

TO: Staff Senate
FROM: Traci Vennie
DATE: December 20, 2023
SUBJECT: December 20, 2023, Staff Senate Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Brenda Amato, Shawn Beistline, Amy Black, Bridget Conlogue, Grismeiris De Jesus, Melissa Eckenrode, Kym Fetsko, Lori Flynn, Autumn Forgione, Melisa Gallo, Lucy Grissingner, Meg Hambrose, Rose Ann Jubinski, Sybil Keris, Kristi Klien, Mark Murphy, Peter Sakowski, Patricia Savitts, Daniela Teneva, Patricia Tetreault, and Traci Vennie.

Not In Attendance: Geri Barber, Brenda Lee Clarke, Peggy Doolittle, Rebecca Dzikowski, Jonathan Kirby, Bernard Krzan, Denise Kuzma, Tammy Manka, Andrea Malia, Sandina Meo, Meghan Nowakowski, and Janet Schieber.

Welcome: Mr. Mark Murphy, President, called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM. Mark Murphy offered the opening prayer. Autumn Forgione will offer the opening prayer at the next meeting. Mr. Murphy read the Land Acknowledgement Statement. Attendance was checked, an alternate quorum was met.

Review of Previous Month's Minutes: The minutes from the November meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved.

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

Guest(s): Michelle Maldonato, Ph.D., Provost, and Senior VP for Academic Affairs

Dr. Maldonato recently attended the Commencement Celebration at the Dallas Prison, she noted it was overwhelming to see the emotions of the recipients as well as the family members each member.

Dr. Maldonato wanted to discuss two topics, the first being the new building. It was noted that they hope to break ground in February/March weather dependent. She explained this was a new type of building for us as it is slated to be inward and outward facing with a focus on bringing the outside community in. The committee is working to create an open space, 2 floor atrium, large wooden bleacher type seating for lounge area on the first floor. Additionally, the first floor is planning to house a maker space and innovation hub. The hope is to create a space that reflects the University. This is where faculty, staff and students can do hobbyist work. The goal is also to be able to utilize this hub for projects for classes, and ultimately be open for all to reserve space and innovate. The hope is to put in 3D printers, CAD, and podcast equipment, as well as virtual, augmented, and AI technology. The expectation is to incorporate various types of equipment for all interests.

The building will also be the new home of CHEW and Health and Wellness, the Small Business Development Center, and the University Success Program. The Psychology Department will also be rehomed to the new building and allow for all faculty to have their own labs. A Self-care room will be included, and this is in an effort to target neurodivergent students and offer a quiet, dim, retreat space for those students. Lastly, the Department of Criminal Justice, Cybersecurity, and Sociology will also be moved to the new building.

Questions and Comments on the new building project were taken and resulted in the following discussions.

Will there be art studios? Dr. Maldonato explained that Makers Spaces tend not to have an art space but rather offer sewing and embroidery. Michelle went on to explain that Entrepreneurship is often a part of this type of space and others from the outside can come and utilize the equipment and run their own business out of the space. The team looks to reach out to Johnson College for a collaboration, perhaps to include the allowance of internship type of program where they can fix the equipment and we can teach them the business end of things.

Will there be staff or is it open? It will be a new staff position and student workers. Much of the equipment is expensive and can be dangerous therefore staff will need to train and assist users.

Suggestion: a Cricut machine, vinyl is popular as is small business.

Will you look for staff and faculty to share a talent and hold workshops? "I look for this space to celebrate our own talents so yes that is the type of collaboration we look for. Want it to be an expression of who we are and what we can offer".

Suggestion: Lackawanna College has an Innovation Center, and they state it is never full, perhaps we can find out why and use it to our advantage. For example, what are they missing? Is it a test kitchen, just as an example. Is this something we could incorporate. Sometimes parking can be an issue, so we will have parking for them. We do not want logistics to be a prevention.

Virtual reality – Nursing is interested in using VR, looking at it for the health professional areas, looking at gained VR, can we have "beefed up" computers to accommodate this; gaming is an interest since new group on campus: look to incorporate it into teaching for our own faculty.

Partnered with various groups – will there be space where a group can meet inside instead of outside for training and allow for a hands-on portion in the makers space? Looking for an open space of about 35. Hope to have the open atrium an area to have mass.

Incorporate a two-way classroom to offer people in person and virtual at the same time.

Sustainability is a focus; can we incorporate ways that help with that cause.

Second topic – Committee on Gender Equity, formerly Committee on the Status of Women, is struggling to fill slots on the committee. Finding overlap with new offices and positions on campus and looking to find ways to enhance the focus of the group. If anyone is interested, please contact Michelle Maldonato or Liz Garcia.

Liaison Report: Patricia Tetreault, Vice President Human Resources

Father Marina: Father Marina and Gerry Zaboloski were invited to Taiwan, in an effort to make connections with schools there. The Taiwanese government sponsored the trip. The trip was successful and there are opportunities for further conversations with some of the schools.

Cabinet:

- Work continues on the 5-year financial strategic plan, coordinated by Ed Steinmetz and Pat Donohue;
- Shannon Zottola attended a conference on Hispanic serving institutions. The University does not currently meet the enrollment criteria necessary to be designated as a Hispanic serving institution; however, the information is valuable to understand how we can better serve our current and future students and resources and structures that would need to be in place should we pursue this designation in the future.
- Koya Partners was on campus to talk to community regarding the search to replace Ed as Sr VP for Finance & Administration role. The position will be posted after the new year and we expect to have finalists in the March/April

timeframe.

Human Resources:

- Hybrid Policy presented. Training sessions held to which approximately 30 people attended. Some feedback from the sessions were a clarification on the form and process of who signs.
- IT states they are disappointed about the lack of hours flexibility for staff who cannot work remote, as in pilot. While there is no hour flexibility in the current policy, HR is open to coming up with creative options. This policy replaces all pilot programs.
- Construction to begin February/March therefore parking access will likely close soon around mid-January due to preliminary digging and set up of the site.
- Provost email regarding student mental health training – Jan 22, Monday 10-11:30, virtual in person or on own. Encouraged participation.
 - Question – will there be any handouts or information available in absence of attendance?
- Sursum corda – lists are being compiled and will close after the new year.

President's Report:

UGC meeting:

- No meeting, no report.

Board of Trustees Meeting:

- Discussion about possible law changes to deal with athletes becoming employees.
- FAFSA coming much later due to changes and plans in place to alleviate concerns for admissions
- Presentation for admissions including campus visits and things are looking good thus far
- Discussions on the new building
- Tiwan visit was discussed; visited 12 universities; alumni event held while there and they had 100% from those that responded they'd be there.
- Father discussed upcoming travel for donors.
- Ed's search
- Hybrid remote work policy

Student Government Meeting:

- Mark presented at their meeting in December on behalf of the Sustainability Club and Staff Senate in an open forum style meeting.

Confirmation of guest speakers:

- Jose Sanchez and Shaefny Grays, tentative January

Previous Business:

New Business:

- None noted.

Standing Committee Reports:

- **Communications Committee:** Co-Chairs: Denise Kuzma and Melisa Gallo
 - Newsletter released this week.
 - Working to plan a symposium for next semester.
- **Election & Membership:** Tri-chairs: Shawn Beistline, Rose Ann Jubinski & Kristi Klien
 - Started looking at the number of senators and statistics from 2011 to present, committee is planning to meet and determine what or how to handle it moving forward.
- **Finance:** Chair: Traci Vennie
 - \$3,588.34 invoice submitted for the Staff Senate Holiday Luncheon.
- **Social Events & Community Building:** Co-chairs: Melissa Eckenrode and Lucy Grissinger
 - \$1687 raised for CSSJ and the Service trips
 - Toiletries and pantry items collected
 - \$313 motion to donate to increase the 1687 for a total donation of \$2000 out of the agency account.
- **Staff Development:** Co-chairs: Geri Barber & Meg Hambrose
 - Planning for Spring to do a showcase staff talents or small business in lieu of BBQ
- **Staff Recognition and Excellence:** Chair: Kym Fetsko
 - Sursum Corda Award applications have been done electronically this year. The Committee is working with Patti on 11 nominees
 - Meg Cullen-Brown award 60 nominations thus far
- **Ad Hoc:**
 - **Assessment:** Chair: Geri Barber
 - Not present

Items from the Floor:

Roundtables did not occur in Fall and looking for it to occur Spring.

New my.scranton goes live 1/16/24.

Motion to Adjourn:

- A motion was made to adjourn at 3:22 PM. The motion was seconded and approved.