

TO: Staff Senate  
FROM: Pauline Palko  
DATE: June 3, 2015  
SUBJECT: Minutes of the May 13, 2015 Meeting

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In attendance: Ms. Cherra, Ms. Palko, Ms. Rupp, Ms. Tucker, Ms. Klien, Mr. Barrett, Ms. Edwards, Mr. Fedoryk, Mr. Pilger, Mr. Sakowski, Ms. Shimsky, Mr. Hallock, Ms. Butler, Ms. Cook, Ms. Hollingshead, Ms. Freeman, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Oakey, Mr. Wetherell, Ms. Vita, Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Knicely, Ms. Grissinger, Ms. Cali, Mr. Krzan, Ms. Thomas, Ms. Schofield, Ms. Strickland.

Not in attendance: Ms. Mecadon, Ms. Barrett Notarianni, Ms. Kocis, Ms. Barnoski, Mr. Davitt, Mr. Roginski, Mr. Griguts, Ms. Bevacqua, Ms. Driscoll-McNulty, Ms. Johnson.

Guests: Mr. Coleman, Ms. Wormuth, Ms. Tetreault.

**Welcome:**

- Mr. Wetherell called the meeting to order at 10:37 am, in the PNC Bank Board Room, Brennan Hall. Mr. Sheehan offered the opening prayer, Mr. Murphy volunteered to offer the prayer for the June 10 meeting.
- Attendance was checked, quorum met for voting purposes.

**Review of March meeting minutes:**

Minutes approved.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Agenda approved.

**Liaison Report (Ms. Patricia Tetreault):**

The University's Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees May 8, 2015.

Admissions numbers project the incoming first-year class to number in the range of 900-930, fewer than last year, but exceeding Ed's predicted budget allowances.

Hildebrand Learning Centers presented an information session on their new Learning Center scheduled to open and be in operation by mid-August 2015. The University Human Resources Office has links to the Hildebrand website so people can access the applicable rate sheet.

There are no discounts in costs for children of students or employees of the University, but children and grandchildren of University students, staff, and

faculty receive preference over the general community for available childcare spots. There is a lot of community interest in the center, so spots will go fast.

Ms. Tetreault noted there are only 8 slots available for infants, and recommended that anyone interested in obtaining childcare for an infant at Hildebrand contact them soon rather than waiting until they are open or close to opening as those slots may be filled.

The Retirement Window Voluntary Retirement Plan with pay and benefits incentive was offered to the sixty employees who were eligible having reached the age of sixty-two and had at least fifteen years of service; forty-one of the sixty accepted the offer and most will be leaving at the end of May. Human Resources is planning a community reception for them, to be held May 26. A few have been asked to stay on for a few weeks for transition purposes. It's a great opportunity for those that have accepted.

Responding to the question of whether or not all those vacant positions would be filled, Ms. Tetreault said that Ed and his team are engaged in taking an overall look at expenses and revenue and any saving or revenue opportunities. On the staff side, HR will be looking at those positions and the work in those areas determining whether the position should be filled as is or should be modified. HR will review those positions with the department and divisional leadership of those areas. Several departments are significantly impacted by the number of staff that will be leaving. All areas are important and of concern, but the areas that will experience a significant impact due to these vacancies will be addressed first and started quickly. Some positions will be filled, but most likely not all, the number filled depends on the outcome of the analysis.

When asked about the cost savings of not filling some of these positions, Ms. Tetreault answered that savings couldn't be predicted, because costs depends on the number of positions not filled and the market rate of the skill sets required for positions that will be filled. Ms. Tetreault noted that typically, the savings of not replacing staff is minimal compared to when senior faculty leave and those positions are filled by junior faculty members who don't command the same level of salary. After the last window retirement opportunity, the University did not eliminate many positions so the savings was minimal.

Hiring temps in the short term may be a possibility especially for departments in which numerous people are leaving.

Ms. Tetreault stressed that The University is sensitive to the impact all these people leaving will have on the people that are left as well as the critical and time-sensitive nature of the work.

Ms. Tetreault thanked Ms. Rupp and Mr. Sakowski for including her in roundtable discussions or asking her for answers to questions that arose at roundtables. She noted the benefit of knowing what employees are thinking, questioning, concerned about,

excited about, or seeking clarification on, and offered that she, Mr. Nottelmann or Ms. McCartney would be happy to attend any roundtable or staff meeting. She is looking into some questions that came up at roundtables and will get back to those constituencies with the answers when she has them. Sometimes questions that come up are just a matter of a misunderstanding that is quickly and easily solved just by giving accurate information.

HR is working on inquiries pertaining to the day before Thanksgiving snow day—if timecard was already turned in with a vacation day, staff lost that vacation day, others got the snow day; talking with Ed about it.

Another item is holiday pay for facilities staff when the holiday falls on Sunday, such as Easter; facilities staff don't typically get holiday pay.

Personal Time use and procedures, calling in procedures;

Also reviewing overtime hours pay rate when worked in the same week employee has taken time off for vacation, sick or personal time.

Over the summer, The University will engage in a Request for Proposal for a time and attendance system that would replace both time cards for non-exempt, and the on-line system for exempt employees. This change will not happen quickly; once a system is chosen it will likely take a full year of working with IT to be functional. This is one of the priorities on the to-do list.

In the meantime, revised time cards will be introduced in June. The new timecards are streamlined and have the codes currently used. Clay Nottelmann will be doing training over the summer with supervisors.

The policy that allows employees to carryover one year's personal time into the next should be effective June 1, 2015. The new policy will be included in the updated handbook. With assistance from the Staff Senate, The Staff Handbook will be reviewed and updated this summer.

No new information to report regarding background checks for all employees in education. Should know more after calling into a session in Harrisburg taking place May 13.

### **Presidents Report:**

Mr. Wetherell and a number of senators attended the State of Scranton Seminar presented by the financial consultant to the City of Scranton. The consultant expressed optimism that the City of Scranton could recover, if proper steps are taken. Mr. Wetherell thanked those that attended for being aware of and interested in the community beyond the campus.

Board of Trustees were happy with the number of incoming first-year students. Much of the meeting time was focused on Title IX incident procedures with an emphasis on correct handling and fairness to all parties involved for every incident.

Mr. Wetherell welcomed the newly elected senators. June order of business will be electing a Vice President and President Elect. Mr. Wetherell, Mr. Murphy, and Ms. Palko will be completing the second of their two-year terms as President, Parliamentarian, and Secretary, respectively. Senators may self-nominate to run for a position. A senator may simultaneously hold both the Vice President and President Elect positions. Anyone interested in running, should send their name to Joe Wetherell before the June 10 meeting.

### **Committee Reports**

Election and Membership—Alternates may run for office and also vote for officers.

Communications—Mr. Murphy thanked Ms. Rupp and Ms. McNulty for putting together and distributing the newsletter, and Mr. Wetherell for his informative letter to include in the newsletter.

Social Events & Community—Nothing to report.

Recognition and Excellence—Not in attendance, setting up for the Awards and Recognition Luncheon.

Staff Development—Home Improvement Barbecue was a resounding success. Better turn out than last year. The committee needed less financial backing from the Jesuit Center this year because our budget was in better shape than last year. Mr. Oakey (co-chair) thanked the Jesuit Center for supplementing the budget. Everyone had a great time. The weather was perfect. Ryan Sheehan offered an opening prayer. The Sustainability Office gave away 200 seedlings. May add other areas of expertise to the offerings next year, such as IT. It was nice to see some department and divisional leadership in attendance.

Finance—All charges have not yet hit the budget. Will have a better picture at the June meeting, but expenses have been well managed this year, so not expecting any surprises.

### **Roundtable Reports**

MTTP roundtable: Julie Schumacher Cohen gave a quick presentation on the volunteer form that goes out to employees asking about their community service. Ms. Schumacher Cohen also gave an overview of her office's functions and responsibilities.

Ms. Tetreault attended as well, and answered questions that had been submitted ahead of time, about overtime, comp-time, etc. and addressed other questions or concerns raised at previous roundtables. Overall, the group believed questions

were answered sufficiently. She will research the new items she couldn't answer completely, and will respond to the group in the future.

Ms. Tetreault gave an update on all the benefits the University has to offer, all the programs available to employees, etc.

Mr. Sakowski reported that most attendees were satisfied with the answers, because hearing the how and why was helpful.

One of the questions raised at the MTTP roundtable, and that had been brought to the senate was in regard to the policy when an employee is called in for overtime in the same week that employee has been out sick, or has taken personal, or vacation time. Ms. Tetreault stated that she had done some research and found that there may be some modifications that could be made to the policy for certain circumstances. She will update at a later time.

Mr. Wetherell commented that he is working with Ms. Tetreault on resolving some items that came up at the Clerical Roundtable. He asked that roundtable chairs prepare a list of items they felt should be brought to the full senate.

Ms. Tucker added that she had met with Ms. Tetreault who had answered the questions raised at the Clerical Roundtable.

### **Items from the Floor:**

Mr. Murphy introduced BikeScranton, a completely free bike share program managed by the Lackawanna Heritage Valley, and encouraged employees to try biking! Six bikes and helmets are available for loan at the Weinberg Memorial Library on The University of Scranton campus. Anyone age 18 and over with a valid driver's license or state photo ID can sign out a bike and bike downtown, up to Nay Aug Park, or other routes in the city. Bike route maps will be available soon with notations of historical interest and mapped strategically to avoid traffic. The entire route is 7.4 miles, completed leisurely in 90 minutes, less if completed more aggressively. The bike loan program is one of our sustainability initiatives. The hope is that once people try biking with a loaner bike, they will be inspired to buy their own and use it around town. Other bike share locations include Lackawanna Heritage Valley, Cedar Bike and Paddle, and Hilton Scranton & Conference Center. More information can be found at [BikeScranton.com](http://BikeScranton.com).

Mr. Barrett asked Ms. Tetreault if summer would be an appropriate time to put forward the Wellness Participation Study. She agreed it would probably be a good time.

Ms. Butler suggested advertising Hildebrand Learning Center to graduate and commuter students.

Ms. Butler commented that it is imperative to stay on top of communication efforts campus wide.

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Meeting adjourned 11:35am