

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STAFF SENATE MEETING**

Tuesday, December 14, 2021
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Closs Hipp Building, Lumpkin Auditorium

PRESIDING: Shelley Dempsey, PhD, President

Call to Order – Shelley Dempsey, PhD, President

President Shelley Dempsey called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m. and welcomed staff senators and visitors to the full staff senate meeting.

Roll Call/Attendance Report - Andrenette Hudley, Secretary

Secretary Andrenette Hudley checked the roll through the QR Code. According to the attendance report, 39 senators were in attendance, 9 senators were absent, 2 senators on extended leave and 1 senator on extended leave attended virtually, and 4 senators absent gave proxies.

Establish Quorum - Tyson Lusk, Parliamentarian

Based on the attendance report, Parliamentarian Tyson Lusk declared a quorum established and business can be conducted.

Approval of Minutes – Rushondra James, Vice-President

There were no changes to the November 9, 2021, staff senate meeting minutes. Senator Megan Colascione made a motion to accept the November 9, 2021, general body staff senate minutes as written. Senator Brad Holt second the motion and all senators were in favor. The motion was adopted, and the minutes were accepted as written.

Guest Speakers

Audrey Korsgaard, PhD, Chair, Faculty Senate and Thad H. Westbrook, Vice Chairman, UofSC Board of Trustees, Chair, Presidential Search Committee were unable to attend and present at the general full body staff senate meeting.

Lauren Smith, Staff Representative on the Presidential Search Committee

Lauren Smith gave the following report. Prior to the preferred candidate withdrawing from the presidential search, the Board assured the Staff Representative on the Search Committee, Lauren Smith, that they intended to have staff representatives from the Staff Senate meet with him during his campus visit. Since the withdrawal of the preferred candidate, the search committee has no additional information regarding the status of the presidential search.

Reports of Officers

By-laws Amendments- Tyson Lusk, Parliamentarian

At this time there is no vote or action that needs to be taken on the bylaws. Information was presented to the general full body staff senate to solicit feedback and questions. According to the bylaws you must present any changes to the bylaws one month before voting on the bylaw change.

The membership committee sent the bylaws committee a few suggestions/request/changes to the bylaws. Amendments to the bylaws must be first reviewed and approved by majority vote of the executive committee. The executive committee must submit any proposed bylaw changes to senators at least 10 days prior to a regular scheduled meeting. These bylaws may be amended with a 2/3 or more favorable vote. The senator’s approval of changes to the bylaws become effective immediately, unless designated otherwise by the Staff Senate.

The executive committee approved the proposed bylaw changes from the membership committee. Tyson Lusk, Parliamentarian, presented the following bylaws changes to the general full body staff senate to consider:

Item No.	Action Item
1	<p>By-laws change Article V: Election Process, Section 4 Election of Officers from → “Officers of the Staff Senate (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian) will be elected during the May meeting each year and be seated as of July 1.”</p> <p>To → Officers of the Staff Senate (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian) will be elected at the March Staff Senate Meeting and be seated as of July 1.”</p>
2	<p>By-laws change: Article V: Election Process, Section 4 Election of Officers, Section 4D From→ “The letter must be received by the Immediate-Past President prior to the April meeting.”</p> <p>To→ The letter must be received by the Immediate-Past President prior to the February Staff Senate Meeting.”</p>
3	<p>By-laws change: Article V: Election Process, Section 4 Election of Officers, Section 4B From → “An orientation for Senators interested in Officer positions may be held, typically in January annually. This orientation would include discussion with past Officers on the job descriptions.”</p> <p>To → “An information session for Senators interested in Officer positions may be held, typically in January annually. This information session would include discussion with past Officers on the job descriptions.”</p>

Reports of Committees (As Needed):

Membership – Vanessa Berry/Caroline Maulana

No Report

Communications – Lauren Angelo-Duck/Bailey Watts

Senator Craig Brandhorst gave the following report.

The Vice-President for the Office of Communications, Larry Thomas, spoke to the staff senate, and that generated some conversation in Senator Brandhorst's office about what they can do as an office to better tell staff stories. The committee has been talking all semester about how to communicate to staff. There's a difference. 'To' is HR stuff. 'To' is information about what we're doing. 'About' is about celebrating staff, recognizing staff, elevating staff, and engaging with them intelligently.

Senator Brandhorst was the editor of USC TIMES, a print publication that went on hiatus in March of 2020 because of the pandemic. Larry Thomas visit to the staff senate sparked further conversation within the committee about what can be done but also sparked conversation in the Office of Communication, in particular a conversation between Senator Brandhorst and Larry Thomas. The USC TIMES is coming back. There will be a significant focus on staff—faculty as well because it's a faculty and staff publication. The timeline is still up in the air.

Senator Brandhorst asked senators to help the Office of Communication by providing input about what their constituents would prefer to receive stories about. Would the constituents prefer a print format or a web format? Note cards were left for senators to put a P for print format or a W for web format. If you can't pick one, then put a question mark. If you want to put a comment, feel free to do so on the back of the notecard. If you want Senator Brandhorst to contact you individually, you can put your name and contact info on the notecard.

Policy and Well-Being - Megan Colascione/Ja-Nae Epps

Senator Megan Colascione gave the following report.

The Policy and Well-Being Committee met with Vice President Caroline Agardy and Belinda Ogorek from Human Resources, and Dr. Rebecca Caldwell from University Health Services, to go over the benefits feedback that was collected from the Staff Senate. The Human Resources benefits team was able to review and theme the feedback, note the respective benefit authority responsible for that benefit to change, and share insight on where the feedback falls into the following color-coded areas (attached): RED – requested benefits that we do not have or do not have to the degree specifically requested and GREEN – requested benefits that we have at UofSC already. The YELLOW column represents the Policy and Well-being Committee notes from the meeting. [See attachment.](#)

Senators were asked to share the information with their respective constituents and find out the top 3 benefit areas that the Policy and Well-Being Committee can focus on for the coming year. All senators will complete a survey within the time frame of January 4 – January 14 to share the benefit areas that their constituents would like to be focused on.

If you have any questions, feedback, or concerns, please connect with the Policy and Well-Being Committee via the Microsoft Teams channel.

Professional Development – Melissa Kupfer/Leroy Sims

No Report

Community Project – Joe Fortune/Katherine Hilson

No Report

By-Laws- Bo Hart/ Kim Rose
No Report

New Ad hoc Committee – Shelley Dempsey

The Executive Committee suggested we move forward with an ad hoc committee to research and show benchmarks how other universities staff senates are having staff representation on presidential searches. President Shelley Dempsey with the support of the Executive Committee agreed to develop an ad hoc committee that could look at other university campuses and see how the staff and staff senate is represented on their presidential searches and board of trustees.

The Executive Committee agreed to appoint Senator Wright Culpepper as chair of the ad hoc committee. President Shelley Dempsey will appoint 2-3 people to serve on the committee with Senator Culpepper for a 4–5-month period.

Order of Business

New Business

Proposed Resolution – Staff Involvement on Presidential Search – Tyson Lusk, Parliamentarian

Vice-President Rushondra James presented the following proposed resolution to the general full body for approval.

Proposed Resolution

Whereas UofSC Staff comprise 65% of the university employees.

And Whereas the UofSC faculty and students each have a member on the Board of Trustees, and staff members do not:

Therefore, be it resolved, the UofSC Staff Senate respectfully requests to the UofSC Board of Trustees that prior to the naming of a new President, staff engagement with potential candidates be increased to include but not limited to inclusion on faculty panels, an independent staff panel, and other direct engagement by staff members and staff leaders at UofSC.

Be it further recommended, that upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to the Board of Trustees, Dr. Harris Pastides, Interim University President, Dr. Stephen Cutler, Interim Provost, Terry Parham, General Counsel, Julian Williams, VP of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Caroline Agardy, VP of Human Resources, Jeff Stensland, AVP of Media and External Engagement, Dr. Audrey Korsgaard, Chair of the Faculty Senate, Alex Harrell, Student Body President.

The proposed resolution will need two votes. The first vote will need 2/3 majority vote of the general full body for the proposed resolution to be considered, and the second vote will be a yes or no on the proposed resolution.

President Shelley Dempsey shared the background to the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search before the vote. President Dempsey made a motion and Treasurer Bridget Leslie second the motion for the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search to be considered by the general full body staff senate for a vote. Before the call for the vote Vice-President Rushondra James asked if there was any discussion. Secretary Andrenette Hudley did a roll call of the general full body staff senate for the vote to consider the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search. There was a consensus/unanimous vote by the general full

body of the staff senate to consider the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search.

Vice-President Rushondra James opened the floor for discussion on the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search.

Discussion of the Proposed Resolution – Staff Involvement on Presidential Search

Senator Kelley Fink asked if the proposed resolution has perpetuity to it. She wanted to know if it will be relevant years from now and will it be able to address the need of staff as it is written. If not, is it possible to add that to the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search?

President Shelley Dempsey responded by saying “we have discussed that the urgency felt like a little more to this piece because that's where we're going now, and we already have the other and there's been no indication that they're going to fix Lauren off the island or any of those things until we really do feel good about where we want that very positive and appreciative. So, at this point, her personal opinion is separating the two would be valuable to ask truly for what we want right now, given the urgency of the situation.”

Senator Mike Dial shared the following:

He had a conversation with a number of his constituents and with a few other senators and just wanted to highlight that there are a number of people who are on board with the thinking of the executive committee. They are excited that the executive committee came forward with this initiative. Staff comprise 65% of the workforce at the university. It's important that staff have a voice in the next phase of the search process. Internal grateful to Lauren for her role in the search.

Many staff feel voiceless. Faculty who are tenured, students, and alumni all had the opportunity and the safety to make their voices known. Whether they were a pro or against the direction the university was taken. While staff may have seen a number of issues with the relevant experience of our prior president and displeasure with the obvious political interference in the university governance, there just wasn't a safe way for staff to have a voice and SC also has a history of enabling a lack of transparency in our presidential search.

Having staff engaged in the process will open up for us a more transparent pathway for the staff senate. This body that represents an important group on our campus to have a voice and have a say and understand where we're going on the current search. We were lucky to have Lauren Smith, but the board of trustees circumvented our staff senate representation after multiple requests to have President Shelley Dempsey or others from this particular body serve on that group.

It would be good for us to have, in writing a plan of where staff will fit in. Thankfully Lauren Smith was incredibly communicative, but as we move into the next phase, it's imperative that staff, through their duly elected senators have a seat at the table. Staff had been voiceless for quite a while at this university. This body, that represents the needs of staff was formed just to do that. To not take this opportunity to not say that we need this opportunity to have our voices heard and to be available and to be seen as important by the next potential President of our institution would be a dereliction of our duty.

For this reason, Senator Mike Dial fully support the proposal and encourage his fellow senators to support it.

Senator Megan Colascione stated “On the grounds for how this Staff Senate body was established, we must advocate for a staff voice at the highest levels. Please consider voting yes to continue advocating for the staff and the future of this institution.”

Senator Christine Sleek ask the question from the floor on why any staff member is not interested in supporting the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search. Vice-President wanted to make sure we gave everyone including opposition the chance to discuss the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search.

Senator Bo Hart stated “Since the current search is in limbo, and if the current search committee is dissolved or starts over, can this resolution be effective for the current search and not for 10 years later for the next one?”

Vice President Rushondra James shared that the executive committee did hear different opinions on it. Some feel like why we should rock the boat now when there are good candidates, and the search is going well. Some feel we are still forming and that we still need to develop relationships and work well with others across campus.

From the very beginning President Shelley Dempsey, showed reasons why we have the staff senate. Although we must build trust and relationships across campus, we also need to build trusting relationships with our coworkers and our fellow colleagues as well. That is why we were elected to represent the staff.

Senator Wright Culpepper made a motion and Treasurer Bridget Leslie second the motion to approve the proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search as is. The general full body was ready for the vote. All senators voted in favor of the motion except Senators Delphine Bigony and Summer Yarborough. Senators Delphine Bigony and Summer Yarborough opposed the vote. The proposed resolution – staff involvement on presidential search passed and is now the staff senate resolution – staff involvement on presidential search.

Announcements (Executive Committee or Senators)

President Shelley Dempsey reminded everyone of the Holiday Social immediately after the general full body meeting.

President Shelley Dempsey thanked Treasurer Bridget Leslie for securing the in-kind donations from Aramark for the Holiday Social.

Treasurer Bridget Leslie thanked Aramark for the in-kind donations.

Senator Mike Dial reminded the senators that the info sessions will take place in January.

Adjourn

President Shelley Dempsey adjourned the full staff senate meeting at 4:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrenette F. Hudley
Secretary of Staff Senate