

STAFF COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
APRIL 2, 2009  
2:00 PM

Present: Debbie Allen  
Robert Castleberry  
Karen Cochran  
Stephanie Cooper  
Todd Essary  
Bert Miller  
Blaine Rose  
Betty Smith  
Bob Vavricka

Guests: Dr. Duane Anderson, Interim President; Dr. Diane Berty, Vice President Student Development; Dr. Steve Turner, Vice President Administration and Finance

I. The meeting was called to order at 2:05 pm by Stephanie Cooper, President. Stephanie welcomed Drs. Anderson, Berty and Turner.

II. Approval of Previous Minutes and Budget Report

Betty Smith submitted copies of the previous minutes, March 5 and 12, and the current Budget Report. The motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes and budget as submitted. Betty will have the minutes placed on the Staff Council Web Page.

III. Comments from Dr. Anderson

In a previous Council meeting, Dr. Anderson had requested the Staff Council to obtain suggestions from the staff regarding the evaluation form. Stephanie Cooper responded that she had received some emails from staff but most responses did not contain any suggestions. She stated the Council had discussed this and it was the consensus of the Council that there should be something specific that the staff member can do to reach the goal of exceeds expectations. A staff member should be able to submit an application for exceeds expectations merit. The Council had discussed different things a staff member could do to achieve this goal including community involvement or attending university events or athletic events on campus. Developing a procedure similar to what the Chickasaw's have was discussed. The Chickasaw's have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) developed at the beginning of the year. Those employees choose if they want to be a part of this. These IDP's are tied to the employee's job path.

Dr. Berty stated that she requires her professional staff to attend events. This requirement is part of her meets expectations for her staff. Dr. Anderson stated that the faculty have an evaluation document that they are being evaluated on each year. Each part of the document has 8 to 10 descriptors that the faculty are to accomplish each year. At the end of the year, the faculty go over their evaluation form with their Department Chair and Dean. If they have exceeded expectations in certain areas they are eligible to apply for exceptional merit. Dr. Anderson stated that we might try to model what we are trying to do for staff after the faculty evaluation so there will be as little ambiguity as possible. It

will be more difficult to do this for staff because there is such a wide range of responsibilities. He thought pulling in more of the individual's job duties would help with that some. Dr. Anderson stated that he is not opposed to trying to develop this type of evaluation procedure for staff but did state that it would require a great amount of work to accomplish this. He stated that ultimately it had taken a committee of administrators, deans, and faculty a summer to create a faculty document, with the pilot form being used one year with changes made to the form for the next year. Dr. Anderson stated that the problem on the staff side is that professional staff job descriptions are entirely different than support staff. We may not be able to accomplish this without having a different form for professional staff and support staff.

The Council asked how merit is given for staff. Dr. Berty said last year the sole responsibility was with the supervisor. The Council stated that staff need to know beforehand what they need to do to qualify for exceeds expectations. The responsibility will need to be with that person to document what they have done. Dr. Anderson stated again that we will not be giving up merit. The decision to be made is how we can take the small amount of money that will be available and divide that amount between cost of living and merit. It was agreed that everyone must be communicated to upfront.

Dr. Berty stated that if the intent of the evaluation document was fine last year then we should examine what caused the grief over the evaluation procedure last year. Dr. Anderson asked is grief wide spread across campus or is there just a few that are disgruntled. It is the responsibility of the administration to make decisions. The issue is better training of supervisors. Dr. Anderson suggested that we could take the 7 institutional priorities and come up with triggers in each area. Dr. Anderson agreed to come back and talk with the Council about this. He stressed that we must have something concrete on the table. He stated that he did not know how much that could be done between now and the end of the semester but we do have a little time to work on this. Regardless, we are going to do evaluations. The reality is we are getting budget cuts for next year. Dr. Anderson cannot see any scenario where we will get any kind of monetary raise. The Council stated that sometimes it is not the money that is the issue, it is the perception of how an employee is being perceived by his/her supervisor. Dr. Berty stated that we are not always going to please everyone. We will still have some people that will get their feelings hurt. The Staff Council needs to move forward with what they think is fair.

Dr. Anderson stated that the Executive Board will make the final decision as to merit and will tell the individual person what decision has been made. Dr. Anderson pledged that there will not be a lack of communication as during this past year. Dr. Berty stated that an employee who does not meet expectations or exceeds expectations will already know this if the procedure works like it should. Dr. Anderson requested the Staff Council to provide him with a recommendation on how to proceed with the evaluation process.

Stephanie thanked Drs. Anderson, Berty and Turner for attending the Council meeting.

Stephanie reiterated the following items that were discussed: the university does not have any money; merit must be continued; the evaluation process is subjective; the administration will have the final say in merit; there will be communication with the employee; this time there will be more procedural discussions with the Vice Presidents; an employee will be communicated to as to why they did not get exceeds or not exceeds

expectations; evaluations are just evaluations with no money tied to them; and an employee will have to do their job to get a cost of living increase. The second tier to the evaluation process is exceeds expectations. An employee can apply for exceeds expectations but this does not necessarily mean that they will be given this. The Council will continue discussions of the evaluation process and provide Dr. Anderson with a recommendation.

#### IV. Unfinished Business

##### Nominations and Elections

The Nominations and Elections Committee will meet Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup> to count nomination forms. Those staff members with 3 or more nominations will be contacted about having their names placed on the ballot. The ballot will be sent out by Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. Election dates will be from April 8<sup>th</sup> through April 10. The Committee will meet again on Monday or Tuesday to count ballots. Stephanie Cooper agreed to send an email today to extend the nomination process through Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00 p.m.

##### Staff Development Training

Discussion of the Staff Development Training was tabled until the next Council meeting.

#### VI. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.