

STAFF COUNCIL
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 3, 2009
3:00 PM

Present: Debbie Allen
 Kathy Baker
 Robert Castleberry
 Stephanie Cooper
 Todd Essary
 Blaine Rose
 Lisa Sheffield
 Betty Smith
 B.J. Thompson

Guests: President John Hargrave; Dr. Steve Turner, Vice President Administration and Finance;
 Sherry Darbison; Sheila Todd; Carol Peshehonoff; Kay Pinley

I. The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm by Stephanie Cooper, President. Stephanie welcomed President Hargrave, Dr. Turner and other guests.

II. Approval of Previous Minutes and Budget Report

The motion was made and seconded to approve the June 22, 2009 minutes and budget as distributed. Betty Smith had already requested approval via email and the minutes are already posted on the Staff Council Web Page.

III. Comments from President Hargrave

President Hargrave thanked Dr. Turner for attending. He stated the plans are to bring Homecoming back to what it was in the past with more bands and floats. There will be a '70's Alumni Party at Pesagi this year. There have been major improvements on campus including the completion of the Strength and Conditioning facility. This facility is rated as one of the best in the NCAA II division. President Hargrave stated that enrollment is up by 5 to 5.6%. ECU has budgeted monies conservatively. Our goal is to protect the university as a unit and to not have to lay people off. He feels that ECU, Ada and Pontotoc County are in good shape financially.

President Hargrave stated that Hallie Brown Ford's daughter, Ms. Phillips, will be coming to ECU. Ms. Ford was instrumental in starting the Francisco-Hatchett Scholarship. President Hargrave decided to bring former recipients of this scholarship back to visit with Ms. Phillips and to thank her for what her mother had provided for them through this scholarship. President Hargrave informed the Council that he had received this scholarship in 1975.

President Hargrave opened the floor for any questions. Sherry Darbison presented President Hargrave with a signed petition requesting staff to be allowed to use the Wellness Center at no cost as one of their benefits. President Hargrave thought this was a great idea. It was stated that the cost is \$90 per year for an ECU employee and \$270 per year for the community. President Hargrave questioned how many \$90 annual fees would be taken from the Wellness Center if free use of the Wellness Center was put into place. President Hargrave stated this request would be placed on the agenda for the next Executive meeting, September 21st. He would also visit with Rick Wetherill about this.

President Hargrave requested that the Council submit different proposals to him that would help increase staff moral. He suggested the possibility of having an “Employee of the Month”.

Dr. Steve Turner was asked about the status of ECU’s health insurance. He stated that a recommendation was sent to the Board last week to make Blue Cross/Blue Shield the health insurance carrier. Dr. Turner stated that Health Choice’s co-pay is going to increase to \$50 this next year. He stated that the savings to ECU for employee coverage will be about \$2.30 per person but there will be big savings for employees with dependents. The Board should make their decision by this Friday. Dr. Turner stressed that there would only be one true open enrollment period in October. If an employee does not enroll their dependents at that time then they would have to be clear of any pre-existing condition for six months or Blue Cross would not cover that condition for 12 months. There will be a \$2 million max benefit the first year. Vision insurance will still be with VSP. American Fidelity coverage will stay the same. Pharmacy and health insurance co-pays will be \$25. Deductibles will be the same. He stated that M.D. Anderson and Scott & White will now be in network with Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

Dr. Turner stated that ECU employees hired before July 1, 2009 have their health insurance paid until they reach the age of 65. Insurance for those employees hired after July 1, 2009 will stop at their last day of employment. Currently ECU pays approximately \$450 per month in benefits on each employee.

The protocol for the flu was discussed. President Hargrave stressed to be mindful of symptoms and if you are sick stay at home. Infected people should stay at home at least 24 hours after fever (without medication) has subsided. Information will be posted on the ECU web site to educate employees and students about the flu. Hand sanitizers are being distributed across campus. Dr. Anderson will be putting out information today about relaxing academic rules for students that must stay home sick. President Hargrave stressed that education is the key. ECU is ready, prepared and professional. Be aware of symptoms and don’t be afraid to act.

Stephanie Cooper stated that the Council had worked with Drs. Berty, Turner, and Anderson on the issue of Staff Longevity Pay. One meeting had been held last fall. The Council would like to know the status of longevity pay. Dr. Turner assured the Council that the Executive committee supports the concept. The first issue was the financial cost to the institution. Dr. Turner stated that this would create a new cost to the institution of approximately \$140-160,000 per year. He stated that a formal presentation should be ready to present to the Council by May. He also stated that the Longevity Pay Committee would meet again in October.

Stephanie Cooper thanked President Hargrave, Dr. Turner and other guests for attending the Council Meeting.

IV. Miscellaneous Comments, Announcements, etc.

Discussion of employee incentives, including employee of the month, will be continued at the next Council meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Stephanie Cooper will notify the Council of the next meeting time. There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.