

Meeting Minutes - July 7, 1999

The Staff Senate met on Wednesday, July 7, 1999, in the Senate Room of the University Center, with PeeWee Roberson, President, presiding. Senators present were: Ables, Cory, Nava, Nichols, Saiz, Schuessler, Smith, Trischitti, Weaver, Wheeler, Clawson, Segura, Tillack, Billingsley, Burns, D., Whyburn, Bell, Sjue-Hall, Hunter, Kinghorn, Little, Meriwether, Prado, Welch, White, Williams, Burns, J., Crosby, Flores, Garcia, Lira, Sandoval, Ramos, Rocha, Chavez, Harris, and Stubbs. Senators Flores, Graham, Pirkle, Samarripas, Ellis, and Thomas were excused.

Recognition of Guests

President Roberson called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and welcomed the alternate senators: Sims, Turner, Burt, Cates, Segran, Stow, Barnett, and Lacy, and special guests: Gene West, Vice President for Operations and Megan Lenhart, Chair of the Millennium Project.

Presentations by Guests

Gene West spoke to the Staff Senate regarding the Master Plan and presented a layout of the plan. He noted that the Master Plan has enough money to do those things that were suggested. He told the group that the Board of Regents would be looking at approving the four-phase plan at the August meeting. It was further noted that the parking fees are going to go up, but it is not known at this time how much, but it is thought it will be about \$225 or \$250 per year. Texas Tech has next to the lowest fee of the Big XII schools. The upper administration is looking at a wide range of answers to the parking fees and parking space problems.

Gene West told the group that he would be more than happy to sit down with any group that has any constructive ideas and recommendations to the parking problem on campus.

Someone asked about engineering circle and stated that the street was being constructed too close for visitor parking. Gene West checked the width of the street with Grounds Maintenance and was told the new street is the same width as the old, however, ADA parking spaces are being constructed that require an indentation in the curb to allow for exit from his/her vehicle without being in the street when getting out of the car.

Megan Lenhart, Chair of the Millennium Project, spoke to the Staff Senate about raising \$120,000 for a class gift from the senior class at Texas Tech. The class gift is a two part project that will include an Interactive Sun Dial, which will cost approximately \$100,000 and the other \$20,000 will go toward the Clock Tower. This is to be a student gift and so far they have raised \$47,000 toward their goal. Megan said that bricks could be purchased in the amount of \$50 to help with this project. Any additional funds

left after the two projects are completed will be used for landscaping. It was suggested that the Staff Senate could purchase a brick saying "Congratulations to the Senior Class of 2000, signed: "Staff Senate." It was further suggested that the Staff Senators could make a donation to the purchase of a brick, however, no action was taken on this item.

Liz Longren, Vice Chancellor for Facilities had been invited to the Staff Senate Meeting, and her office had been called one week ago to make sure that it was still on the calendar and she would attend. However, she did not show up at the meeting to make a presentation, and no notice was received that she would not attend. Action: President Roberson will contact the Facility Planning Office regarding this. Any letter sent regarding this matter would go with copies to the Faculty and Student Senate and to Regent Sowell.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Cliff Harris and seconded by Maurice Welch that the minutes of the meeting held June 2, 1999, be approved with one correction noting that Barbara White was excused from the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

It was reported that the balance in the Staff Senate account is \$1,584.45. The Staff Senate will have a new budget for the next fiscal year of \$11,600. No motion was made to accept the Treasurer's report, but a copy was distributed to those present.

Standing Committee Reports

It was noted that any staff member may become involved as a member of a Staff Senate Committee. Anyone interested in serving on a committee should contact Everne Williams.

Bylaws and Constitution

Copies of the revised Bylaws were distributed and it was moved by Dan Burns and seconded by Judy Hunter that the Bylaws be accepted on the first reading and voted on at the next meeting; the motion passed unanimously. Action: Each Senator is to look at the Bylaws carefully and be prepared to vote on acceptance at the next meeting.

Proposed Amendment to the Staff Senate Constitution

Staff Senate Resolution 99.03 concerning the date of elections for the Executive Board and meeting times for the Staff Senate and Executive Board proposed the following:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE Staff Senate Constitution be changed accordingly: Positions on the Executive Board are elected at the 1st meeting in July.

Executive Board shall meet the last week of each month.

Staff Senate shall meet the 1st week of each month.

Proxy vote may not be assigned.

Action: This resolution will be voted on at the next meeting.

Communication and Public Relations

Staff Senate Resolution 99.04A, 99.04B, 99.04C, 99.04D were presented to the group and voted on as follows:

99.04A: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE Staff Senate set up methods by which our constituency can give input and voice concerns through surveys and polls. This would include surveys published on the Web site and distributed with the minutes. It was moved by Jessie Hall and seconded by Beth Trischitti that this resolution be accepted; the motion passed unanimously. 99.04B: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE Staff Senate obtain exposure and to inform our constituency of our activities and projects by getting involved in campus wide events such as the New Employee Benefits Orientation and the Student Affairs Kick-Off Coffee, and improve public relations by getting involved with community-wide service projects such as Habitat for Humanity, Boy's Ranch, and Women's Protective Services. It was moved by Kerry Billingsley and seconded by Oscar Segura that this resolution be accepted; the motion passed unanimously.

99.04C: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE Staff Senate record its history, activities, and continued service to the staff of Texas Tech through campus-wide publications such as "Que Paso" and "La Ventana." The Staff Senate should purchase a page for "La Ventana." August of 1999 will be when we will be able to purchase a page for the 2000 issue. A group photograph of the current Senators and Alternates should be included, and a photo session to be scheduled at the beginning of the next regular Staff Senate meeting. It was moved by Mary Nichols and seconded by Jeff Burns that this resolution be tabled.

99.04D: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, in the light of cost and time effectiveness, at the present time, the minutes should continue to be distributed through campus mailings and via the Web site. Concerns and suggestions should be expressed to the Communication/Public Relations Committee directly via the Web site survey. It was moved by Maurice Welch and seconded by Judy Hunter that this resolution be accepted; the motion passed unanimously.

It was suggested that the Staff Senate have a Staff Convocation and ask the Chancellor to speak.

Legislative Issues

No report

Election

This committee held it's first meeting and will be meeting again. The first issue that will be considered is how ballots can be counted due to the fact that the individual that has helped with electronic counting in the past will be leaving the University.

Nomination

They are working on getting the Traffic and Parking Committee put together.

Grievance

Will be meeting.

President's Report Reported that Wally Ponticell has resigned and Judy Curlee will fill his spot in the Clerical area.

It was noted that the Nomination Committee is doing a wonderful job.

There have been some concerns expressed that staff members have been doing too much on the Staff Senate which takes them away from their work. It was suggested that all members need to be aware of this and were encouraged to make sure that the meeting do not conflict with their work.

Issue forms have been developed and will be sent with the minutes; a copy of this form will also be on the Web site.

The United Spirit Arena Grand Opening Celebration was announced.

Unfinished Business

Reports

Christian Faculty/Staff Association

An Ad Hoc committee had looked into the concern of the Christian Faculty/Staff Association request for support of the Staff Senate in the following statement (which is quoted, but contained no actual name(s) or signatures of officer(s) or author(s): The Executive Committee of the Christian Faculty/Staff Association strongly and emphatically believes that the concept of "domestic partners" undermines and cheapens the institution of marriage, which is a foundation stone of our civilized society. By recognizing "domestic partners" it declares to the world that public commitment and loyalty mean nothing. Therefore, the Executive Committee of the Texas Tech University Christian Faculty/Staff Association strongly recommends that benefits not be extended to "domestic partners," and that even the concept of "domestic partners" not be recognized as a legitimate relationship.

In researching this issue by the Ad Hoc committee it was noted the following:

Texas does not recognize "domestic partnership" thus TTU nor ERS offer any benefits. The consideration of TTU will be how to define "domestic partner."

The benefits must also be defined by the institution. Insurance coverage: full, partial, reimbursement method, etc.

Fringe benefits: "spousal" use of facilities, etc.

TTU does not recognize domestic partners at this time.

The Faculty Senate has issued the following resolution:

"The Faculty Senate recommends that fringe benefits be extended to domestic partners of faculty members...After considerable discussion, the resolution passed: 22 in favor; 9 against." (Minutes #196, TTU Faculty Senate, March 10, 1999)

President Haragan has briefed the Presidents Executive Council and the Dean's meeting about the resolution from the Faculty Senate and is gathering information and considering a response to the resolution (PEC and Deans Meetings Minutes, May 5, 1999)

After some discussion on this issue, the Staff Senate took no action.

Staff Survey Dealing with Salaries

Jim Brown and Dave Gruver will be invited to the August meeting to discuss staff salary surveys.

Traffic and Parking

As soon as all members have been contacted, this committee will be meeting.

Social Security Number on Checks

This Ad Hoc committee looked into the concern of individuals being asked to write their social security card number on the back of a check when cashing a check. The Student Business Services Office (formerly Bursar's Office) will no longer cash checks for employees. The Committee suggested a new OP be created to protect employee privacy to include the following type of content:

All University employees will take reasonable and necessary steps to insure privacy of any personal information, i.e., SSN, Drivers license, home address, and home phone number, personal account numbers, financial information, etc.

Staff Senate recommended safeguards to be implemented, where appropriate, by all employees to protect personal information, i.e., locking records, shredding hard copies, protecting electronic files, reviewing departmental processes, etc.

Develop brochure to publicize recommended safeguards.

Action: Action on this issue was tabled until the next meeting because a quorum was not present at the end of the meeting.

Retirement Plan

It was reported that the State Higher Education Coordinating Board has specific authority through the State Legislature to offer an additional retirement plan to the faculty. After some discussion, it was moved by Dan Burns and seconded by David Tillack that the Legislative Committee research the difference in the retirement plans and bring back a report. Action: This item will go to the Legislative Committee to research.

New Business

Child Care on Campus

Taxes on Gift Awards

New business items were tabled in the interest of time and will be moved to the next meeting.

Next Meetings

Staff Senate Executive Board Meeting, Friday, July 23, 1999, Conference Room 106, Administrative Support Center, UC, 3:00 p.m.

Staff Senate Meeting, Wednesday, August 4, 1999, Senate Room, UC, 3:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.