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2005 April 11 - Staff Senate Minutes

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EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
Staff Senate Minutes
April 11, 2005

PRESENT: Constance Alexander, Kathy Smith, Pat Barnett, Carolyn Bond, Mark Bragg, Kathy Brooks, Amy Bower, Sharon Chandler, Laura Cooper, Renee Couch, Tim Dills, Marcia Donnelson, Charles Forrester, Joy Fulkerson, Linda Greenwell, Betty Grice, Clifford Hudson, Trillis McKee, Donna Murphy, Betty Ann Proffitt, Judy Oaks, Wanda Richardson, Karen Sullivan, Mike Vaughn, Carla Warner

ABSENT: Thomas Hill (excused), Corintha Duncan (excused), Diana McClay (excused), Kim Denton (excused), Mary Duncan (excused), Darcy Martin, Terry Nelson (excused), Sherri Renfro (excused), Andre Stevens, Rita Taylor (excused), Cindy Weaver, Joe Webb

1. President Kathy Smith called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.
2. President Smith welcomed Drs. Wilsie Bishop and Steve Bader and Mr. Dave Mullins who gave a presentation of the Athletics Academic Program Report. Dr. Bishop stated that ETSU was at the top of the list for Tennessee Institutions and Division I Institutions. Also, she asked the Senate to take a look at the report content of the NCAA Division I Certification Self-Study, which is in three parts located on the S drive, and report errors to her directly. The site visit is scheduled for November, 2005.

President Smith introduced Lisa Moffett of the Tennessee State Employee Association who talked about new legislation going forth about keeping a percentage of insurance benefits for years of service. It was also noted that Carolyn Bond is the local president.

3. Approval of Minutes – A motion to approve February minutes was made by Karen Sullivan and seconded by Marcia Donnelson. Motion carried. A motion to approve the March minutes was made by Tim Dills and seconded by Betty Ann Proffitt. Motion carried.
4. Treasurer's Report – No Report
5. Committee Reports
 - a) Staff Development and Evaluation – Senator Marcia Donnelson stated that the committee met with Rich Ashley from the Employee Development Center regarding a survey he is planning to do campus-wide which was distributed to the senate.

The committee also discussed establishing a new employee "mentoring" program. A review and update of the staff handbook was talked about and it was suggested that the senate might do a one-on-one survey across campus to develop dialogue with staff to find out what concerns they might have or their opinions of the senate.

- b) Staff Concerns & Grievances – Senator Karen Sullivan, stated their committee met on March 14 and 21st to respond to concerns expressed by Robert Calkins in the Department of Art & Design. A handout was distributed regarding three concerns and the recommendations. The senate voted to table the first and

second concerns and recommendations until they can be studied further. The third concern, the committee made no recommendation and voted not to take on the issue.

With regards to the first and second concerns, Dr. Bishop recommended consideration of a new classification for part-time employees and also suggested that decisions be made for the organization not an individual. A sub-committee was established to discuss the suggestions put forth by Dr. Bishop. The members are senators Carla Warner, Amy Bower, Kathy Smith, and Karen Sullivan.

It was suggested that Carolyn Bond take the third concern to TSEA.

- c) Committee on Committees – Senator Judy Oaks asked for names for University Standing Committees.
- d) Elections – No Report

6. Old Business

- a) Staff Awards Picnic – Senators Trillis McKee and Wanda Richardson asked senators for help with door prizes, and a volunteer sheet was passed around for workers between the hours of 2 PM to 4:30 PM. There will be Beach/Jazz Music for entertainment. Senator Tim Dills volunteered to chair the Staff Awards Committee.

7. New Business

- a) Senator Karen Sullivan presented the report for the Staff Concerns and Grievance Committee.
- b) Senator Betty Grice asked for volunteers to help with the Blood Drive on June 8, 2005. A volunteer sheet was passed around.
- c) Dr. Franks from COM, who is also co-chair of the American Diabetes Walk, invited senators to come out and walk Sunday, April 17 at 12:30 PM at the Bristol Motor Speedway.

- 8. President Kathy Smith told the senate that Senator Terry Nelson is having knee surgery Tuesday, April 12th. Also, President Stanton broke his ankle and had surgery Saturday, April 9th.

President Kathy Smith adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Constance Alexander, Secretary

*East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, TN*



INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

To: ETSU Staff Senate

From: Staff Concerns & Grievances Committee

Subject: Report and Recommendations-Staff Senate Membership Eligibility;
Distinguished Staff Awards Eligibility; Longevity Pay

Date: April 8, 2005

Responding to concerns expressed by Robert Calkins, staff member in the Department of Art & Design, the Concerns & Grievances Committee met on March 14th and 21st of 2005 to discuss his following concerns:

1. Concern - Distinguished Staff Awards (DSA) Eligibility (Attachment A). Research of the Archives of Appalachia documented that the DSAs were first awarded in April of 1983 under the ETSU Presidency of Dr. Ronald Beller. Staff Senate minutes (1978-1985) made no distinction between full or part-time employee eligibility for the DSAs. Currently, according to our foundation accounting office, "Staff awards are given to full time employees at the discretion of staff awards committee." (Attachment B). Since DSA eligibility rests within the purview of the Staff Senate and through it, the Staff Awards Committee; and since DSA eligibility is not mandated in the Staff Senate Constitution or Bylaws, but rather by Staff Senate vote, after careful discussion, the Concerns and Grievances Committee decided upon the following recommendation:

Recommend that eligibility for Distinguished Staff Awards be open to all permanent staff members regardless of full or part-time status.

2. Concern - Staff Senate Membership Eligibility came under discussion by the committee as a logical result of the aforementioned Distinguished Staff Awards topic. Constitutionally, Senate membership eligibility is open to, "Any full-time member of the university staff...." Research through the archives uncovered at least one precedent. Sue Ann Reese, who was a part-time employee at 80% employment, served as a Staff Senator (Category 5) from 1996-1998, and was an active and productive senator as reflected in the archives of the senate minutes. Statistics provided by the ETSU Office of

Human Resources indicates that 7% of ETSU employees are currently employed at part-time status. Further discussion among the committee revealed the deep commitment to ETSU exhibited by many part-time employees, some of whom have been employed at part-time status for over ten years. In addition, at least one of the EEOC Categories, mandated for Staff Senator representation, is currently unfilled due to the elected senator's part-time employment status. Therefore:

Recommend that the Staff Senate Constitution, Article III, Membership, Section A., Eligibility, be amended to encompass permanent part-time employees of ETSU; that if the amendment is adopted by the Senate, nomination forms and election materials be edited to include the suggested amendment; and further, that this amendment when/if passed shall be made retroactive to the last staff senate elections held in 2004. Suggested amendment changes are indicated in bold italics below:

“ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

The Staff Senate shall consist of thirty (30) elected members.

- A. Eligibility: Any *permanent* full *or part-time* member of the university staff (non-faculty component) having been employed by the University...”

3. Concern - Longevity Pay for Part-Time Employees (Attachment C) was researched and found to be covered under ETSU Personnel Policy 15 – Longevity Pay, Section I., Introduction, which reads as follows:

“The 89th General Assembly of the State of Tennessee adopted a longevity pay plan to reward State employees for extended service to the State. The plan became effective on July 1, 1979 and was amended July 1, 1980 to include faculty members of the State's public higher education institutions, and was further amended on July 1, 1994 to include regular part-time employees who are scheduled to work 1600 or more hours (82.1 percent time) in a fiscal year. In addition, effective July 1, 1995, regular full-time employees with 36 months of full-time service became eligible to receive longevity credit for prior part-time service that is equivalent to not less than 5 years of full-time service. Its continuation each year is subject to positive action by the State Legislature.”

Since the issue of eligibility for longevity pay clearly falls under the purview of the Tennessee State Legislature, the committee decided to table this concern pending further discussion.