

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI  
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES  
January 13, 2004**

**1.0 Call to Order**

President Kittrell called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

The following members were present:

Robin Barnett, Susan Blackwell, Cheryl Burnette, Kalin Butirich, Scott Carr, Mathew Cox, Kameron Dale, Sally Donovan, Victoria Fairley, Kathy Hayman, Keri Hensarling, Charmaine Hill, Valerie Horne, Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, Karen Lott, Stephen Rey, Stacey Ready, Tonia Shaw, Ray Stevens, Toni Stringer, Frances Sudduth, Mary Butler Sumrall, and Mary Virgil.

**2.0 Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted with reservation to change the order as necessary.

**3.0 Call for Proxies**

The following members were represented by proxy:

Myra Herndon by Mary Sumrall, Donna Donegan by Pam Posey, Ray Scott by Ray Stevens, Bob Lowe by Kathy Hayman, Vicky Watkins by Sally Donovan, David Byrd by Mary Virgil, Robin Johnson by Keri Hensarling, and Arlin Steen by Charmaine Hill.

The following members were absent without representation:

Tommy Dye, Beverly McNeese, and William Sanders.

**4.0 Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the December regular meeting were tabled until the February 2004 meeting.

**5.0 Officer's Reports**

**5.1 President's Report – Virginia Kittrell - no report**

**5.2 President-Elect's Report – Valerie Horne  
Cabinet-Jan. 12, 2004**

Dr. Jay Grimes said that registration at Gulf Park went well. Informational tents were set up to aid newcomers on campus.

Dr. Angie Dvorak said that invitations had been sent to agencies to visit the university. She stated that compelling funding was looking good but she was not pleased with congressional funding. She also stated that the university would begin implementing the new system on 2-2-2004. She said that it should make the system quicker.

Dr. Joe Paul stated that enrollment was up by at least 100 students.

Bob Pierce said that the Saturday Leadership Conference was a success. There were 35-40 people in attendance. The Liberty Bowl blowout was very

successful as well. There is a new alumni once-awarded scholarship in the amount of \$1000. The scholarship will be announced at the end of January. The deadline to submit applications will be March 5, 2004.

Dr. Tim Hudson reported that he was working with Dr. Joe Paul on enrollment issues. He also reported that the deans are looking forward to getting more involved in the recruitment process. They are willing to help in any way that they can.

Jared Loftus reported that they are still working on the concert. He also reported SGA elections would be held on Feb. 17, 2004.

Greg Lassen reported that Sid Gonsoulin was working on the Payne Center in preparation for the upcoming IHL meeting.

Lisa Mader reported that the letter regarding the dependent tuition scholarship had been mailed. Effective fall 2004, if both parents work at the university, dependents will receive a 100 percent tuition scholarship.

President Thames stated that his first priority for the new year would be faculty and staff raises. He challenged all of us to be recruiters for the university. He also stated that he wanted us to continue to reflect a positive image for The University of Southern Mississippi.

### **5.3 Secretary's Report – Robin Johnson – no report**

### **5.4 Secretary-Elect's Report – Keri Hensarling – no report**

### **5.5 Assignment of Action Items**

#100 – assigned to Salary and Benefits Committee

*Permit staff spouses to enroll and receive the free course benefit if not used by the staff member.*

#101 – assigned to Salary and Benefits Committee

*A concern to be presented to President Thames: If and when the IHL allots monies for raises, how will the raises be distributed? Will staff get equal consideration with faculty?*

## **6.0 Old Business**

### **6.1 Dependent Tuition Waiver Proposal/Letter**

A memorandum was sent out to all faculty and staff from President Thames on Jan. 7, 2004, regarding this matter. The memo states that, beginning in the fall 2004 semester, the children of full-time faculty and staff are eligible for a scholarship equal to 100 percent of their tuition at Southern Miss, if both parents are employed by the university. Kathy Hayman expressed her thanks for the hard work that has gone into this proposal since the proposal has been in the process of review for several years.

### **6.2 Vacated Positions**

President Kittrell stated that the currently vacant positions on Staff Council will remain vacant until the Constitution and By-Laws Committee can do some research and make recommendations as to how this should be handled. Kathy Hayman stated that the committee would be meeting soon to address this and other ongoing issues.

### **6.3 President-Elect Election**

President Kittrell stated that Stacey Ready was elected last month as President-Elect. After realizing the amount of responsibility the job entails, Ready decided to decline the position. Valerie Horne, the other candidate on the ballot, accepted the position. A motion was made by Kathy Hayman to accept this change. Motion seconded by Charmaine Hill. Motion passed.

### **6.4 Staff Handbook**

President Kittrell stated that at this time the handbook is being revised. As she understands from Gregg Lassen, the changes being made are minor. At this point we will hold off on any action regarding the handbook. Lassen, who was in attendance at the meeting on Jan. 13, stated that although there are a lot of issues in review, he is sorry that we will not be given the same review privileges that have been given to the faculty in regard to their handbook. There are different departmental policies that conflict with each other, so the administration is trying to create a general handbook that is not department specific, but applicable to the entire university.

Robin Barnett stated that the Staff Council doesn't want to set policy but wants to take an active role in what affects the day-to-day jobs of the staff. We wish to be proactive rather than reactive to these situations.

Mary Sumrall stated that even though administrators are staff, they are a different kind of staff. Please keep in mind that decisions made by the administration affect the minimum-wage earners much differently than the better-paid staff. Please get some input from some of the lower level people to discern the impact on their positions.

## **7.0 Committee Reports & Assignments**

**7.1 Constitution & Bylaws - Kathy Hayman - no report**

**7.2 Legislative – Cheryl Burnette - no report**

**7.3 Salaries & Benefits – David Byrd and Myra Herndon - no report**

**7.4 University Relations and Cultural Diversity – Robin Barnett and Mathew Cox - no report**

**7.5 Technology & Training – Ray Scott and Toni Stringer - no report**

President Kittrell stated that we need to get the Web site up and running as soon as possible. Pam Posey and Toni Stringer will work on it.

**7.6 Other Committees:**

**A. Institutional Effectiveness – Mathew Cox – no report**

**B. Sexual Harassment – Charmaine Hill**

Charmaine Hill recently conducted a RAD (Rape Aggression Defensive Training) class on the coast. She would like to give a similar seminar in

Hattiesburg. She will try to set one up for Spring Break. The cost is \$5 to cover the cost of the book.

### **C. Transportation Committee – Mary Butler Sumrall**

The Transportation Committee met on Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2003. The main topic of discussion was the use of visitor passes and how to stop abuse. I presented to the committee the suggestions given at the Staff Council meeting earlier in the day, such as recording all those who obtain a visitor pass each day. After considerable discussion and several proposals, such as charging \$2 or \$3 per day for a visitor pass, the committee decided to designate visitor parking as parking spaces currently designated “Visitor Parking” and “Open Zone Parking.” Most Open Zone parking is on the periphery of the campus, so students who abuse visitor passes will be less inclined to do so. If they park in areas designated for faculty/staff, they will be ticketed. As usual, there will be a two-week “grace period” at the beginning of each semester. A notice will be drafted by the chairperson, Mary Beth Bankston, and when approved by the committee, it will be sent to the university community the first of January, and departments will be urged to notify the Transportation Department when they are expecting special guests or need parking for special events.

The remainder of the meeting was spent reviewing parking appeals made since the first of the year. The Transportation Committee was not functional until October 2003, so appeals had not been reviewed for several months. We reviewed 15 appeals, and all were denied. The next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 20, 2004.

Mathew Cox stated that there was a message on the list-serve this morning restating the handicapped parking rules. Hopefully, this will provide an additional deterrent for parking in the handicapped slots.

### **D. Scholarship Committee-Virginia Kittrell**

President Kittrell stated that there is not, at this time, any money available for the textbook scholarship. Gregg Lassen will meet with President Kittrell and Kathy Hayman to explore other options and possibilities regarding this proposal.

### **E. Space Allocation and Utilization Committee – Virginia Kittrell**

The committee met in early January, but she has no report from that meeting, as she was unable to attend and has not seen the report yet. The software was scheduled to be demonstrated, but that demonstration has been postponed. The committee hasn't asked for our recommendations yet. Faculty are in the process of presenting their ideas. Kathy Hayman asked that we send in our recommendations, even if they haven't been asked for.

## **8.0 New Business**

### **8.1 Black History Month Honoree**

President Kittrell stated that in the past, the Staff Council has presented an honoree to the administration. One recommendation is sent from each

university to IHL for consideration. Since we had such short notice, the Executive Committee has already sent in the nomination.

## **8.2 Nominations for Election Committee**

The Elections Committee must be comprised of one representative from each EEOC category. The following people volunteered to represent their category on the committee: Mary Virgil, Keri Hensarling, Bob Lowe, Sally Donovan, Susan King, Kathy Hayman, and Toni Stringer. An inquiry letter and explanation of election should be sent out in March. Stephen Rey asked for and received an explanation about the election and its purpose. This election will be held to fill seats recently vacated or to be vacated by outgoing members.

## **9.0 Announcements**

### **9.1 Registration for “No Payne, No Gain” fitness incentive program at the Payne Center, Jan. 12, 2004.**

Stacey Ready explained the fitness incentive program and the prizes available for participants.

### **9.2 Jan. 19, 2004, Martin Luther King holiday.**

### **9.3 IHL meeting will be held at Southern Miss this week.**

### **9.4 Saturday, Jan. 31, 2004, will be Faculty/Staff Appreciation Day with a women’s basketball game against Saint Louis. Employees will be entitled to two free tickets.**

## **10.0 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:21 a.m.

Keri Hensarling  
Secretary-Elect  
Jan. 13, 2004