

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
STAFF SENATE MEETING**

Tuesday, March 14, 2023  
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.  
Close-Hipp Building, Lumpkin Auditorium, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

PRESIDING: Rushondra James, President

***Call to Order – Rushondra James, President***

President James officially called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM and welcomed staff senators and visitors to the full staff senate meeting.

***Roll Call/Attendance Report - Katherine Hilson, Secretary***

Secretary Hilson checked the roll after taking attendance. According to the attendance report, 33 senators were in attendance, 13 senators were absent, 2 senators gave proxies, and 5 senators were virtual.

***Establish Quorum - Bo Hart, Parliamentarian***

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

***Approval of Minutes – Rushondra James, President***

There were no changes to the February 14, 2023, staff senate meeting minutes. Parliamentarian Hart made a motion to accept the February 14, 2023, general body staff senate minutes as written. Senator 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:***

***Julian Williams, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion***

State of DEI work. DEI is not about being anti-American, it is about instilling a culture where anyone can come to live, work, and learn. As long as I have a job here, I will continue to be a passionate advocate. It will require all of us to continue to move forward. As you're thinking about your own advocacy, know that while I have a budget, I will provide funding and support for events, workshops, etc. I want to create a space that will prioritize what belonging and community look like. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to bring your authentic self to work? We need everyone's authentic selves at work in this University.

President James – I just wanted to share for those who may not know that Dr. Williams was one of our Executive Sponsors to help Staff Senate get support from leadership and we are very appreciative for his consistent support!

Senator Sims – When you take the temperature around campus and everything that is happening, what do you think is the biggest obstacle on our campus in reference to diversity, equity and inclusion?

VP Williams – I think we have an empathy gap. I think we need to walk in the shoes of some of our peers. We have to be able to listen to and hear diverse experiences. There has always been pushback towards progress, but progress doesn't stop. We have to communicate our ideals and leverage them. The people who are making decisions about DEI don't work here; you do. How do we further elevate the voices of student and faculty experiences?

Senator Petritsis – If certain decisions are made in courts, if funding is pulled, are steps being taken to create a plan b and plan c to ensure we have DEI on campus and if so, what are they?

VP Williams – We're strategizing now. We have to stay forward-looking and honest. I am working with the President, Provost, and other senior leadership. This matters to us because we have a variety of lived experiences and cultures. We have elevate the values that everyone belongs at this University. How do advance our own narrative for how DEI shows up in our students and at our University? We have to be able to push forward and not let things just happen to us.

Senator Colascione – We have had a climate survey launched in past years to navigate how people are feeling. Are you all planning to do a new climate survey?

VP Williams – We haven't done a climate survey since 2018. I am advocating for the resources to be able to do that. I am optimistic, and we are looking forward to that. We have a need for additional surveys for faculty and staff to look at individual experiences.

***Rushondra James, President***

Welcome to our guests! Thank you for joining us. As a reminder, our Staff Senate meetings are open to anyone.

We have two new Senators! Welcome to Laura Thorp from the College of Information and Communications and Alissa Liggett from the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. We are so thankful to have you both here and look forward to working with you all this year.

Imagine Carolina recap – We did receive a lot of the results from note-takers. We will be meeting on March 16th to go over the notes and discuss our next steps. We believe will see some action from these notes on behalf of the staff. I appreciate your enthusiasm and continue to spread the word to your colleagues.

Staff Policy and Well-Being met with VP Jeff Perkins and Senator Colascione will share more when she gives their report later today.

I had the opportunity to meet with the Chair of the Staff Senate from the University of Kentucky. Very different process than we do, we as an Executive Committee are meeting with them and their leadership on Monday, March 20th. We are excited to learn more from this group. Faculty Senate Budget Committee – Every Dean-led school will have a representative on a university-wide budget committee. Please connect with your college's financial officer on ways to ensure that the senator is kept in the loop regarding important decisions. This is an opportunity for senators to speak on behalf of constituents, and the executive committee is happy to support once initial contact has been made.

[Link](#) to the faculty Senate Budget committee (starts on page 10)

Election Reminders –

- Email your constituents to make them aware of upcoming elections.
- Staff can self-nominate or nominate someone else.
- Details in email sent on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Word of the Month – Perpetuity: the property or condition of being endless or perpetual. We want to make sure that Staff Senate lasts longer than we do!

***Speeches from Executive Committee Candidates:***

EVP Elect – Megan Colascione

Good afternoon, everyone! I represent the division of Student Affairs. I am an alumna, and I have been here for over 10 years. I have been a part of a lot of different avenues of learning and connection across campus. I have been a part of President Pastides' Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee and the Provost's Advisory Council on Women's Initiatives. I have participated on HR professional development programming, and really have enjoyed the past two years serving as a Senator, specifically serving as co-chair on the Policy and Wellbeing Committee. There has been a lot of moving and shaking, with advocacy being the cornerstone of what we do. We have advocated for paid parental leave, which has come to fruition, and advocated for flexible schedules (especially in the summer time), for the HR policy update to allow first-year employees to be remote or have remote opportunities, and for HR contacts to be included in the supervisor newsletter. We were able to advocate for mental health being included in sick leave and for the staff ombuds position. In this role, I hope to bring my skills of leadership, empathy, strategic forecasting, organization, and again, advocacy, to the table. My values. Authenticity. What you see is what you get. This is who I am. I'm all about kindness because we don't know what a person is facing day-to-day. Learning. I love learning. I'm a very curious soul, and input is everything to me. I will always be asking those why-questions. Belonging in relationships. These values are pivotal to who I am as a person and how I connect to all of you. Thank you.

Treasurer Elect – Vanessa Berry

I am a member of the Membership Committee. We have been working very hard to make sure the election process goes smoothly. I have been at the University 15 years, serving at different roles, including the Director of Financial Operations at Student Health. We have a budget of about 18 million. I am interested in this position because it fits into the role that I currently have. I am committed to providing support to you by way of resources for you to continue doing the work the you are committed to doing for our constituents. I will be transparent of the resources that are being used, and I look forward to being a part of our next session.

Secretary Elect – Katherine Hilson

I am honored to be considered to continue as your Staff Senate Secretary for next year! It has been amazing to work with you all this past year and I'm eager to continue to advocate for you in our Executive Committee meetings, ensure our amazing work is documented through our

minutes, and to continue to work with each of you throughout the year. If you have any questions or suggestions, please let me know! Thank you!

Parliamentarian Elect – Chris Burkett

Good afternoon. I am currently the executive director of student services. I have been at the University of South Carolina for six years, higher education for 19. I currently serve on the Staff Policy and Wellbeing Committee and also chair the Staff Ad-Hoc Award Committee. I would be honored to serve as the next Parliamentarian. Most importantly, my experience in higher education would be an asset in regards to being a liaison for Staff Senate to the Executive Committee and serving the Executive Committee. I look forward to continuing to serve the University of South Carolina and you all.

President Elect – Tyson Lusk

I am the Assistant Athletic Director for Development, which is a fancy way of saying I'm a fundraiser. I am really, really excited about working with this group. This group will be incredible advocates. My word of the day would be "optimism", and when you hear about the things we're doing, what we've done, and what we're planning to do, this is a very optimistic time for Staff Senate. All of us have built a foundation where we are out there, we're seen, we're heard. I am really excited. I think we have buy-in from key campus leaders, and I think we can work together in a cohesive way to take this thing to whole new heights. That's my goal for the next few years, and I'm excited to be along for the ride with you. Thank you very much.

***Reports of Committees:***

**Membership:** Kelley Fink

A) Elections Coordination

B) Paper Ballots

- The Membership Committee requests that Senators assess whether or not their unit/division/college needs paper ballots for this election. We don't want to make it difficult for any staff members to participate and vote.
- Michelle Knight (Athletics) is coordinating this component of the voting process. She will work with both the Senate Office and the unit/division/college to ensure the consistency/validity/legitimacy/security of the paper ballot voting process.
- **Units MUST contact Michelle Knight NO LATER than 3/24/2023 to receive paper ballots for their area.**
- Please contact Michelle Knight at [MBKnight@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:MBKnight@mailbox.sc.edu) or at 803-777-2555

C) Timeline for Senator Elections

**2023 Senator Elections Timeline**

<b>Due Date for Task</b>	<b>Task to Complete</b>
3/13/23-3/21/2023	Nomination/application period
3/24/2023	Senate seat candidate applications deadline

4/7/2023	Senator candidates announced for each unit/college/division
4/10/2023	Paper ballots distributed
4/10/2023	Election Campaigns may begin
4/10/2023	Election Voting Opens
4/21/2023	Election Voting closes/concludes
5/2/2023	Certification of Senator Elections by Staff Senate Executive Committee
5/8/2023	Candidate Notification
5/9/2023	Full slate of newly elected senators announced
5/10/23-5/12/2023	Election results notification to University personnel
6/22/2023	New Senator Orientation

**Communications:** Dwuan Sellers/Craig Brandhorst

- If you go to our website currently, when you click “Staff Senate” about us page:
- [https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/staff\\_senate/about/index.php](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/staff_senate/about/index.php)
- It has the video for more about being a Staff Senator, as well as a FAQ page.

**Staff Policy and Well-Being:** Megan Colascione/Brad Holt

- Staff Ombudsperson: President Amiridis committed to creating this role for the upcoming fiscal year at Imagine Carolina. We are working with the Executive Board to connect with the President’s Office for the on-going development of this role.
- Parking & Transportation Services: Jeff Perkins (USC Chief Operating Officer) and Esther Legette (Director of Parking and Transportation Services) met with the committee on 3/8.
  - Highlights include:
    - Overview of parking issues and initiatives
    - By Fall of ‘23 USC will have added 25% more parking capacity overall compared with two years ago.
    - Mr. Perkins described the balance between generated revenue and expense needs (e.g. operational costs and deferred maintenance) as “adequate”
    - Mr. Perkins informed the committee that he will be presenting a plan to the BOT for a parking and transportation optimization study to be conducted by a third party.
    - Mr. Perkins was receptive to future representation from Staff Senate on planning and feedback groups where appropriate.
    - Mr. Perkins is invited to a future Staff Senate meeting to discuss the optimization study and any other parking and transportation issues with the full Staff Senate
- Call for Inquiry for Academic Staff: Faculty Senate is in the process of updating their faculty senate manual and revising their budget committee bylaws to create unit-level budget committees within colleges. We are unclear if these unit-committees will allow staff to have a representative seat at the table or if they will be faculty only. We advise all

academic Staff Senators to connect with their Faculty Senate Senators and their unit's financial representatives to understand the processes that may be affected by these updates. Please connect to President James, Senator Colascione, and Senator Epps for all updates.

- Imagine Carolina – we will be following up with the executive committee on notes from this event.

**Professional Development:** Georgia Doran

- We have been working through developing relevant programming based on the survey.
  - Time management, resiliency, and balance. We will work on developing a year calendar focusing on these themes.
- Your department/area can schedule active shooter training through USC PD.

**Community Projects:** Brian Hull

- Give it Up for Good:
  - We have a volunteer opportunity through Housing!
  - We need a collection point for students as they are in the process of moving out of their residence halls across campus.
  - Volunteers are needed to help organize collection points to prepare for pickup and remove trash April 17th thru May 12th (Mon-Fri). Volunteers are encouraged to sign up colleagues to help.
    - commit to at least a one-hour time block (feel free to take as many one-hour blocks as you can) to prep/bag the items for pick up from the dorms? Volunteers with 2+ hours of service will be entered into a drawing for 1801 Grille dinner vouchers (multiple recipients).
- Please complete the poll here to help us get an initial idea of how much help Staff Senate can offer: <https://forms.office.com/r/XwtnXFVdxQ>

**Bylaws:** Kim Rose

- We've been busy reviewing Staff Senator seat allocations.
- We worked with the Membership Committee to discuss interpretation.
- If any committee or Senator has a question regarding the Bylaws, please do not hesitate to reach out and let us know.

**Staff Senate Awards Committee (Ad-Hoc):** Chris Burkett

- We've received your input and suggestions and made some revisions to the Staff Senate award categories, wording, criteria, etc.
- Senator Burkett made a motion to submit the draft for the Staff Senate Awards be approved. Senator Colascione motioned to approve. Senator Rose seconded the motion. All senators were in favor. The motion was adopted and carried, and the awards were approved.
- QR code to volunteer to be on the Staff Senate Awards Selection Committee.

## Staff Senate Awards Selection Committee



### Staff Senate Scholarship/Fundraising Committee (Ad-Hoc): Loren Murphy

- (a32527) Staff Senate Fund has a current spendable balance of \$202.50.
- Here are two quick ways to donate (link and QR code for online giving and a link if you wish to donate via payroll deduction). No amount is too small!
- Direct link and QR Code for online donation: <https://donate.sc.edu/staffsenatefund>



- Link to complete payroll deduction form online:  
[https://sc.edu/giving/about\\_our\\_services/annual\\_giving\\_programs/family\\_fund/family\\_fund\\_payroll\\_deduction\\_form.php](https://sc.edu/giving/about_our_services/annual_giving_programs/family_fund/family_fund_payroll_deduction_form.php)
- Give for Garnet!

### ***Additional Announcements***

#### Upcoming meetings:

- 5/9: Karlton Washington, SC State Employees Association
- 6/13: Rex Tolliver, VP Student Affairs Academic Support

***Adjourn***

Senator Burkett made a motion to adjourn. Senator Epps seconded the motion to adjourn. All senators were in favor. The formal meeting adjourned at 4:23 PM.

**Next meeting: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the Lumpkin Auditorium, Close-Hipp Building, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Katherine Hilson

Secretary  
Staff Senate