

Arkansas State University
Staff Senate Meeting
November 15, 2006

The Arkansas State University Staff Senate met on Wednesday, November 15, 2006, 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 – absent
Margaret Brewer – present
Steve Brown – present
Carol Byrd – present
Joycelyn Coleman – present
Laura Cremeens – present
Patrick Dixon – present
Tami Freeman – absent
Toni Holt – absent
Rhonda Keith – present
L. C. Kennedy – absent
Donna Kirksey – absent

Jerrod Lockhart – Lauren Smees, proxy
Randy Martin – present
Dena May – Pam Cummings, proxy
Terry Merriweather – present
Don Neldon – present
Jerry Sailor – present
Mia Sheppard-Taylor – present
Brandi Thompson – present
Natalie Turney – present
Neal Vickers – Rosemary Freer, proxy
Vicki Walker – absent
Evelyn Weatherford – Deidre Dotter, proxy

Past President:
Victor Hill – present

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

Minutes

The minutes of the October meeting were not made available to senators prior to the meeting. They will be distributed by email and approved by electronic vote.

Treasury Report

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

Reports

President Cremeens reminded everyone of two wellness program activities planned for the holiday season: (1) *ASU Employee Lunch & Learn: Heart Health* on November 29 and (2) *Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge* during November and December. She noted the deadlines for sign-up for each event.

Old Business

Pay Plan Study Update – Dr. J.W. Mason, Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration, presented an overview of the proposed. He said he has been working with

New Business

Health Screening Tests – Dr. Mason provided information on a new health service soon to be available to benefited ASU employees. A series of 12 screening tests will be offered for the cost of the current co-pay of \$20. Tests will be performed in a mobile unit on campus, results will be evaluated by physicians and a reply sent to the individual. The service is available to benefited employees only – not spouses or dependents. He also announced that this marks the fourth consecutive year that ASU employees have had no increase in their health care premium. He credited it to employees staying within their networks and thanked everyone for their help.

Dr. Mason presented an update on the State pay plan study. He said during the last two months he has worked with senior administrators across the state to structure a plan to take to the state legislature to redesign the current job classification system. He said the proposal includes collapsing approximately 2,000 current job titles into about 600. A study of midpoint salaries (based on actual data) has been completed. The plan proposes future merit increases be based on the mid-point determined, not on the current base salary of the employee. There will also be a “longevity formula” applied to take into account years of services by individual employees. COLA (cost of living adjustment) increases will be replaced by merit increases. Under the proposed new

classification system, no one will receive a salary decrease. The proposal also includes an appeal process to be developed by each entity as a means to resolve disputes regarding employee performance evaluations. Dr. Mason stressed that the proposal is subject to approval by the State legislature and increases are relative to the amount determined annually by the office of the State's chief financial officer.

Dr. Mason will attend the December meeting to answer other questions regarding the proposed plan.

Educational Stipend Awards – The Educational Stipend Committee requested permission to offer \$200 awards to 14 of the 41 who applied. On motion by Carol Byrd, second by Margaret Brewer, the Senate voted unanimously to approve the 14 awards.

Announcements

- Next Staff Senate meeting will be Wednesday, December 13, at 10 a.m., in the Library Board Room.
- Administration Building Open House will be Tuesday, December 12, 2:30 to 4:30, in the Administration Building Lobby.
- ASU-Beebe Staff Senate will sponsor a Holiday Bazaar Craft and Bake Sale on Saturday, December 12, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the ASU-Beebe Student Center. The public is invited.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Submitted by Laura Cremeens