

Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Date/Time:	February 16, 2022 1:30PM	Location:	Zoom and OL250
Meeting called by:	Staff Council Exec.	Type of meeting:	Staff Council Monthly Meeting
Facilitator:	Staff Council Exec.	Note taker:	Gina Smith
Attendees:	Ryan Milke, Colin McDonough, Michelle Drake, Lisa Crater, Kala Dixon, Marsha Martin, Alex Sanderson, Tony Christian, Selena Foreman, Julie Robertson, Ben Rogers, Sierra Rains, Helen Konstantopoulos, Becky Meneely, Amanda Dempsey, Troy Brady, Barb Weybrew, Jill Kain, Adam Randles. Elainabeth Russo, Melissa Chesnut.		

Agenda Items

Organizational Structure Support & Strategic Operations Reports

Leadership Advisory Team – Clarence and Krista (not in attendance).

March 2nd meeting with Stacy Carrick from Finance to preview and explain the FY22-23 budget currently under development. Everyone is urged to attend if possible.

Faculty Senate – Gina

- Legislative Affairs update; see attached summaries from February 9th and February 16th Faculty Senate meetings. Both summaries contain several items of interest to staff, particularly with regard to employee pay.

Student Senate – TBD; currently no Staff Council representative attending Student Senate meetings.

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Board of Regents – Gina

- The work session that's usually attended by Staff Council exec board members was cancelled; instead, Governor Parsons conducted a roundtable discussion with Northwest leadership and leaders from several other institutions.
- Benefits & Wellness Committee – Elainabeth Russo: The committee's frequency of meetings has changed; no meeting is scheduled for next month, so a report won't be issued. The MyBlueKC mobile app now includes virtual mental health care; those who already have installed the app should refresh it for access to the mental health care option. Effective Jan 15th our pharmacy benefit allows for eight at-home Covid tests per month with no out-of-pocket expense. Employees who have purchased at-home tests may file for reimbursement. Employees recently received a notification that incorrect tax information for health savings accounts was sent out by Optum; Human Resources is looking into other potential HSA providers because of general frustration with Optum's performance. Northwest is working with the Family Guidance Center partnership for the services of a confidential counselor. Callie, the current counselor, is not intended to provide long-term care; she will now direct employees to appropriate long-term care sources. The Benefits and Wellness committee plans to break down into subcommittees to handle specific concerns. The committee continues to examine a variety of options for the Fitness Challenge.

- Ally Affinity Group - Helen Konstantopoulos: The group meeting yesterday featured a discussion on ways to support black-owned businesses and products; she described a new whiskey called “Uncle Nearest” - named for the slave who taught Jack Daniels how to make whiskey. Several events are scheduled during the remainder of Black History Month, including tonight’s film “The Color of Medicine: The Story of Homer G. Phillips Hospital” and next week will be the Black Student Union Spirit Week and Dr. Mercy Dickson speaking on the health of the Black community and health care; everyone encouraged to wear all black clothing on Friday in support of Black Lives Matter. Dr. Laura Kauzlarich, assistant professor in the Booth School of Business, will present on the impact of intimate partner violence in the workplace and on college campuses during the March 15th meeting. All of the Ally Group meetings take place over Zoom.

Office of Diversity and Inclusion - Brittany Roberts

- No report; Brittany not present.

Old Business Items

- Planning for future increases in health care costs and premiums; this is a continuously evolving activity.

New Business Items

- Selection of candidate for chair-elect; this will take place after the general election.
- Selection of candidate for Employee Engagement and Recognition Committee chair. Melissa Chesnut and Colin McDonough agreed to serve as co-chairs for the remainder of the fiscal year. A “Poppin’ in the Spring” popcorn event is scheduled for Wednesday afternoon, March 23rd. The committee is working on the best method for determining the quantity of popcorn needed and the best method for distribution to employees.

Committee Reports

Employee Engagement and Recognition Committee – New chair TBD.

Outreach Committee – Marsha Martin: The committee will meet next week to finalize selection of the Staff Council scholarship recipients in order to meet the March 1 deadline. The committee circulated artwork depicting black T-shirts and hoodies with green lettering which will be offered for sale to employees; the proceeds will support the scholarship. T-shirts can be purchased for \$15.00; hoodies will be priced between \$35.00 and \$40.00. Highest price to produce hoodies will be \$29.00. The committee is still finalizing payment options.

Policy Committee – Julie Robertson: The committee continues to finalize preparations for the upcoming elections. Seven seats are eligible for re-election. The committee will reach out to NLT members to alert their areas and inform potential candidates, with a February 25th deadline for a response from NLT. Ballots will be sent out during the first week in March in areas with interested candidates. Committee flyers will be updated and sent out, with Tony’s help as Communications Chair, to all committee chairs so that candidates are knowledgeable about what’s going on and better able to select committee service. A plan will be developed and put in place to deal with vacancies caused by employee departures or transfers to different areas; this plan will be included in the charter.

Engagement Survey Action Items

A discussion of issues raised in a feedback session moderated by Dr. Greg Haddock resulted in several suggestions; a desire for more cohesion with regard to university processes, which vary from department to department; more communication about university issues through official sources, rather than via social media; concerns about possible repercussions from upper-level leaders when lower-level employees are asked for

feedback, as opposed to providing feedback to immediate leaders and supervisors; limited opportunities for job growth and promotion and general dissatisfaction with compensation when the only option for a pay increase is to change jobs.

Employee Suggestions/Comments/Concerns

In response to a question about paid time off in lieu of increased pay, it was noted that some institutions offer accrued benefits, such as hours off per month based on years of service.

Announcements / Area Reports

Selena Foreman produced medallions which will be distributed to recent staff graduates Melissa Chesnut, Kala Dixon, Sarah Freeman, Courtney Gard, Kathleen Kobayashi and Jackie Runde.

Next Meeting

March 16, 2022 1:30pm- 3:30pm – OL250 and Zoom