

The WKU Staff Council held its July meeting on Wednesday, September 7, 2005. Members present were: Patty Booth, LySandra Bowles, David Emerson, Barbara Johnston, Jeff Jones, James McCaslin, Charles McCoy, Chester McNulty, Ann Potter, Angela Robertson, Tina Sneed, Heather Stubblefield, Mike Thompson, and Lauri Warden. Timmy Givens and Pat Jordan were absent.

James McCaslin reminded the Council of the history of the proposal for the Tuition Waiver for Employee Dependents. Patty Booth has met with Belinda Higginbotham regarding funding issues. It was determined that there were no problems procedurally to prevent the waiver from being applied first, so this information was sent to Ann Mead. During a conference call with President Ransdell during the Staff Council Meeting, he stated that he thought this proposal had been approved and was ready for implementation, but we would need to clarify that with Ann Mead.

On August 29, Betsy Schoenfelt and James McCaslin met with the Administrative Council and presented the results of the Staff Satisfaction Survey. During the conference call, Dr. Ransdell said he was pleased and encouraged by the results and will share this information with the University Senate, as he would like to see that body prepare and administer a similar survey.

Tom Riley, Director of Facilities Management, was introduced to the Staff Council. Mr. Riley gave the Council a short biography of his qualifications. The following proposals and issues were discussed with Mr. Riley:

- ❖ Designated smoking areas: Mr. Riley has reviewed the information on signage and receptacles that the Staff Council had gathered and presented a funding request to the administration in the approximate amount of \$12,000. He is waiting on funding information before he can move ahead with the purchase of the signs and materials needed to implement this initiative. During the conference call, President Ransdell requested that the updated funding information be sent to him, so he can authorize university funds and Mr. Riley may proceed.
- ❖ The Staff Council has been contacted to see if recycling bins similar to the ones in DUC could be placed in all academic buildings. It was explained that the recycling bins in DUC were put in place and were sponsored by the Student Government Association. The issue of people abusing the bins and the types of waste products that are placed in the bins was discussed. One of the main problems in having recycling bins out in a general public area is that they often times get used as a general trash can rather than just for recyclable materials, which causes all materials in the bin to become trash. Other recycling efforts on campus was reviewed, and further information on these efforts will be forthcoming.
- ❖ Energy management at WKU was discussed. WKU set a new peak electrical usage in August, and there is a proposed 7.1% increase in electrical charges from TVA that is set to begin in October. There is a utility master survey being conducted right now with an outside consultant. Once the results are in, this will give WKU the information to put several money-saving policies in place to keep

energy costs in check. Mr. Riley explained the age and condition of the current HVAC and heating systems and told the Staff Council that energy management is facing some tough infrastructure issues. The issue of some buildings not receiving enough air conditioning while other buildings are extremely cold was discussed. Mr. Riley explained that the typical temperature range for buildings should be 68 to 78 degrees. If work environments are repeatedly outside this range, then he asked that employees let Facilities Management know, so those specific issues can be addressed.

The Staff Leadership Institute applications will be sent to the campus in the near future. All staff members are encouraged to consider applying for this group. LySandra Bowles, Barbara Johnston, and Angela Robertson will represent the Staff Council on this committee.

A note of appreciation from a WKU staff employee for the Staff Council's hard work and representation of the staff was read.

During the conference call with President Ransdell, the question of employee tuition benefits being available to employees for the Winter term was discussed. The President stated that while the employee would need to check with their supervisor before signing up for a class, that the tuition benefit would apply for the Winter term.

The President approved the week of October 10 --homecoming week-- as "Wear WKU Gear" week.

The President was invited to participate in the Fall Break Brunch festivities and responded that he looked forward to this gathering.

James McCaslin talked with Human Resources and made a clarification of making up missed work time for classes. The official policy states:

"With the approval of the department head, an employee may take one course during normal working hours, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. without being required to use vacation time or lunch time to make up for time spent in class. Although supervisors/department heads are encouraged to approve an employee's request to take a class during regular working hours unless the taking of a class would adversely affect the work unit, it is expressly provided herein that divisions/departments of the University may implement additional and/or more specific provisions relating to taking a course during normal working hours."

The Council was reminded that if the work unit would be adversely affected, the supervisor/department head could disallow the taking of courses during the work day.

Staff Excellence Awards nominations for the 2005 Staff Excellence Awards are due in Human Resources by the close of business on Tuesday, September 13, 2005. There is a new selection committee this year. Any staff person, including part-time employees, may nominate any other staff person for this award.

The Staff Council was asked for 7 staff members to serve on the Parking and Transportation Appeals committee for a one-year term. The 7 chosen were: Chris Rhynerson, Debbie Carroll, Regina Allen, Ann Potter, Mike Thompson, Wendy Wren and Tina Sneed. There are other WKU faculty representatives on this committee also.

An update from the Parking & Transportation Appeals Committee was given by Patty Booth. The parking and transportation policy allowing gated pass holders to park down in premium parking spaces was discussed. James McCaslin presented the opposing side of the gated park-down issues as requested by a staff employee. Based on the number of email and verbal communications received by the Staff Council, it was recommended that a formal request be made to the Parking and Transportation Committee at the next meeting to revisit that policy. The Staff Council recommends the following:

- Gated pass holders may be allowed to park down in non-premium parking.
- Employees whose job responsibilities require more availability with parking will be addressed on an individual basis with Dr. Tougas and the committee.
- If changes are made to the policy governing use of gated lots such that a gated pass holder no longer desires to own a gated pass, that person may exercise a one time option to change to a premium or non premium pass within in a specified time frame.

A benefits committee update was given by James McCaslin. The benefits committee is currently in the process of selecting a third party administrator for 2006. Utilizing the bid process has produced very competitive rates. The selection is to be made soon, and then the insurance premiums for 2006 can be set.

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Patty Booth reported that a recommendation from the Part Time Benefits Committee has been made to develop a Benefits Package for any regular part time employee. Such an employee is defined as one who regularly works an average of 20 hours per week. There are currently 33 such employees at WKU. Benefits would include accrual of vacation and medical leave on a prorated basis, Tuition Waiver Discount Program, and use of the Preston Center.

The Fall Break Brunch decorating committee would like for WKU staff/faculty members to look through any photo memorabilia that they have from over the years and send an electronic copy to Heather Stubblefield by e-mail no later than Friday, September 23. The committee asks that you please identify the people in the photos and the event with date and/or year, if possible. These photos will be used in a display during the brunch. Fall Break Brunch donations for door prizes were discussed. The theme for the brunch will be the same as for homecoming: Celebrate Traditions--Build Memories. The Council will meet on Monday October 3 to finish Fall Break Brunch planning.

Next regular meeting of the Staff Council will be on Wednesday, November 2, 2005 at 9:00 in the HR Conference Room. Guests will be Brandon Higgins (workers comp) at 9:00 and Barbara Burch at 10:00.

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>