

**Staff Assembly Meeting
June 3, 2014
Polly Ford Conference Room, West Center**

Staff Assembly members present:

Rebecca Best, TJ Carney, Maria D'Agostino, Sharen Dubard, Kelly McGinnis, Kelly Shelton, Grant Scurry, Gena Smith, Rosanne Wallace, Margaret Williamson

HR representatives present: Lisa Cowart and Tina Purnell

Margaret called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM.

- Margaret announced that Sharen Dubard decided that the position of Secretary is not the best fit for her and she is stepping down.
- Gena Smith has accepted the position of Secretary.

Margaret (chair) opened meeting up to review Staff Conference held on 05-20-14.

An estimated 50-60 staff were present at the Staff Conference.

- Discussed: We will no longer record Staff Conference. This information is also posted on the Staff Assembly webpage under Frequently Asked Questions.

Staff Assembly asked if suggestions/comments have been submitted via the webpage.

- **Margaret addressed questions, suggestions, and comments that have been submitted via the SA webpage:**
 - **Suggestion:** Free memberships to West Center for staff.
 - **Response:** (Grant)
 - Fees received from West Center memberships are used to operate the facility. Without these fees the West Center could not be open as many hours and Recreational Services would not be able to offer the programming now available to our students, staff and faculty. Grant addressed the following –
 - Membership includes use of the entire facility including the climbing wall, weight room, cardio stations, racquetball courts, basketball courts and pool.
 - West Center memberships include a locker and towel service.
 - Personal Training is a free service offered to students and patrons in all membership categories. At most campus facilities there is an additional fee for personal training that can range from \$20.00 to \$40.00 per session and up. The West Center has a \$20.00 no show fee which is returned if all sessions are attended.
 - Groups Fitness classes are also part of West Center membership. To participate in group fitness sessions many campus facilities charge an additional fee.
 - Recreational Services currently offers 2 week free trial West Center memberships to employees and their families. This is done so that potential members can see if joining will fit into their schedules and if the facility offers what they are looking for.
 - Margaret suggested that we post the information Grant highlighted about the West Center on the Staff Assembly webpage under FAQs.
- **Comment:** about salaries – unfortunate that good employees have to leave Winthrop and sometimes be re-hired before salaries are raised.
- **Comment:** sometimes lower salaries/unfilled positions lead to increased work for remaining staff. Lisa agreed that unfortunately these two issues could be true.

- **Comment:** Until HR and the University discuss conducting exit interviews with employees who leave, we will never fully know what will make Winthrop a great place to work.
 - Margaret asked: Has HR/Winthrop ever conducted exit interviews?
 - **Response:** (Lisa): No, but it is a great idea for the future. There is a benefits interview when employees leave, but not an exit interview.
- **Suggestion:** employee recognition – employee of the month type recognition with a parking space of their choice.
 - SA noted that this was a great idea.
 - Also noted – this will be more valuable to some employees, likely those on the main campus. For example, there is already ample parking at the Coliseum.
- **Suggestion:** Could employers recognize employees' birthdays or employment start dates with a note or in some other small but appreciated way?
 - Several Staff Assembly members noted that they appreciate the years of birthday cards from the President
- **Comment:** The water fountain water in multiple buildings (Tillman, Owens, etc.) tastes bad – could that be improved?
 - Staff Assembly noted that Facilities would need to check.

Return to Staff Conference reflections:

- Staff Assembly members commented that they were glad for the turnout at the first meeting, and hoped increased numbers of staff would come to future meetings.
- After the Staff Conference meeting, several Staff Assembly members were asked why the Staff Conference started after nine-month employees were gone for the summer. Staff Assembly members has responded that it was the timing of the representative elections and that during this first year, it seemed especially important to get Staff Assembly started – to draft bylaws, elect the Staff Council, plan meeting – and not lose momentum.
- Kelly McGinnis was asked prior to the Staff Conference about a rumor that if staff members from any particular Division don't attend Staff Conference meetings, then that Division will lose its representative(s). This is not true at all.
- Kelly Shelton was asked if she was really elected or if she was appointed to Staff Assembly. She responded that she was elected. SA members responded that all Staff Assembly members were elected via a nomination process and voting.

June 12 - Margaret has a meeting scheduled with President Williamson.

Margaret will discuss the following:

- How does President want Staff Assembly to bring concerns/feedback to her (by what method)?
- Discuss further Staff Assembly representation at the Board of Trustees meetings
- What are the University's enrollment goals?
- Football issue – what is next there?

Lisa Cowart addressed at last PAC meeting that it is important for supervisors, VPs, chairs, and deans to encourage staff members to attend the monthly Staff Conference meetings.

- To do so effectively, PAC would like to be copied on Staff Assembly announcements of dates and times of Staff Conference meetings. Margaret will do this.
- Lisa noted that PAC will not attend the Staff Conference meetings; they just want to know the schedule and receive the reminders so that they can encourage staff to attend.

Kelly Shelton inquired if it was a conflict of interest to have Lisa Cowart as a non-elected HR representative to Staff Assembly if she is also on PAC.

- Becky Best responded that she felt it was in our interest as staff to have HR representation at the Staff Assembly meetings.
- Several Staff Assembly members agreed. Gena remarked that hopefully HR representation is seen as a way to provide answers only HR can give, as was the case at the first Staff Conference meeting that Tina Purnell attended.
- Kelly S. clarified that she was not concerned about HR representation, but about Lisa's presence in particular. The lines can get blurry when Lisa has direct contact with the President. Several Staff Assembly members felt HR presence at this early point in our development, be it Lisa or Tina, will be important.
- Sharen noted it will take time for trust to build as a campus community.
- Kelly S. shared that she has gotten feedback from staff that the Staff Assembly is seen as 'fake' and 'not real.'
- Margaret noted that we must continue to be sensitive to the lack of trust campus-wide.

Representative to Board of Trustees

- Again we reviewed the concern that Staff Assembly must wait to have representation at the Board of Trustees meetings.
- Gena asked what the process was for the Council of Student Leaders or the Faculty Conference to have representation to the Board and were we being given that same opportunity? It was noted that both the Faculty Conference and CSL have had representation for so long that it may be difficult to know the steps they took to achieve representation to the Board.

Faculty Conference Budget

- Staff Assembly had inquired if Faculty Conference had a budget. Lisa asked Debra Boyd, and Faculty Conference does not have a budget.
- President Williamson wants to host the first after-meeting welcome in August – pay for refreshments.

By-Laws - Maria D'Agostino presented –

- Staff Assembly discussed **Section E. Terms of Office** and the use of the phrase "in good standing." Phrase was removed for the following reason: who would determine what 'in good standing' means? Not necessary to have the phrase "in good standing" as part of the terms of office since the employee must be off probation and have worked at Winthrop for at least 1 year.
- Discussed Meeting Time: It will remain at 2:00 PM. Staff Assembly input indicates that may be the most workable time for large populations of staff, such as Facilities.
- Discussed potentially combining one meeting to cover November-December because of time away that University is closed for Thanksgiving and winter Holiday Break.
- Discussed summer meetings, 9-month employee access. Staff Assembly still believes it was in staff's best interest to begin working on Staff Assembly right away.
 - Margaret would like to announce to Staff Conference at next meeting (June 17) that we have By-Laws. Last edits will happen this week.
- Staff Assembly should reply to Margaret about By-Laws by June 10, prior to her meeting with the President on June 12.