

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES
MARCH 2, 2004**

1.0 Call to Order

President Kittrell called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m.

The following members were present:

Robin Barnett, Kalin Butirich, David Byrd, Mathew Cox, Donna Donegan, Sally Donovan, Tommy Dye, Victoria Adams Fairley, Keri Hensarling, Valerie Horne, Robin Johnson, Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, Beverly McNeese, Stacey Ready, William Sanders, Tonia Shaw, Ray Stevens, Toni Stringer, Mary Butler Sumrall, Mary Virgil, and Vicki Watkins.

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:

Scott Carr by Susan King, Robert Lowe by Robin Johnson, Karen Lott by Mary Butler Sumrall, Stephen Rey by Stacey Ready, Ray Scott by Virginia Kittrell, and Arlin Steen by David Byrd.

The following members were absent without representation:

Susan Blackwell, Cheryl Burnette, Myra Herndon-Wade, and Frances Sudduth.

4.0 Approval of Minutes

4.1 January Proposed Minutes

The minutes of the January regular meeting were approved with minor changes.

4.2 February Proposed Minutes

The minutes of the February regular meeting were tabled until the next regular meeting.

5.0 Officer's Reports

5.1 President's Report – Virginia Kittrell

Cabinet – March 1, 2004

The main topic of the meeting was the negative publicity the University had been receiving. The main concern was that the Department of Marketing and Public Relations is trying to get out positive information and negative information keeps surfacing. President Kittrell suggested that if we had more open communication, maybe some of these issues would not make it to the press. The administration does not want negative information to be brought to the media.

All other meetings regularly scheduled were canceled.

5.2 President-Elect's Report – Valerie Horne – no report

5.3 Secretary's Report – Robin Johnson

Keri Hensarling and I will be combining our reports for today. We are having problems getting reports in order to prepare the minutes. Thank you to Robin Barnett and Mary Butler Sumrall for always getting me your reports on time and usually before I get back to the office. I ask that all reports be sent to us by Friday of the meeting week. I currently spend the weekend after our meeting getting the minutes ready. When I do not get reports in a timely manner, the minutes cannot be completed and I have wasted an entire weekend that I could have spent with my family. If the submission of reports does not improve, I will resign as secretary of Staff Council. This is not something that I want to do. We are professionals here;

you were elected to represent the staff in your area and it does not take much to type something up. You can e-mail it to me; it does not have to be in a professional report format. Send me an e-mail that gives me a little blurb about what you said in your report. The tape recorder does not pick up everything. I cannot continue to doing this with these hindrances. This is why February minutes are not ready and why January's minutes are just getting approved in March. I do not like feeling like this. Staff Council is a great organization. We can do a lot for the staff at Southern Miss. Nobody else is working for us; we have to work for us. President Kittrell asked that everyone have a report prepared for the meeting. This would allow for the report to be sent to Robin or Keri in a timely manner.

5.4 Secretary-Elect's Report – Keri Hensarling – combined with Secretary's report

5.5 Assignment of Action Items

106 – assigned to University Relations & Cultural Diversity

Since there is no money currently available to fund a textbook scholarship or loan program for staff, I would like Staff Council to consider a posting or listing service on the Web where our staff and students could buy and sell textbooks.

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Vacated Positions

All positions that have become vacant throughout the year will be addressed during the upcoming election. President Kittrell feels that Staff Council should remain at the current number since additional staff will be needed when the University reaches its goal of 20,000 students. We are afraid that if we reduce the number of representatives on Staff Council, we may never get those positions back.

Executive Committee met recently with Kathy Hayman, chair of Constitution and Bylaws, to discuss the presidency. Since Kenton McNeese left the university earlier this year, Kittrell was finishing out McNeese's term as president. Valerie Horne is new to Staff Council, and since this is her first year on the Council she has much to learn about its responsibilities. The Executive Committee and Hayman feel that it would be in the best interest of Staff Council if Horne served the rest of Kittrell's term as President-Elect and then serve her own full term as President-Elect. This will give Staff Council some stability during this time of uncertainty. Horne and Kittrell feel very strongly about this. President Kittrell stated that she was open to discussion on this topic. The vacancy of the president is not addressed in the constitution and bylaws. The committee is currently working to rectify this oversight.

There was some discussion that serving more than one term as president could be a problem. Some feel that it will be a tremendous burden to serve more than one term. Mary Butler Sumrall suggested that the committee look at the bylaws to address that the officers need to have served on the council for at least one year before being elected to an officer's position. Hensarling noted that the Executive Committee has had very long, detailed discussions about this. Kittrell was an active participant in these discussions and her stance has not changed. Kittrell first brought this situation up and Horne agreed that additional learning time would be beneficial.

Pam Posey, parliamentarian, stated her concerns about this situation. Her main concern involved the fact that an election took place to elect a new president-elect in accordance with our Bylaws (Division II, Article 1, Section 6). It is her interpretation that we have two choices: 1. Horne assume the presidency in July as scheduled. 2. If Horne does not want to step into the presidency in July, we will have to have another election for President-Elect. Posey stated that since we have already taken action by holding the special election, in accordance with our Bylaws, we should not change what the Council has already voted to approve.

Kittrell stated again that she was under the impression that she was filling the rest of McNeese's term and she would become president as scheduled. Horne indicated that she was and is willing to serve as president-elect.

If Horne wanted to step down as president-elect now, she could be appointed as a special assistant to the president and be placed on the ballot for president-elect next year.

A motion was made by Keri Hensarling and seconded by Mathew Cox. The motion reads, "To have Valerie Horne resign her position as president-elect and be appointed as special assistant to the president to assist President Kittrell. When officer elections are held, Horne should be placed on the ballot for president-elect." Motioned passed unanimously.

This action will give the Constitution & Bylaws committee time to work on the additions to the bylaws.

6.2 Staff Council Award

Staff Council's Outstanding Staff Member Award will be given again this year. All nominations must come through a Staff Council member. Nominations must be turned in at the April meeting.

7.0 Committee Reports and Assignments

7.1 Constitution & Bylaws – Kathy Hayman – no report

7.2 Legislative – Cheryl Burnette – no report

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

7.4 University Relations & Cultural Diversity – Robin Barnett & Mathew Cox – no report

7.5 Technology & Training – Ray Scott & Toni Stringer – no report

7.6 Other Committees:

A. Institutional Effectiveness – Mathew Cox – no report

B. Sexual Harassment – Charmaine Hill – no report

C. Transportation Committee – Mary Butler Sumrall

The Transportation Committee met on Feb. 3 to discuss its finding regarding parking policies at Conference USA schools and other comparable public universities. Schools reported on were University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Texas Christian University, the University of Louisville, the University of Houston, East Carolina, the University of Alabama, the University of Memphis, Mississippi State University, the University of Mississippi, Jackson State University, the University of South Alabama, and Louisiana State University. Most of these institutions charge considerably more for parking to faculty, staff, students, and visitors. Some do not allow freshmen to have a vehicle on campus at all. Others allow only buses and service vehicles in the center of campus. Mary Beth Walker, chairman, will have a graduate student compile the data and send copies to committee members. As of this date, we have not received a copy of that report.

Lucy Bowens from the Transportation Department was going to meet with the staff in /Tech that week to work out the details on keeping a log of all people requesting a visitor pass from the information booth at the front of campus. If

this registration system cannot be implemented, we will go back to our original plan to have visitors park in a designated visitor parking and open parking zones.

The committee meets again on March 9 at 3:30 p.m. Hopefully, we will have the report on comparable schools and know where we stand on the visitors pass situation.

D. Scholarship Committee – Virginia Kittrell

We are still working on the textbook scholarship.

E. Space Allocation & Utilization – Virginia Kittrell – no report

F. Election Committee – Kathy Hayman – no report

8.0 New Business

8.1 Outsourcing

The bookstore vendors are currently touring the campus. Recommendations for Food Service and Bookstore outsourcing will be submitted to IHL in May, with the new companies taking over in July.

8.2 Correspondence to legislators regarding health insurance proposal

All staff are encouraged to contact legislators regarding the Governor's proposal to have state employees pay for their own insurance.

9.0 Announcements

9.1 Staff Council Executive Committee Meeting – March 16, 2004, 10 a.m., Physical Plant Conference Room

9.2 IHL Meeting – March 18, 2004

9.3 Administrative Positions

David Anderson, who served as associate vice president, has left the University to become director of Bureau of Buildings, Grounds and Real Property for the state of Mississippi

10.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

**Robin Johnson
Secretary
March 2, 2004**

Staff Council met at the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center and Aquarium (MEC&A) on the Gulf Coast. By introducing MEC&A to Staff Council, they learned what an important role MEC&A plays in our comprehensive university.

Dr. Sharon Walker, administrator of MEC&A

MEC&A is a marine education center administered by Southern Miss as a part of the College of Science and Technology within the Department of Coastal Sciences. MEC&A is joined with GCRL as a separate line item with regard to budget allocations. MEC&A is the outreach campus for the University and GCRL.

Approximately 80,000 visit MEC&A annually. Roughly 36,000 students and teachers visit the center for educational field trips. MEC&A helps train about 200 preservice teachers through our educational programs.

Currently MEC&A is responsible for \$1.3 million in research funding for programs at their center.

On Feb. 16, 2000, IHL voted 11-1 to expand MEC&A to a state of the art facility. The objective and mission of MEC&A is education; tourism is secondary.

MEC&A offers a variety of summer activities for children. Please contact the center for additional information regarding "Sea Camp." Southern Miss employees are entitled to free admission to MEC&A, though additional visitors must pay.

Dr. Ken Malone, chief operating officer, Southern Miss Gulf Coast

The main campus is designed for traditional students who will live on or near the campus, which historically has been the University's mission.

Gulf Park's mission is adult education for the Gulf Coast. We do not typically go after the traditional students. Our target group is the student in his or her 30s who works full time, has a family, and who wants to get a degree to better his or her career.

These nontraditional students must be treated differently than the traditional student population. We currently have a few challenging processes that makes it difficult for nontraditional students to take care of business. Nontraditional students demand a high level of customer service.

We currently have roughly 2,000 students on the Coast. The University of South Alabama, Tulane, and William Carey have been growing very rapidly. While Southern Miss' Gulf Coast campus has been growing at a slow steady pace, we have some systems in place that make is very challenging for the working adults to go to school here. How do we grow in our nontraditional student base? We have a few key items that need to be addressed. The first is customer service. Customer service does not mean everyone being really nice to people. We are looking at our entire customer service process from the time the student first shows interest in Southern Miss through advisement, enrollment, and graduation. A review of the entire process will be conducted Thursday and Friday with players from the Coast as well as Hattiesburg. The group will be using value stream mapping, which is walking through the process to get from point 'A' to point 'B,' and then deciding what part of the process does not make sense or add value. Scheduling is a big concern for the working adult. Nontraditional students also like alternative formats to learning.

The Gulf Coast has set a goal of having an enrollment of 6,000 students by 2006. This does not mean all 6,000 students have to show up on campus. It also does not mean all 6,000 students have to show up Monday through Thursday nights. There is a big demand for alternative format scheduling. These include online, discussion groups, all day Saturday, and all day Thursday through Saturday classes.

The second item that needs to be addressed is targeted sales. We need to get out into the community to sell specific programs. There are a large number of people who do not know what programs we offer.

We are very excited about the new growth on the Coast campus. We are adding 24 faculty to help with the student growth.

Sally Donovan asked what campus improvements will be made to accommodate the additional student growth. Malone stated that we have a lot of space; our choice of how that space has been used is interesting. Malone will be looking at how we use that space more efficiently.

Mary Butler Sumrall asked if employees will see a change in their normal work schedules due to the alternative formats that are being reviewed. Malone said he did not know the answer to that question. There will be a minimal staffing needed for Saturday ,should we choose to go to that format. There will need to be some type of customer service when large groups are on campus. For the most part, current staffing hours are appropriate.