

**WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
DECEMBER 5, 2007**

The WKU Staff Council met on December 5, 2007 at MMTH 219. Those present were Diane Carver, Tex Currington, Larry Hardin, Trish Jagers, James Kennedy, Cheryl Lewis-Smith, Chester McNulty, Todd Misener, Sherry Nation, Jennifer Ragan, Angela Robertson, Darrel Saalwaechter, Tamela Smith, Shannon Ward, Stephanie Wimsatt and Mike Young.

The issue of WKU Voice was addressed by Angela Robertson. She has received several complaints concerning people using the Voice in a way that was not intended. Not only are issues brought up that do not relate to WKU, facts are misconstrued or misrepresented in a way that may be misleading to staff and faculty currently subscribed to the Voice. We believe that guidelines need to be put in place to monitor the Voice. Angela Robertson and James Kennedy will set up a meeting with Dr. Kirchmeyer to discuss a possible change in policy.

Todd Misener addressed questions and concerns that have come from various people on campus regarding the Wellness benefit proposal. He clarified that it is a health care cost containment strategy and that the proposed source of funding would NOT tap into the Health Insurance Reserve Fund. Rather, it is being proposed as an additional benefit to WKU employees that would be paid for by WKU, not the individual employees. The first part of the proposal is to increase the budget for the Employee Wellness Program so as to be able to hire new personnel, such as a nutritionist and program coordinator, and provide more health related programming and services to all employees. The second part is providing a free membership to the Preston Center for all full-time benefits-eligible employees. He stated that each part would be evaluated separately and that this proposal will be presented to the Benefits Committee in 2008.

Tamela Smith, Staff Regent, addressed the issue of Staffing. She has evaluated various positions on campus and how the enrollment growth has affected these positions. She believes several new positions need to be created to help with the work load. Angela Robertson suggested that we establish a committee to keep evaluating this issue regularly.

A concern was raised regarding a recent assault situation involving a BSA. It is understood that the BSA was instructed to contact her supervisor first before contacting campus police. WKU Campus Services and Facilities Associate Vice President, John Osborne, has provided clarification regarding the defined policy or protocol for emergency situations of this nature.

Tamela Smith stated that she has served on the review committee to interview candidates for the position of Director of Facilities Management. Three individuals have meet with the review committee. The committee provides input to the individuals who then make the final decision in the hiring process.

Cheryl Lewis-Smith brought up an item concerning the 2009 KRS Retirement Regulation. Some staff members are concerned about the overall impact to WKU based on potential mass exodus of qualifying individuals. It was mentioned that some universities are looking at ways to offset the difference of what 2009 qualifying retiree candidates would receive if they remained in their positions after January 2009. The line of thinking is that employees could remain a few more years without being penalized. Overall thinking is that this concept would be a great way to ensure continuity of institutional operations. The question was raised as to whether or not WKU has considered

conducting a formal review or analysis as a means of projecting the overall impact to the campus. It was decided that we do not have enough time to act on this issue (via formal recommendation or statement of concern) due to Budget/Fiscal planning timeline restraints.

Diane Carver, Secretary, stated that she has been asked to respond personally to individuals who have made an official request to the Staff Council, before stating the results in the minutes. The Staff Council agreed that would be an appropriate response.

Mike Young asked about the Staff Survey, but Angela said we would not work on that until the January meeting.

At the January meeting, Angela will ask staff council representatives on university committees to meet with us and give us an update.

The next meeting will be at the HR Conference Room on January 9, 2008.

Minutes recorded by Diane Carver