

***** PROPOSED MINUTES *****

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Proposed Staff Council Minutes

May 4, 1999

Speaker:

Russ Willis, Assistant Director of Human Resources, gave a summary about the new paycheck. Some highlights discussed:

* Tax filing status. If you did not respond by filling out a new tax form, Human Resources will put you as A single with no dependents. @ You can go to the Human Resources office and complete a new form. It should be in by 10th or 11th of the month to be effective for the next check.

* Graduate courses taken by staff & faculty are taxable income. The money taken out in April can be refunded by Human Resources, but it will be reported as income at the end of the year.

* April leave balances accrued were not added in, but will be caught up in May.

Call Russ Willis if you have specific questions.

1.0 Call to Order

President Hill called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

The following members were present: Victoria Adams, Linda Bass, Terry Bethea, Patricia Brewer, Carolyn Cawthon, Ruth Chapman, Tommy Dye, Mary Ann Griffin, Kim Henson, Debby Hill, Becky Holder, Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, Patricia Linton, James Mackabee, Janeal McKee, Larry McMickle, Cheryl Mowdy, Larry Posey, Pam Posey, Tracy Townsend, and Ruby Waits.

The following members were represented by proxy: Wes Barrett by Debby Hill, Regina Knight by John Hayman, Phil McCready by Ruby Waits, Nelda Moree by Mary Sumrall,

Joyce Sanders by Patricia Brewer, Sam Thomas by Cheryl Mowdy, Dick Vogel by Tawana Walker, and Carole White by Jennifer Blalock.

The following members were absent without representation: Kalin Butirich, Marsha Hinton, and Ray Scott.

2.0 Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda was approved as amended.

3.0 Call for Proxies

4.0 Approval of the Minutes

Minutes were approved as printed.

5.0 Officers= Reports

5.1 President=s Report

President Hill submitted a written report on her April Activities/Meetings.

* April 12 – Dr. Henry presided. Dr. Paul expressed concern about the sexual assault that occurred in the fraternity house. Dr. McGowan discussed the PeopleSoft problems associated with taxes for 9-month faculty members. Mr. McLelland encouraged everyone to attend the first home game of the nationally ranked women's softball team. Jesse Palmer asked Dr. Henry if he thought operating costs would be increased to offset the increase on the telephone system. Dr. Henry stated that increases in operating costs would probably be minimal. Dr. Williams said that because of the judge's ruling on the Gulf Coast expansion, fall admissions were uncertain. The decision lies with IHL at this point.

* April 16 – MASCO meeting at the University Center with Dr. Bristow, Chair of the Council of Presidents. MASCO representatives met with Dr. Bristow to discuss supporting the following staff

issues: (1) staff recognition in HEADWAE, (2) increased health coverage including preventive care, well baby care, dental and optical benefits, etc., (3) tuition reciprocity for employees at our sister institutions, and (4) competitive salaries. Dr. Bristow was encouraging and stated that some items had already been discussed with the Council of Presidents and assured us that he will continue to bring these issues forward to the Council of Presidents and IHL. He also encouraged MASCO to continue to bring issues forward and to establish a better link with the Council of Presidents.

*April 21 – Met with Dr. Gilbert and Barbara Bolton concerning the Personnel System Committee. Barbara has researched the Georgia Merit System, and Dr. Gilbert believes that the employee survey used by the GA Merit System can be adapted to USM to provide additional information. In my earlier discussions with external experts in the human resource industry, I discovered that system-wide surveys were not the best form of data generators. They suggested a random sample of small focus groups for more accurate data. Dr. Gilbert agreed with the suggestion and has requested that the council play an active role in the process. Plans are now for council to organize focus groups from a random sample from each EEOC area and to promote the focus group involvement. The target date for focus group sessions is late summer.

*April 21 – Met with Representative Charlie Williams and Dr. Ginn. Susan King, Virginia Kittrell, and I had the opportunity to thank Charlie Williams for his legislative support over the years.

*April 23 – Election Committee tallied votes for 1999 Elections.

*April 23 – Strategic Plan Brown Bagger with Dr. Henry. About 20 employees attended a brown-bag luncheon with Dr. Henry to respond to the initiatives addressed in the Strategic Plan.

*April 23 – University Foundation "Black-Tie" Dinner.

*April 29 – MASCO meeting at Alcorn. Sam Thomas and I attended the MASCO meeting. Discussion included our meeting with Dr. Bristow and the need for strategic plans to make MASCO more proactive in addressing the concerns of staff statewide. Following the last meeting's discussion to increase the number of meetings, the transition of officers stated in the Constitution must be changed

as well. The transition will now occur at the September meeting at a 2-day Leadership Conference. MASCO representatives agreed to show a good faith effort in sending the Past President, current President, and the President-elect to each of the meetings to establish continuity within the rotation group. Subcommittees were also formed to establish set agendas for each meeting and to update the MASCO constitution.

*April 30 – Strategic Plan Committee. The committee met to discuss the responses to the Strategic Plan. The editing committee is making its revisions, and the committee will meet again to discuss the final version on May 7.

*May 3 – Expanded Cabinet. Dr. Fleming discussed the need for USM to move ahead with the renovations of the field house. If we do not use the money given to us a few years ago for the field house by this December, we will lose it. Therefore, we need to raise about 3.5 million to complete the project. Dr. Fleming stated that although Athletics is operating under a deficit of about \$750,000, arrangements have been made for Athletics to borrow internally from auxiliaries and repay the money over a 4-5 year period at market interest. Dr. Gilbert stated that Kathy Hayman will replace Joan Glover, who is retiring. Dr. Gilbert also discussed the salary guidelines the Vice President agreed to. The legislature and IHL appropriated 7.5% to universities. However, USM will use an 8.4% pool for staff and a 7% pool for faculty and administrators. The guidelines state that 4% should be given for satisfactory work, and anything above that would be given meritoriously for employees exceeding expectations. There would be no cost of living "across the board" raise. Operating budgets would not increase except for supplementing budget to defray the increase in telephone expenses. Dr. Gilbert commended the OTR and HR personnel for their first printing of the new payroll checks. She encouraged everyone to check their exemptions and leave balances because of some minor problems. Concerns should be addressed directly to HR. Jesse Palmer reported the Faculty Senate's request to revisit the issue of full tuition benefit for faculty and staff dependents at sister institutions. Dr. Fleming responded with his belief that a "cafeteria plan" of benefits would be better suited for everyone, and he hopes to pursue that further. Dr. Fleming and Dr. McGowan mentioned the technology needs across campus. Dr. Fleming stated that, although

our technology is behind at least 25 years in some cases, the funding would not come from money designated for salaries.

5.2 President-Elect's Report – Sam Thomas – No Report

5.3 Assignment of Action Items –

Item #49 The current administrative budget is not available in the library as it has been in the past.

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Personnel System

The Personnel System Committee is currently looking at other systems to see their classification systems. We will adapt the GA Merit Survey and have focus groups in each EEOC category. We will meet and discuss evaluation systems. Surveys will be conducted in late summer. The Committee that is currently in place will continue in total for the next year because of the base knowledge of research that has been completed. We will run an article in the Update. Dr. Gilbert is so committed to this project that she has a full-time staffer working on the information. It was recommended that President Hill meet with each focus group to explain what we are trying to accomplish. We need to start publicity now about the survey to come to include the possible end results.

6.2 Staff Memorial Scholarship Fund Survey – Tracy Townsend

A survey was distributed in the April minutes for input on supporting such a fund. Thirty-two inquiries were returned and of those: 1 voted to support with a lump sum payment; 3 voted to support with a one-time payment; 3 voted to support on a monthly payroll deduction; and 25 voted not to support the staff memorial scholarship fund.

7.0 Committee Reports

7.1 Constitution & Bylaws –Carolyn Cawthon

* Div III Article 6 – Training and Technology Committee.

A sheet to be voted on in June was distributed explaining the duties of this committee. This Committee was moved into the Standing Committees.

*Standing Rules – The committee made a motion, and it passed for the two following additions: (1) Elections – Election ballots shall be maintained by the President of the Council for a period of three years following elections in order to refer to them in the event of a vacancy. (2) Vacancies – The President of the Council should make a good faith effort in making a recommendation and/or appointment to fill the unexpired term of a Council member by referring to the most recent ballot of an EEOC category.

7.2 Legislature – Patricia Brewer

We sent out 24 invitations to our legislators. We have 7 responses as of today. The panel discussion will be held Friday, May 7, in the Hall of Honors from 10:00 – noon. Talk it up in your area.

7.3 Salaries & Benefits – Becky Holder

#44 Bi-monthly Paycheck – This did not pass in the legislature.

#45 & #48 Payne Center Membership as a Benefit – We can propose a resolution from the Staff Council. If this benefit is done in a cafeteria plan, it will be for one full year. The committee will continue to look into this.

7.4 University Relations and Cultural Diversity – Tracy Townsend – Item #33 – Employee Appreciation Day.

* Action Item #7 – Staff Memorial Scholarship Fund. Report given in 6.2.

* Employee Appreciation Day will be May 21. The Staff Council will distribute T-shirts and tickets on 5/18 and 5/19. We still need workers.

7.5 Technology & Training – Marsha Hinton – No report

7.6 Other Committee Reports

*Election Committee – Linda Bass

All of the following new members elected agreed to serve and will be at our June meeting:

Charlie McMillin, Susan Sanders, & Mary Sumrall, Clerical

Ann Billings, Gulf Coast

Mike Giles and Connie Morgan, Professional

Ronnie Williamson, Skilled Craft

Kalin Butirich, Stennis

Jessie Person and Veda Spencer, Service Maintenance

*Parking Appeals – Linda Bass – No report

*Parking Task Force – Regina Knight – No report

*Upward Feedback – Pam Posey – No report

8.0 New Business

8.1 Staff Council Award

A ballot was distributed, and a vote was taken. The results will be announced at the June meeting.

9.0 Announcements

*Commencement will be Friday, May 14, at 2:30 & 6:30 p.m. The Coast graduation will be May 15.

* We will meet at 10:30 a.m. for our June meeting. We have reserved 3 vans to leave at 11:30 a.m. to transport us to Dr. Fleming's home for lunch. We will not have a speaker.

* President Hill read a resignation letter from Phil McCready effective 5/5/99.

10.0 Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Debby Hill, President

Susan King, Recording Secretary

5/10/99 sk