

TO: Staff Senate
FROM: Kristi Klien
DATE: December 17, 2025
SUBJECT: Staff Senate Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Lucy Grissinger, Denise Kuzma, Melissa Eckenrode, Patti Tetreault, Sybil Keris, Melisa Gallo, Megan Sweeney, Kelly Cook, Kristi Klien, Bridget Judge, Bridget Conlogue, Shawn Beistline, Brenda Amato, Hollie Roscioli, Brenda Clarke, Diane Collins Gilmore, Marcella LaMura, Melissa Przewlocki, Joseph Medina, Melinda Finnerty, Shonna Emick, Raymond Kratz, Grace Crowley, Jill Eidenberg, Bridget Hunter

Not in Attendance: Gerianne Barber, Gina Butler, Meghan Eidenberg, Autumn Forgione, Rose Ann Jubinski, Bryn Schofield, Traci Vennie, Daniela Teneva

Welcome: Kristi Klien called the meeting to order. Brenda Amato offered the opening prayer. Volunteer needed for opening prayer at the next meeting, Brenda Amato volunteered. The Land Acknowledgement Statement was read. Attendance was checked, and a quorum was met.

Review of Agenda: A motion was made to accept the agenda and minutes. The motion was seconded, and the agenda and minutes were approved.

Christmas Luncheon Proceeds - Donation to Domestic Service Trips (CSJ)

Background & Financial Summary

- Total raised from luncheon: \$1,973.00
- Minus 50/50 winnings paid out: \$200.00
- Remaining luncheon funds: \$1,773.00
- Current agency fund balance: \$102.63
- Total available for donation: \$1,875.63

Because agency funds cannot continue rolling over, the goal is to use the remaining balance this year.

Proposed Action

A motion was put forward to:

- Add: \$124.37
- To bring the total donation to: \$2,000.00
- Recipient: Domestic Service Trips (CSJ)
- Funding Sources: Luncheon proceeds + agency fund balance + added amount
- Purpose: To fully clear the agency account and provide an even, round-number donation.

Discussion

- Noted that past donations were higher (e.g., \$2,500 last year), but this year's available funds cap the contribution at \$2,000.
- Members agreed this approach both donates meaningfully and resolves the agency fund rollover issue.

Vote

- Motion was seconded.
- All in favor.
- Motion passed unanimously.

Liaison Report: Kristi Klein, President for Patti Tetreault

Summary of Cabinet & Committee Activity

Cabinet Updates

- Board Meeting Preparation:
Cabinet focused heavily on preparing for the December 12th Board Meeting, including financial projections and the draft 2026–2030 strategic plan.
- Next Steps: Cabinet will continue partnering with Steve on the five-year financial forecast and related planning/action items. FY27 budget planning will be a priority early in the new year.
- Waste, Fraud & Abuse Hotline: On December 4th, Liz Garcia sent a reminder encouraging staff to report relevant concerns. Staff with questions can contact Liz or Patti.
- Hybrid Work Period: With supervisor approval, eligible staff may work a hybrid remote schedule from January 5–23, 2026.
- Faculty Contract Negotiations: Negotiations are ongoing; no confirmed resolution yet. A session was held recently with a plan to meet again in January.

Safety & Compliance

- Lockdown Exercise:
Per the December 9th email, the Incident Management Team will run a 10-minute lockdown drill at 9:40 AM on January 30th.
 - Format will mirror last January's exercise.
 - A procedural video will be shared.
 - No external law enforcement will participate.

HR Deadlines

- Vacation Carryover Forms are due Friday, December 19th.

Presidents Report – Kristi Klien

UGC (University Governance Committee) Meeting

- The most recent meeting was very short (about 20 minutes).
- Updates included:
 - Student Government
 - Staff Senate
 - Faculty (brief note that Senate will meet soon)
- Spring meeting schedule is now on calendars.
- No major new business or announcements.

Previous Business

Graduate-Level Tuition Benefits for Staff Dependents

- Still under review.
- Father is supportive but it needs to be incorporated into the budget before moving forward.

Constitution & Bylaws Updates

- Still in Patty and Rob's hands for revisions.
- Two main issues being corrected:
 1. Qualification for membership language differed between the Constitution and Bylaws — these will now match.
 2. Consecutive presidential terms clarification is being added since this is the first time a president has served consecutive terms.

New Business

Roundtable Summary (December 4th)

Attendance

- The event was well attended overall.
- 81 people registered, but there were 22 no-shows, which was more than expected.

Feedback on No-Shows

Several attendees shared feedback about why people may have forgotten:

- Many expected a reminder email before the event.
- Although reminder notices were sent close to registration closing, individuals reported: They did not see a day-of reminder, or they forgot to manually add the event to their calendars.

Discussion points:

- Some assumed the registration system automatically added the event to calendars (especially for Google Calendar users).
- Not all users realized they needed to manually click "Add to Calendar" at the end of the registration form.
- While reminders are helpful, several members noted that registrants also have a responsibility to record events on their calendars.
- Leftover lunches were donated to Pat and Carol.
- A small number of people arrived believing they had registered but were not on the list; extra lunches had been reserved for these cases.
- No one was left without a meal, including those affected by possible registration glitches.

Christmas Luncheon Proceeds

- This item was already discussed and approved earlier in the meeting.
- Thanks were expressed to all for approving the additional funds to bring the CSJ donation to \$2,000.

January Meeting Format

- The January meeting will be held via Teams.

- This is to accommodate members who may be working remotely on that Wednesday.

Staff Appreciation Party – Discussion Summary

Tracy, Lucy, Melissa, and Kristi recently met with Father Marina to discuss recurring staff concerns, including questions about raises (which were answered in yesterday’s email update) and the format of the Staff Appreciation Party. This topic continues to come up frequently among staff, so Father asked that the Senate explore ideas and bring suggestions forward.

Key Concern: Party Format & Engagement

Staff have repeatedly expressed that:

- The current event often results in offices sitting with offices and administrators sitting together.
- There is limited cross-department interaction.
- The event feels more like “a lunch where everyone stays with their own group” rather than a community-building celebration.

Father is not interested in eliminating the party, but he is open to reasonable, thoughtful changes to improve engagement.

Brainstorming & Ideas Raised

No decisions were required today, but several suggestions and themes emerged:

1. Activity-Based Engagement

Activities that encourage people to get out of their seats and mingle:

- Karaoke
- Line dancing
- Team or partner games
- Cornhole (noted as very successful at a prior community event)
- Bingo or interactive icebreaker-style games
- Mini “Olympic-theme” activities since this year’s theme is the Olympics (50-yard dash, silly relays, etc.)

2. Incentivized Participation

To motivate cross-department interaction:

- Offer raffle tickets for participating in games or activities.
- More interaction = more chances to win.
- This has been successful at other campus events.

3. Rethinking the Calendar Issue

A question was raised about moving the event to warmer months.

Father prefers:

- Holding the party when students are not on campus.
- This has historically occurred in late January or February.

This year’s date: January 24th.

4. Event Format & Atmosphere

Participants noted:

- The event used to be a more formal, “night out” style event (e.g., gowns, suits, Mardi Gras themes).

- There may be interest in bringing back a bit of that elevated atmosphere—or balancing fun activities with a more festive environment.
- This year will feature live music and an Olympic theme.

Other Points

- Some staff said they'd rather receive the monetary value of the event, but Father is not interested to replace the event with cash.
- Past events like Wellness Day and interactive tables were mentioned as examples of successful engagement formats.

Next Steps

- Senators and staff are encouraged to email you suggestions as they think of them.
- Kristi will compile the ideas and send them to Patty and Father Marina.
- Father may adopt some suggestions, though changes are not guaranteed.

Standing Committee Reports

Communications Committee

- The newsletter will be going out soon.
- Anyone wishing to include content should send items to Jill, Meg, or any committee member (they will route it appropriately).

Elections & Membership Committee

Space Utilization Committee

- Call for members was issued.
- Kristi Klein and Jason O. were selected to serve as staff representatives.

Senate Membership Changes

- One senator (Alex) can no longer participate.
- Next alternate in line is Melinda Finnerty, who is present and will now step into the Senate role.
- Under Clerical and MTP, there are currently no remaining alternates.
- Professional staff have sufficient alternates.
- Members are encouraged to generate interest among MTP colleagues before the next election cycle, since representation is low.

Additional Note

- Lunch tickets for the McGowan Brown Magis Award require a signature. They can be signed, scanned, and emailed back.

Finance

- Tracy was absent.
- The committee does have funds, but:
 - Exact balance was not reported.
 - It is unclear whether the Christmas Luncheon charges have posted yet.
- Tracy will provide a full update next month.

Social Events Committee

- Melissa provided updates:
 - The survey has not gone out yet due to workload but will be sent before the end of the week.
 - 266 were billed, 282 registered, and there were some no-shows, partly due to weather.
 - Overall feedback was very positive; no complaints reported.
 - The event ran smoothly; many people complimented the work.

Staff Development

- Bryn was absent; another committee member provided an update.
- The committee has been compiling resources for staff related to event planning.
- Materials are gathered; next step is determining how and where to post the resources for staff access.
- Expected to be shared within the next few months.

Staff Recognition & Excellence

- Autumn was absent; Sean provided the update.
- Committee has been working with HR regarding questions on the service awards process.
- HR has responded to some inquiries; not all items are fully resolved.
- Final decisions and funding ultimately flow through HR.

Nominations

- HR reports a strong number of nominations, estimated at 15–20 and possibly still increasing.

Items from the Floor

Positive Feedback on Christmas Luncheon

- Melissa shared that a newer staff member emailed her after attending the Christmas luncheon.
- They had a great experience, appreciated the camaraderie, and expressed interest in:
 - Volunteering for future staff events, and
 - Possibly joining Staff Senate in the future.
- Melissa provided them with information about attending meetings and supporting events such as the Communications Symposium.
- The group noted this as a positive example of the luncheon having the intended impact of community building.

Staff Senate Volunteer Experience

- It was mentioned that last year several people volunteered to help with staff events even though they were not senators—another positive outcome of community engagement.

Question: Where to Find Past Award Winners

- A member asked where to find information on past Award winners.
- Responses included:
 - On the Human Resources webpage under the Awards section.

- Award lists are also typically attached to nomination emails when the call for nominations goes out.
- The list is posted on Engage/Yammer as well, under prior announcements.

Adjournment

With no further items from the floor, a motion to adjourn was passed.