

Meeting Minutes - June 2, 1999

The Staff Senate met on Wednesday, June 2, 1999, in the Senate Room of the University Center, with Dan Burns, Vice President, presiding. Senators present were: Flores, Nichols, Pirkle, Ponticell, Schuessler, Smith, Trischitti, Weaver, Wheeler, Samarripas, Segura, Tillack, Whyburn, Bell, Ellis, Hall, Hunter, Kinghorn, Little, Meriwether, Prado, Silvas, Welch, Burns, J., Crosby, Flores, Garcia, Lira, Sandoval, Ramos, Rocha, Chavez, Harris, and Thomas. Senators Ables, Graham, Nava, Saiz, Clawson, Billingsley, Roberson, White, Widener, and Williams were excused.

Recognition of Guests

Vice President Burns called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and welcomed the alternate senators: Sims, Cates, Hurlow, Segran, Stow, Barnett, and Lacy, and special guests: Gloria Hale, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources and Carrie Evans from the Student Senate.

Telephone Listing for Staff Senators

A list was passed around so Staff Senators could list their office telephone numbers to be included in the Texas Tech Campus Directory next fall. These phone numbers have been added to the Staff Senator Roster.

Presentation Regarding Benefits

Gloria Hale, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources presented some background information regarding the insurance programs at Texas Tech and touched on some of the changes that will take place effective September 1, 1999. There will be an increase in premiums of approximately 8 percent; however, the State contribution will also increase. The Dental Indemnity Plan will increase approximately 6 percent, and the other plan will increase approximately 17 percent. The Dental Program continues to be a high priority for discussion. Co-pay and prescription drugs will increase from \$10 to \$15 for name brand drugs. For those individuals using a non-network physician and hospital, the deductible is going to increase from \$250 to \$500 per year effective September 1, 1999.

It was noted that there is a bill that has not been signed as of yet which will increase the factor from 2.0 to 2.2 in figuring retirement benefits through the Teacher Retirement System.

Open Summer enrollment for all insurance programs will be from July 1 through July 31. If you do not make changes in your insurance programs at this time, you will only be able to make changes

throughout the year if there are life-changing situations. Information will be sent through the mail to each employee; if you have any questions, you can contact the Benefits Office.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Kathy Schuessler and seconded by Jessie Hall that the minutes of the May 5, 1999, be accepted as corrected for filing. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

A written Treasurer's Report was distributed. Russell Crosby moved that the report be accepted and Judy Hunter seconded it; the motion passed unanimously.

President's Report

In the absence of the President, Vice President Burns made the President's Report as follows:

Liz Longren, Vice Chancellor of Facilities and Gene West, Vice President for Operations, will present the Master Plan to the Staff Senate on July 7. If time permits, the parking plan will also be discussed.

Raymond Zavala resigned and Nick Chavez from Grounds Maintenance will fill his Staff Senate seat.

We will discuss having an Ad hoc Committee to look at legislative issues that have an impact on Higher Education. This item will be referred to the Nominations Committee to select membership for the committee.

The Christian Faculty/Staff Association has asked that the Staff Senate look into the request for recognition of domestic partners. It was noted that this issue is being discussed in other arenas.

Action: Beth Trischitti and Craig Wheeler will look into this issue and report back at the next meeting.

There has been an increase in freshmen enrollment at Texas Tech.

There is a University Common Market and this can be utilized to obtain in-state tuition if a course is not offered at Texas Tech or in Texas and must be taken out of state.

Interested departments can ask Kathy Hicks for training on the new Web registration for students.

The Nominations Committee was asked to meet to get the Parking and Privatization Committees in place.

It was also noted that it would be nice to have someone look into getting a Reese Shuttle because of the activity between campus and Reese.

Old Business

Ad-Hoc Committees Longevity Pay for Part-time Employees

Kay Whyburn reported that OP 70.25 states that you have to be a full-time employee to receive longevity pay. The OP refers to the Texas Government Code, which also states that you must be a full-time employee to receive longevity pay. However, the Texas Government Code does state that your accumulated service time is on a year-for-year basis whether you work part-time or full-time and should a part-time employee elect to be full-time, the years worked will count as full years.

Staff Survey Dealing with Salaries

This item was tabled because the individual that was to report back was not at the meeting.

Social Security Number on Checks

Maurice Welch reported that the Student Business Services (Bursar) requires a driver's license and the Texas Tech Employee Identification Card when cashing a check. Further, the office prints the social security card number on the back of the check. This issue is being actively pursued, but Maurice has not been able to talk directly with the official in charge as to why this is done. The committee continues to gather information.

Retirement Plan

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Insurance Charges and Employee Dependent Scholarship

Cliff Harris reported that this item is still being looked into and whether or not an employee or employee-dependent can be given a break. It was noted that when an employee registers they must pay an insurance fee of \$60, while they are also being carried on employee insurance. The committee is trying to find out why employees cannot be exempted from this policy. Other universities are being called to see if they have a policy regarding this matter. At the present time, employees attending class

must pay the fees, but do get a refund back when applying for the dependent scholarship, however, the scholarship is taxable so a full refund is not received. The committee hopes that this can be changed. It was noted that there had been a question from an employee that had received a degree and wanted to have a raise.

Standing Committees Bylaws and Constitution Committee

Jessie Hall reported that the Committee had looked into the representation in the Crafts/Trades Classification. It was noted that there are 227 individuals in this classification in 18 departments. The majority of people in this classification are in the Physical Plant and the next largest representation is in Housing and Dining. A letter is being drafted to send to the individual requesting information. It was also noted that under the structure of the Staff Senate seats are not guaranteed to departments—they are only set up according to classifications. The Committee's charge is to look at the Staff Senate Constitution and the Staff Senate Bylaws to make sure they are both consistent; the following is a list of some of the inconsistencies:

In the Constitution Article III Section 7, 2nd paragraph it states: Executive Board ... "may vote by proxy." In the Bylaws it states: "Executive Board – proxy votes may not be assigned."

Action: It was the consensus of the Staff Senate to change the Constitution to match the Bylaws.

On the Executive Board there is no provision for a tiebreaker vote. It is understood that the only voting members are the six elected members from the EEO classifications.

Action: It was determined that the President should be given a tiebreaker vote.

In the Bylaws under Voting Requirements, Section g. "Expel from membership (this motion requires previous notice and trial.)" The committee had a discussion on the word "trial" as to whether this should be removed or not.

Action: It was determined that "trial" should be changed to "discussion between the parties."

In the Bylaws under OPEN/CLOSED Meetings it states: "all meetings shall be open meetings unless otherwise required by law or unless the Staff Senate by a two-thirds majority shall declare that a meeting or a part of a meeting shall be conducted in closed session."

Action: It was determined that this should be left in the Bylaws.

In the Bylaws ORGANIZATION, POWERS AND DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES, it is not clear if there should be a record of attendance, meeting times or if minutes should be taken. In regards to attendance, would this effect your absence as a Senator? Would the Senator need to contact the Chair of their committee or follow the Bylaws in regard to absences whether it is a Staff Senate Meeting or a committee meeting? After lengthy discussion on this issue, it was moved by Maurice Welch and

seconded by Beth Trischitti that the body should vote on whether or not the three absences should include committee meetings.

Action: It was determined by a unanimous vote that the three absences allowed would include both Committee and Staff Senate meetings. Attendance will be taken at Committee meetings.

Communication Committee

Craig Wheeler reported that the committee has been asked to brainstorm as to how we can make our operation more cost effective.

New Business Legislative Issue Committee

After some discussion as to whether this committee should be a Standing committee or an Ad Hoc committee, it was determined that this should be an Ad Hoc committee.

Action: The Nominations Committee is to meet on membership for this committee.

Family and Medical Leave Policy, OP 70.32

A letter was read regarding the Family and Medical Leave Policy at Texas Tech. It was noted that this policy is based on the regulations of the Federal Government under the FMLA Act. It was further noted that the President of the United States is proposing legislation whereby it may become a law that those individuals filing for leave under this law should be paid whether or not they have the leave time to take.

Action: This issue will be given to the Legislative Issue Ad Hoc committee to follow when appointed.

Next Meetings

Staff Senate Executive Board Meeting, Wednesday, June 30, Llano Estacado Room, UC, 3:00 p.m.

Staff Senate Meeting, July 7, Senate Room, UC, 3:00 p.m.

Announcements Recreational Sports is having its annual University Co-rec Softball Tournament, June 18-19. Forms are at the front of the Rec Center for individuals to sign up to participate.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.