

**Winthrop University**  
**Staff Conference Meeting Minutes**  
**October 15, 2019**  
**Dina's Place**

Staff Assembly Present: Megan Baggaly, Kara Cauthen, Thomas Cornelius, Katie Gawronski, April Hershey, Chris Johnson, Jessica Martin, Kirk McSwain, Claire Mooney-Melvin, Brittany Neely, Tanya Pettus

Absent: Johnathan Brabson, Lydia Johnson

Vacancies: one

Staff in Attendance: approximately 65

Call to Order

April Hershey, chair, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. She introduced herself as the new chair of Staff Assembly, and acknowledged that the minutes from the September 3 Staff Assembly meeting and September 17 Staff Conference meeting had been approved. She reminded everyone that the minutes can be viewed online along with the Staff Conference PowerPoints and the answers to the leadership Q&A's.

Leadership Q&A

April explained that the President and others who answer the staff questions will always see the questions exactly as they were submitted. However, they may be edited for length or tone when they are presented at Staff Conference in order to focus on the main points.

1. *What effective tool does Winthrop University use to retain and reward their employees, stimulate productivity, and performance levels?*
  - a. *In regards to the EEAP program, does getting a degree while in your present position guarantee a promotion/advancement and/or raise? If not, why?*
    - i. President Mahony said that getting a degree does not guarantee a raise or promotion, because roles may only require a lower degree. He said Winthrop is similar to other higher education institutions in this regard.
  - b. *What is the latest update on the compensation study in terms of next steps and timeline? How does the \$600 bonus affect this?*
    - i. President Mahony said the compensation study is unrelated to the \$600 bonus. The timeline of the study is still on track to finish by December, at which point the plan will be presented to the board. It will take many years to implement the plan; we will not have the money to immediately implement it.
  - c. *Is the only way to get a raise to leave Winthrop and seek higher paying employment elsewhere?*
    - i. President Mahony said this is not necessarily true. People can apply for other roles and get promotions here at Winthrop. He pointed out that the state did authorize a raise for employees this year, so raises do happen.
  - d. *Are the annual performance evaluations of staff used to evaluate the employee and the position to determine if additional job duties have been added and/or to determine if the employee is going above and beyond?*

- i. President Mahony said that positions are reviewed to see if the descriptions are accurate. If it is found that a role has taken on more responsibilities or supervisory duties, it can lead to a salary increase.
  - e. *What is the current employee turnover statistic? Does the university track this sort of thing and does it have any plans to address it if it is a problem?*
    - i. President Mahony said the current turnover rate is about 13%, which is actually lower than the national rate. He said the fact that the job market is good and that baby boomers are reaching retirement age has contributed to an increase in turnover everywhere.
- 2. *The number of Vice President titled positions seems to be growing and making the administration top heavy. How can the university justify these higher paid positions while also stating that there is not enough money to improve wages for lower paid staff?*
  - a. President Mahony said that we have not increased the number of vice presidents, although some positions have been retitled which may give that impression. There has not actually been any monetary change. We are actually down one VP level position, as someone was not replaced after retirement. The cost of administrative staff positions does not actually affect the budget very much compared to some other costs.
- 3. *What is being done about the pest problems on campus? Why do we have to prove a building has pests before it can be treated?*
  - a. Wes Love said that we have had an uptick of pests coming into buildings over the last few months due to the extreme drought and the fact that they are looking for shelter for winter. We have a lot of older buildings on campus that may have holes and interconnected crawlspaces that make it easy for pests to get in and spread quickly. Facilities Management works with a pest contractor to try to stay ahead of the problem by laying traps, spraying, and searching for the ways the pests get in. He said staff can make a difference by thinking about how snacks are stored in offices, and avoiding the use of scented candles. He said it is not an issue of needing to prove that there are pests, but that facilities must be able to identify which pests we are dealing with in order to treat effectively. Different pests require different treatments, and we want to be considerate of those with allergies, people's time, and budgets before beginning a treatment. He said to keep putting in work orders to let them know where and when pests are sighted.
  - b. A question was asked about the feral cat population on campus. Wes said that this has been a problem for a while, and that people do leave out food and water for them.
- 4. *Will there be a Halloween costume/decorating contest this year?*
  - a. April spoke with Carol Adams of the Campus and Community Involvement Committee regarding this. There will not be an official contest, but staff are encouraged to submit photos to Kara Cauthen via e-mail or the Facebook page to be included in the next Staff Stuff.

#### Updates from the President

President Mahony said that we have the final enrollment numbers now. Freshmen and graduate students were up, but upperclassmen were down, which left us at about a 1% increase total. We are up about 400 applications compared to this time last year, which was already our highest year ever. Interest in Winthrop is good at this time.

## Committee Updates and Announcements

- Media and Communications: Kara Cauthen announced that the next newsletter would be out in early November, and encouraged staff to join the Facebook group.
- Campus and Community Involvement: April Hershey said that the next Food Truck Friday would be October 18. The first 200 Winthrop IDs will receive \$5 in Food Truck Bucks. Volunteer spots are still open for this event.
- Elections and Nominations: Amanda Stewart said that e-mails will be going out soon for the open Finance & Business spot on Staff Assembly, and for the at-large spot on the Ombuds Advisory Committee. Nominees have to have been at Winthrop for one year to be eligible. She encouraged everyone to start thinking of potential nominees.
  - Someone asked what the Ombuds Advisory Committee was. April said that all the details have now been posted online, and that the at-large member will serve for two years. The committee's first role will be to help choose nominees for the ombuds position that will be presented to the President.
- Professional Development: Marcia Willis announced that there are two upcoming events, and encouraged staff to check the Daily Digest for the details. There will be an effective communication event in October and a stress management event in November.
- Staff Feedback: Whitney Hough said the committee is still looking for more members. They meet the Tuesday after Staff Conference at 4 p.m. in 116 McLaurin.
- Recognition: Miranda Knight recognized ten nominees for Staff Member of the Month. The winner was Amy Phillips.
- Other Announcements:
  - Shayna Foxworth announced that Ghost Tours will be taking place on October 29 from 6-10 p.m. The tours last about 20 minutes. Tickets are \$10 and are only available through presale from Eventbrite or at one of the tables in Digs.
  - LeeAnn Pounds reminded everyone that today was the deadline to sign up for the preventative screenings. She said appointments were not required for the flu shots, but that you can reserve your spot online.
  - Whitney Hough shared information about the Arts Winthrop Gala on November 1 in McBryde. All proceeds will go to support student scholarships.
  - Shelia Burkhalter gave a shout-out to the Critical Incident Management Team for their response to the water main break.
  - Craig Sauvigne reminded everyone that the cybersecurity training must be completed by the end of October.
  - Shayna Foxworth shared that Halloween Happenings will also be on October 29 from 6-8 p.m. It is an event for families and the community.
  - Shayna also shared that volunteers are needed for Homecoming.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:44 p.m.