

**Subject: June Staff Council Minutes**

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**Organization:** Western Kentucky University

**To:** Staff-All <Staff-All@wku.edu>

The Staff Council held its annual retreat on Wednesday, June 2 in room 131 of the Ag. Center. Members present were Regina Allen, David Appleby, Patty Booth, Robert Deane, Brandi Fowler, Joy Gramling, Jeff Jones, Treva Martin, James McCaslin, Chester McNulty, Elizabeth Paris, Tina Sneed Heather Stubblefield, Lynne Swetmon, Lauri Warden, Bob Zoellner, and ex officio member Pat Jordan. Members absent were Teresa Dunning and Charles McCoy.

- Elizabeth Paris welcomed the new members and gave a brief description of what the Staff Council's job is and what to expect at the monthly meetings.
- The Staff Council took a few moments to discuss the accomplishments made during the 03 - 04 academic year. Those accomplishments include: exit interviews, improving staff salary and benefits, annual raise pool for permanent part-time staff, improving the annual performance appraisal system, staff mentoring program, KTRS funding, AED's in police cars, smoking policy, fall break brunch, on-line election, and represented staff in the American Heart Walk.
- After some concerns were brought to the attention of the Staff Council, we felt it necessary to revise the nomination process in the Staff Council bylaws. Therefore, after discussion and voting the bylaws now state "WKU staff employees may nominate themselves or any other WKU staff employee to be placed on the ballot in their respective EEO group/category." We believe that this will increase the number of interested staff members who wish to run for Staff Council. The new changes in the bylaws will be available on the Staff Council Website soon.
- David Appleby, who is our benefits representative, will be leaving the Staff Council because his term has expired. However, we believe that given the importance of this position and the knowledge and experience that is a must, we have asked David to continue attending the benefits meetings and begin training his replacement for this position. Sharon Hartz and Bill Basham will also continue representing staff on the benefits committee.
- The Staff Council had been working on the issue of counting pre approved vacation time as time worked when calculating overtime. Although no WKU Policy has been changed, we have been assured that the two departments who have the most recorded overtime, Facilities Management and WKU Police, will work with their employees on a case by case basis to determine time worked when calculating overtime.
- Dr. Gene Tice and Tony Glisson joined the Staff Council for lunch and then were open for any discussions. Our first concern was the proposed January term. Dr. Tice informed us that he has not had any feedback from the January Term Task Force since they met. However, he agreed that he will contact the Administrative Council and also speak with Freida Eggleton who is the Chair of the January Task Force. More information on this matter will be forthcoming.
- Heather Stubblefield wanted to know if it would be possible to allow employees who need to take

off work under the FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) the option to take days off without pay instead of using up all their sick and vacation time. Tony Glisson agreed that it is possible and asked that the Staff Council write up a recommendation.

- The increase in Preston Center membership fees was brought up for discussion. Dr. Tice informed us that the fees have not increased in years and are needed in order to offset budget cuts. Although some employees may feel that the increase was extreme, it would be difficult to find cheaper rates at any of the health club facilities in Bowling Green. Dr. Tice also informed us that there is a plan to expand the size of the Preston Center in the future in order to accommodate members.
- The discussion of Paid Days Off as opposed to the traditional vacation days and sick days was brought to the table. Tony Glisson said the main advantage of the PDO system is simplicity. At the present, employees fill out a sheet showing time they took off and list it either under vacation time or sick time. However, many employees put the time under the wrong column and then can't understand why they were deducted for sick time instead of vacation time and vice versa. With the PDO system, it wouldn't matter why you took the time off. A committee will look into this system and decide if it is something that would benefit staff employees. More information on this will be forthcoming.
- Tony Glisson was happy to announce that due to the passing of House Bill 434, employees who are in the ORP retirement system have been granted a one time chance to move from ORP to KTRS retirement system. Some employees felt they had signed up for this retirement system without being properly informed of all the benefits or lack there of. Tony is planning to have some informational meetings for OPR retirement employees who are interested in switching retirement systems.

After Dr. Tice and Tony Glisson left the meeting, the Staff Council continued with the agenda.

- Elizabeth Paris gave an update on the meeting with Doug Ault and Judy Blankenship concerning shift changes for some BSA's. David Appleby, Joy Gramling, and Tony Glisson also attended this meeting. Doug and Judy explained what had been done to make sure the BSA's involved in the pilot program were given every opportunity to voice their opinion. Management at Facilities will assess the pilot program at the end of the summer.
- Elizabeth Paris reported that she is waiting for a list of names of people that should be included in determining proper designated smoking areas on campus. The smoking committee will continue to work on this matter and more information will be forthcoming.
- Patty Booth reported on the Safety Task Force which had the student representatives survey other students on campus. By in large students feel safe. However, the students would like to see more lighting on campus. This committee has been meeting monthly and hopes to have some

recommendations in a couple of months.

- Pat Jordan wanted to discuss the part-time staff tuition benefit that was lost during the recent budget cuts. In order for the University to achieve Strategic Goal #3, we feel that it is necessary to return this benefit to our part-time staff employees and have listed this as one of the Staff Council's goals for the 04-05 academic year.
- The last item on the agenda was the election of officers for the new year. Jeff Jones was nominated for the position of Web Master. Lynne Swetmon was nominated for Secretary/Treasurer and Elizabeth Paris was nominated for President. No other nominations were brought forward and the nominees were voted in as officers for the 04-05 academic year.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45.

The next Staff Council monthly meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 14 at 9:00 in TCCW 368.

The Staff Council wants to hear from you. Do you have a question, concern or comment? You can now e-mail the Staff Council: [staffcouncil@wku.edu](mailto:staffcouncil@wku.edu)

The Staff Council Minutes, Constitution and By-laws are posted on the Staff Council Web Page at: <http://www.wku.edu/staffcouncil>