Banner, ITS is looking at other programs/areas where student workers may need to have access. They are working to combine all forms granting access to various programs, and periodic agreements would automatically appear when a person signs in to a program.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Future of Student Housing. Tedrick Ratcliff stated the committee is considering a petition to IHL to expand the scope of the budget to build two new residence halls instead of one in the Arbor Acres area for fall 2012. They are also considering a public/private agreement to build an apartment complex at Aiken Village. It has been determined that 831 current students will not be able to live on campus next year due to housing shortages.

Distance Education Task Force. Dinah Jenkins reported that a survey was sent to 57 universities with distance education programs. Twenty-six responded. It was decided that in-depth interviews with 8-10 of the universities responding would be conducted by telephone, teleconference, or in-person.

Employee Benefits. Dinah Jenkins announced some PERS changes that will go into effect this year:

- A third tier for retirement has been added for employees who are hired on and after July 1, 2011. It requires an eight year vesting period; allows for retirement with 30 years of

service at any age; or retirement at age 60, if vested; and provides a partial lump sum distribution for retirees with 33 years of service at any age.

- PERS now offers an Option 4 that provides 75% joint and survivor annuity for members who retire on or after January 1, 2011.
- PERS now requires that a retiree must be retired for not less than 90 consecutive days from their effective date of retirement before they may be reemployed on a limited basis. This replaces the old 45-day separation period and is effective July 1, 2011.
- Employers will begin paying the employee's share of PERS contributions (12%) for rehired PERS retirees effective July 1, 2011.
- The employer's share of PERS contribution is slated to increase to 12.93% effective January 1, 2012.

Also, at the meeting, Judy Spencer discussed two bills which are pending in the legislature that, if passed, would affect PERS retiree benefits. She has been informed that it is too early to anticipate any changes in the State Employees Health Plan for next year.

The committee expressed concern that repeated changes to PERS are aimed at lessening benefits to future employees and that these changes, and their cumulative effect, may adversely impact our ability to recruit new faculty and staff. The committee recommended that a letter be sent to President Keenum communicating these concerns.

The committee also discussed compensation for employees who have to work during days when MSU is closed by administrative action such as the recent "snow days." The university currently has no policy on how these employees are to be compensated. The committee recommended that a letter be sent to the Provost and Executive Vice President supporting the development of a policy to ensure that these essential employees are compensated for their work on days when the university is administratively closed.

Another topic of discussion was the lack of career ladders for most staff positions on campus. This issue was tabled until a new director of HRM is named, but the committee will send a letter to the new director asking that HRM address this issue.

Game Day Operations. There will be a meeting next week. Topics of discussion include golf cars on campus, fan transportation, and a Bulldog Club parking lot.

Athletic Council. Anthony Lowe announced Super Bulldog Weekend will be April 8-10. He also discussed the Thursday night game with LSU. The university will close at noon for staff, but there will be no classes on September 15, 2011.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Publicity: To be discussed under Staff Appreciation Day

Employee Development: There was no report.

Employee Benefits: Given under Standing Committee report.

Employee Relations: There was not report.

OLD BUSINESS

- ✓ Staff Appreciation Day. It will be called MSU Staff Luncheon at the Junction this year. It will be from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There will be no games. Barnes & Noble will have a spring staff discount day on May 6 in conjunction with our event. The rain location will be Humphrey Coliseum. Cade Smith reported the food committee is considering three options. They will continue to gather information before making a final decision. Amanda Bell announced that the t-shirt sale will be April 15th. T-shirts will be \$10. She asked the group to sign up to sell t-shirts at Bost and the Vet School. The group hopes to increase the number of door prizes. Winners must be present to win. Jane Lewis said she has contacted Bill Cook, and we are on his calendar. A SAD Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday at 9:00, but may be rescheduled due to the HRM candidate interview at 9:30.
- ✓ Rotation Schedule – Mary announced that six members will be replaced. Letters have been sent to the VPs requesting nominations. The Executive Committee will be interviewing those nominated and selecting the new members for next year.
- ✓ Merit Based Promotions. Cade Smith and Dinah Jenkins submitted a report regarding career ladders within job families. MSU does not currently have career ladders except within two job categories. Cade and Dinah suggested that Staff Council send a letter to HRM supporting the development of career ladders, possibly using Auburn University as a model. No action is expected on this until the new HRM director is named.

NEW BUSINESS

- Election of Officers. The slate of officers was presented. The floor was opened for other nominations. A motion was made and seconded that the floor be closed for nominations. The motion carried. The group voted on the slate of officers. Those elected were: Amanda Bell, Chair; Cade Smith, Vice Chair; and Mandy Netadj, Recording Secretary.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mary Vaughn reported that the E&G fund has a balance of \$17,442.65; the Foundation account has a balance of \$32,686.48.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Purvis, Acting Secretary
March 9, 2011