Staff Council Minutes  
September 19, 2007

Members present: Val VanDerSluis (Chair), Angela Valdivia, Wanda Hinton, Lori Rognlie, Lori Spurgeon, Becky Shaffer, Dee Barker, Angela Horn, Summer Harris, Jennifer Hill, Joyce Hutchins, and Vicki Baer.

Val called the meeting to order at 3:00pm in MO 204.

Presentation

Celeste Ehrenberg from the Employee Wellness Program presented information regarding this year’s Wellness Program. There are many simple things a person can do to participate in the program. Not only will you benefit by having a healthy life, but there are monetary incentives too.

Reports

From the President:

The offices of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Administration and Treasurer have moved into the 2nd floor suite of the BTAC. There are plans for a couple more areas to move to the basement offices of the BTAC. The vacated offices in Morgan will be renovated for classroom space.

The Stoffer Hall renovation project is on schedule and should be complete by the end of December. Faculty and staff will move in during the semester break.

The basketball court is being moved to the second floor level of Whiting to make the main floor the weight room. Classrooms and offices are being renovated as part of the project.

The baseball diamond is going to see some pretty major renovations. This is the first time the field has undergone any type of construction. Renovations include: infield resurfacing, remodeling of the dugouts, and new fencing. All of these renovations are being paid from private funds.

The Greek Village has run up against a slight problem. Each house (Phi Delta Theta and Sigma Phi Epsilon) needs to raise $2 million. One fraternity is having a problem raising the funds so not sure what they will do.

Currently, faculty and staff members are working on Washburn University’s accreditation report. We will undergo a site visit May 5-8, 2008. The President is asking that all employees to be aware of our mission and values, as the accreditation team may ask various faculty, staff and students about WU.
WU Board of Regents approved a 5% increase in insurance premiums. WU experienced an increase in medical claims last year; eight of them were over $1 million. In addition, the life insurance carrier has been changed. The new carrier offers many more benefits. The President reported enrollment is down approximately 26-2700 credit hours (150 students). He is looking at new marketing approaches for recruitment and retention. There is no change in the OOE budgets but it does mean funds will be slightly tighter and there may be less flexibility in purchases. On a brighter note, the residence halls are at an all time high of residents and the Washburn Village is full.

**Corporate Volunteer:**

Lori Rognlie has received enough toiletries for 5 boxes. Please keep sending them, her goal is to have enough for 7-8 boxes to give to Operation Clean Sweep. If you would like to volunteer to help at Thanksgiving Day Dinner, please contact the United Way. Also volunteers are needed for intake at the Christmas Bureau. You can contact their offices at 273-4804.

**Benefits:**

Benefits committee’s discussion focused mainly on the increase of the insurance premiums and the change in the life insurance carrier.

**Staff Council Elections:**

After the elections this year, we have some new and existing members for staff council. There is a vacancy for Hourly F and a few alternates are still needed.

**Old Business**

The benefits committee is still looking at the Natural Disaster leave request. They are checking with Human Resources and Payroll regarding a shared leave program for this.

A proposal to increase the number of appointments covered for mental health issues will be presented to the WU Board of Regents.

One council member asked if there was any update on the soap/paper towel dispensers. She noted that she had not seen any new dispensers in Henderson.

A council member asked if there had been any progress on the SRWC membership issue. Another suggestion was that SRWC could have a free guest night once a month. This again, is a liability issue, but Val will talk to Joel Bluml.

A council member asked if there had been any decision on the issue of having to use one personal day during the winter break. The benefits committee is still reviewing this matter.
New Business

An employee has made an inquiry regarding recognizing Facilities and Security employees, stating that we recognize WU student workers and there are days recognizing Bosses and Administrative Assistants. WU does recognize student workers, but Bosses and Administrative Assistants recognition is up to each individual office. Also, police and fire fighters are recognized nation wide on September 11th. The consensus was that each office should be in charge of thanking and giving recognition to their Facilities employees, as well as seeing if September 11th could be utilized as a day to thank Security employees since it has been recognized as “Patriots Day”.

An inquiry was received regarding why WU reimburses for personal leave and not sick leave when an employee resigns. Even though the reasoning was thought to be a budgetary issue, the Benefits Committee will address this and give a reason as to why sick leave cannot be cashed in upon an employee’s resignation.

Val has received a request for WU to be a partner of the American Heart Association in their various events that occur on a yearly basis. It is a concern that if we partner here, it could create a flow of local organizations requesting for WU to partner with them in their upcoming events, which could then lead to the potential for volunteers to pull from another fund-raiser (like United Way campaign) in order to help in something else. Val will talk with the source of this request and will let them know of the concerns that were brought up regarding this proposal in the Staff Council meeting and will give us an update at the next meeting.

Announcements

Becky reminded everyone about the Safety Fair on Tuesday, September 25, 2007 from 3:00-7:00pm in the parking lot north of Yager Stadium.

The next Staff Council meeting will be Wednesday, October 10, 2007 at 3pm in Morgan 204.

Meeting adjourned.