UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA STAFF SENATE MEETING

Tuesday, February 13, 2024 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

PRESIDING: Tyson Lusk, President

Call to Order – Tyson Lusk, President

President Lusk officially called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. President Lusk welcomed staff senators and visitors to the staff senate meeting. He reminded attendees that only staff senators are permitted to speak during the meeting.

Roll Call/Attendance Report - Katherine Hilson, Secretary

Secretary Hilson checked the roll after taking attendance. According to the attendance report, 46 senators were in attendance, 4 senators were absent, 3 senators were online, and no senators gave proxies.

Establish Quorum – Chris Burkett, Parliamentarian

Based on the attendance report, Secretary Hilson declared a quorum was established and Parliamentarian Burkett declared business could be conducted.

Approval of Minutes – Tyson Lusk, President

There were no changes to the January 9, 2024, staff senate meeting minutes. Senator Hodge made a motion to accept the January 9, 2024, general body staff senate minutes as written. Parliamentarian Burkett seconded the motion to accept the minutes as written. All senators were in favor. The motion was adopted and carried, and the minutes were accepted as written.

Reports of Officers:

Tyson Lusk, President

- Welcome to our Staff Ombudsperson Robynn Pease! We are so excited you are here.
- Executive Officer elections are forthcoming, please be sure to reach out to any member of the Executive Committee and consider running for a position.
- We will continue to share more about the date and information about the appreciation event for all USC staff.
- Meeting was held with Government Relations staff regarding resolution to be reviewed by SC General Assembly.
- We are very excited to have both President Amiridis and VP for Human Resources, Caroline Agardy, at our meeting today! Welcome!

President Amiridis:

- I've been at the State House today advocating for USC alongside almost 200 students, which was very encouraging to see!
- The state doesn't have as much money for funding as they did last year.

- You've probably heard and read about what is happening across the country in Higher Education and schools that have been in financial deficit. Schools are cutting programs, majors, etc. and we do not want to see that, especially at USC.
- We all know the number of high school graduates is decreasing in the country, and we are experiencing an enrollment cliff.
- However, we are in good shape! We have strong financial management, and we have strong enrollment. We have a strong applicant pool, and we are in demand for incoming students.
- We are going to be careful; we cannot relax. We must deliver the best experience possible for our students.
- You all play an integral role! You interact with our students in different ways than faculty and your services are imperative.
- Access and affordability to higher education are still at the forefront of our priorities.
- Certificate programs are growing, and students are actively taking advantage of these opportunities.
- We are reviewing our infrastructure. A lot of buildings were built in the 60's and 70's and we must look at what is needed for our campus and our growth.
- I was asked about online programs, and the undergraduate students want to be here in person for that experience, so we don't want to overextend and lose our strength. We know there are opportunities for online programs, and we are looking at those for some options such as Palmetto College.
- Parking is an issue. But it is a reality of where we are in the city.
- What keeps me up at night? I sleep well! But I worry about:
 - 1. The students and their well-being, mental health on campus
 - 2. Our reputation as an institution, it affects all of us
 - 3. Keeping my eye on finances and making wise decisions
- How are we doing with our priorities?
 - 1. Operational excellence, a small group but very important!
 - 2. Financial excellence, working hard to ensure our finances are secure.
- We know we need to expand our housing offerings for students. We will not guarantee housing for multiple years, it's too much of a risk. However, we know we need to have some options for our upperclassmen who want to stay on campus. There is currently a demand and the rent in Columbia has skyrocketed.
- What do you identify is the biggest strength of the staff? The relationships you build with students and the support and care they feel from you.
- We have a long way to go with our food insecurity on campus. We are working on this with our CommUnity shop.
- I'm going to invite Caroline up here to share a little more with you from her area.
- Thank you for all that you do and for having me today!

Vice President Agardy:

- We have worked with 40+ units already with Class and Compensation.
- We have another 22 units to work with for phase 3 compression.
- We are reviewing funds that came with the part of implementation and looking at compression and helping units position based on education and experience in job in relation.

- We worked with facilities and over 200 employees received raises.
- Likewise other units have made strides, provided units have the money.
- For those units who do not have the funds, some units may be waiting for it and others we are working to see how we can support each other with the compression.
- Working on training and guidance for managers so they can have informed conversations with their employees.
- Segal HR third party firm who is hosting focus groups to let us know where we need to improve and what we are doing right.

Reports of Committees:

Membership: William Boland/Julia Hodge

- Apportionment Proposal
 - Discussed status waiting on feedback from Executive Committee before moving forward
 - Received updated staff numbers from HR on January 8 (ready to use if new apportionment is approved)
- Elections
 - Reviewed prior year's election timeline and duties
 - Discussed our next steps for this year's officer and general elections
 - For officer elections confirmed with Executive Committee that we will hold a recorded, virtual Q&A panel for interested senators
 - January announcement for officer elections
 - February solicitation for those interested
 - March officer elections
 - For general elections begin reviewing numbers and open seats with Jessica McKie in January

Communications: Thom Harman/Michaela Taylor

- We are still working on our goals such as auditing how we communicate on campus.
- Working on materials for the Staff Appreciation and Awards Day (save the date card/email, formal invitation, etc.)
- As always, if you see any updates that are needed for the website, please reach out!

Staff Policy and Well-Being: Beth Herron/Jason Cone

- Met with Liam Hein who is the Chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee in Faculty Senate joined us and we talked about collaboration for parking and building access.
- We received feedback about accessibility and one of those was including parking behind Gambrell. We are still working on that. However, we were able to replace some very heavy doors in Gambrell with sliding doors, which was a big win!

Community Projects: Toni Karl/Amanda Minnet

- Thank you so much for continuing to collect pop tabs! Please continue to collect them so we will have a lot and we are so excited to give them to the Ronald McDonald House.
 - Ultimate goal 100 pounds of pull tabs

- The Big Event (USC event) The Big Event Leadership and Service Center | University of South Carolina (sc.edu)
 - Join USC as we thank the surrounding Columbia community by volunteering for a day of service! The Big Event will be held on Saturday, March 30, 2024.
 - The Big Event is an annual event that takes place on over 100 college campuses nationwide.
- Gamecock School Supply Closet:
 - Your contribution has been able to help a little over 1,250 students who have visited the supply closet!
 - Spring Semester urgent needs:
 - Notebook Paper
 - Spiral Notebooks
 - Colored Pens
 - Tape
 - Glue
 - Folders
 - Sharpies
 - Markers
 - Binder Dividers
 - Dry Erase Markers
 - Bookbags
 - They are also accepting used items as long as they can be used again (i.e. bookbags, folders, etc.)

Professional Development: Georgia Doran/Rebecca Christopher

- Continued Discussion on Nicole Vaughn being offered as our summer 2024 Speaker (August?) to all Senators.
- Brainstorming Session on PD Committee Ideas:
 - It was agreed to survey the new (June 2024) Senators upon their election for new programming ideas.
 - Dr. Anthony James will speak at our April Staff Senate meeting.
- We are still discussing the following topics: Mental Health Wellness Centers on other Campuses or just USC-Columbia, staff awards only for USC-Columbia campus, Results of the Survey on College specific benefits, etc.

By-Laws: Julia Bellon/Marissa Buck

- The Bylaws Committee submitted to the Executive Committee proposed changes to Article V: Election Procedures to streamline and remove duplication.
- If the proposed changes are approved by the Executive Committee the first reading will be in March due to the President speaking at the February meeting.

Staff Senate Awards and Recognition Committee: Bridget Leslie

- The Awards and Recognition Committee are working diligently to make this Staff Day event a memorable one!
- THANK YOU to our committee members who volunteered to serve as sub-committee chairs.

- These sub-committees with senator members will help develop plans, secure services, and equipment, and execute plans.
- We met individually with the sub-chairs to start planning efforts, and they are reaching out to the newly assigned senator sub-committee members.
- Next steps, we will have a sub-chair meeting to further provide an overview of the vision for the event and to discuss obtaining executive approvals and procurement submissions.
- We have connected with the Director of Executive Communications in the Office of the President to ensure our communication plans align with protocol.
- We have submitted a formal request for President Amiridis to participate in the event.
- We are planning to distribute a save-the-date at the end of February to obtain a soft count of staff attendees to help with logistics, food, and registration efforts.

Task	Budget Category	Subcommittee	Assignee
Food sub chair	Contractual Services	Food	Ja-Nae Epps
Protocol sub chair	N/A	Protocol	Bridget Leslie
Logistics (venue, parking, housekeeping, security) sub chair	Contractual Services	Logistics	Kim Rose
Decorations and Set-up sub chair	Supplies	Decorations	Jennifer Cross
Entertainment sub chair	Supplies	Entertainment	Rushondra James
Communications/Publicity sub chair (includes photographer/videographer)	Supplies	Communications-PR	Rebecca Denisi
Registration sub chair	N/A	Registration	Ashley Dantzler

Staff Senate Scholarship/Fundraising Committee: Chelsey Malloy/Wright Culpepper

• No report this month.

Additional Announcements

• The Gamecock Pantry – Dodie dining/repurpose extra food to go to the Gamecock Pantry

Upcoming meetings:

- 3/12 General Body Meeting
- 4/9 General Body Meeting
- 5/14 General Body Meeting AND Staff Appreciation Day

Adjourn

Senator Epps made a motion to adjourn. Senator Carey seconded the motion to adjourn. All senators were in favor. The formal meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 12, at 3:00 p.m. in the Lumpkin Auditorium, Close-Hipp Building, 8th Floor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katherine Hilson Secretary Staff Senate