

Arkansas State University
Staff Senate Meeting
January 17, 2007

The Arkansas State University Staff Senate met on Wednesday, January 17, 2007, in the Dean B. Ellis Library Board Room on the ASU-Jonesboro campus. President Laura Cremeens called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. In attendance:

Lesley Bauders – present
Margaret Brewer – present
Steve Brown – present
Carol Byrd – present
Joycelyn Coleman – present
Laura Cremeens – present
Patrick Dixon – present
Tami Freeman – present
Toni Holt – present
Rhonda Keith – present
L. C. Kennedy – present
Donna Kirksey – present

Jerrod Lockhart – present
Randy Martin – present
Dena May – present
Terry Merriweather – present
Don Neldon – present
Jerry Sailor – present
Mia Sheppard-Taylor – present
Brandi Thompson – present
Natalie Turney – present
Jennifer Jasinski (N Vickers) – present
Vicki Walker – present
Evelyn Weatherford – present

Departing Senators:
Victor Hill – present

Part-Time Senators:
Debbie Jernigan – present
Vanita Harvey – present

Minutes:

The minutes of the December meeting were approved.

Treasury Report:

Senator Rhonda Keith, Treasurer, distributed a one-page report of Staff Senate account balances as of December 31, 2006. The treasurer's report was accepted as presented.

Other Business:

Dr. Robert Potts, Chancellor, addressed the staff and reported that he and Dr. Wyatt attended budget meetings in Little Rock with other Arkansas colleges and universities. He also mentioned that he holds weekly meetings on Mondays with all the Vice Chancellors, Athletic

Director and Minority Affairs to address issues and if the staff had any concerns that needed to be addressed to let Laura know by noon on Fridays.

Chris Enger, Wellness Program Coordinator, reported that screenings for cardiovascular health had filled up for January and March. He said sign-ups for screenings to be held in April would start at 10:00 a.m. on January 18. After all employees who are interested in the screening are signed up, additional dates will be set for spouses who are covered by insurance through ASU and for employees who do not have coverage through ASU. The cost to those individuals will be \$159. Retirees are included under the \$20 co-pay if they are covered by insurance through ASU.

The Arkansas Fitness Challenge will start March 1 and those who participate will have 90 days to complete 30 days worth of exercise. Employees will log their progress on the new Arkansas Fitness website. ASU will compete with other agencies in the state and locally with St. Bernards. Registration begins Monday, January 22.

Fitness class schedules are located on the wellness website under class calendar. A new walking aerobics class has been added.

Old Business:

Dr. JW Mason, Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration, reported the State Employee Pay Plan study group had completed reviewing all job descriptions and made its recommendations to the State Legislature. The Legislature has tabled discussion of these new recommendations at this time due to a cost of over \$200 million to implement. Currently, no changes in job classifications will occur and the pay plan will remain the same.

New Business:

Jennus Burton, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, reported that the university had some customer service issues with the university being closed for over two weeks during the holiday season. He said that under the proposed plan for 2007, the university will

remain open until Friday, December 21, and be closed from Monday, December 24, through Tuesday, January 1. Commencement for the Fall semester 2007 will be held on Friday, December 14. He added that this plan was not confirmed and requested input from the staff via staff senators.

He also handed out information on the proposed University Wide Pre-Employment National Background policy to become effective July 1 for all new hires (students, full-time, part-time and faculty). This background check will include educational, criminal and credit checks. Funds to pay for fees incurred will come from the department's salary savings; ASU will pay for work-study students.

Mr. Burton also said that in response to IRS regulations, the university is considering a proposal to impose a fringe benefit tax on use of cellular and data phones. Those who use such devices in the job will have two options: (1) keep the university phone, be able to use it for both personal and business calls not to exceed the current minute plan, and be taxed on the value of the plan, or (2) turn in their ASU phone, use their personal phone, and be reimbursed monthly for business calls made on their phone.

Mr. Burton stressed that the documents he distributed are in draft form; a final decision has not been made on any of the three proposed policies. He invited questions and comments on all proposals. Staff should contact Laura Cremeens about the holiday schedule and background check policies. Joyce Coleman is the contact for the cell phone policy.

Other Announcements – President Cremeens reminded senators that each person is asked to send her names of ONE individual from the EEO category he/she represents who is willing to serve on the Staff Handbook ad-hoc committee. She said names are due to her by January 13.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.