

**Winthrop University**  
**Staff Conference Meeting Minutes**  
**May 21, 2019**  
**Dina's Place**

Staff Assembly Present: Johnathan Brabson, Nicole Chisari, Thomas Cornelius, Julia Fockler, Lydia Johnson, Wes Love, Kelly McGinnis, Alicia Marstall, Jessica Martin, Brittany Neely, Linda O'Connor  
Absent: Kara Cauthen, Cheryl Gomez, April Hershey, Kirk McSwain  
Staff in attendance: Approximately 59

Meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m. by Nicole Chisari, chair.

The president was presented with the following questions:

*Are there any discussions going on inside the administration concerning possibly contracting out departments in Facilities Management, such as grounds, custodial, or even Residence Life with all the new apartments being built or planned near campus? Most of Winthrop's dorms are in need of major repairs and the cost of these repairs are reaching a point of no return for investment.*

Justin Oates, CFO, answered: We have not looked at this. The only time something like this would happen is due to an emergency. This is also a funding issue. The Board of Trustees is looking at residence halls and taking on debt is an issue.

President Mahony added that a company came in at one time and looked at taking over the residence halls, but that was not done. The residence halls are a continued source of income for the university.

*Why are the lower Hardin Garden fountains constantly off? I'm sure that a lot of money was spent to install them as well as the flowing water walls. But it seems like the lower fountains are always broken or off. If broken, why can't they be fixed and remain fixed?*

Wes Love answered: The fountains were expensive to build and to maintain. There is machinery in a pit that controls the flow and all the mechanical parts were burned up due to a water issue. The pumps are on order and as soon as they arrive, the fountains will be fixed.

*Men's Basketball staff went to Fahrenheit Restaurant in Charlotte, where they spent a total of \$1,182.51 on a recruit. They posted a picture of the receipt on social media. Isn't there a per diem per staff member? How is this even possible with the budget crunch we are all in? This seems as if they are wasting money we don't have.*

President answered: Basketball receives funds from donors and they have the flexibility to use the funds how they wish. It was in bad judgment for it to be posted on social media and a discussion was had with the staff regarding this post.

*What is going on over the last few months with overflowing trashcans around main campus? Is there anything we can do to help solve the problem and help keep campus clean? It looks horrible!*

Justin answered: Ground crews are responsible for picking up the trash. Due to vacancies, they are short-staffed. We have lost some staff to the City of Rock Hill. He also added that we have hired someone to take over the recycling program at Winthrop and this is a top priority.

Wes added: The City of Rock Hill has changed their recycling policy, which has caused some issues.

*(This was rephrased from its original submission in order to better address the “spirit” of the question.) We hear about people receiving raises and/or promotions at Winthrop (in some cases, people leaving the university for another job, only to return later at a seemingly higher rank). What are the situations on campus in which people are receiving these raises and/or promotions?*

President answered: Several people have applied for and received another job at a higher rate internally. You do not have to leave for another job elsewhere to receive a raise at Winthrop. There are also other cases in which an employee would receive a raise, which he’s discussed at previous meetings, such as extra duties, retention raises, and more.

*Why does Winthrop spend money on national searches flying people in and paying the expenses of those coming for interviews just to promote from within? It seems to a lot of people a total waste of money, taxpayer’s money. Going through the motions is not very impressive to the employees or the taxpayers of South Carolina.*

President answered: He has never just gone through the motions in his life. If there were a job posted, they would attempt to promote within if they could.

President also updated us on the enrollment numbers. The freshman applications are up about 125 and 29 on transfer applications. Total enrollment numbers are not known at this time. Students are graduating early (less than 4 years) and some students do not come in as freshman; this affects our numbers. We will begin to look at enrollment by year and not by class.

It is also being discussed at the state level of giving a one-time \$600 bonus to employees at a certain salary level. In addition, an order from the state says that if public higher education institutions plan to raise tuition in the upcoming academic year, it cannot exceed a 1% increase. The Board of Trustees is discussing this. They could increase housing and other fees, but the board would have to vote on this.

Callie Smith made a presentation on Orientation.

Freshman orientation dates are as follows:

June 12 & 13; June 17 & 18; June 20 & 21; June 24 & 25 and dates in August.

These are two-day sessions where the students are required to stay on campus. The students meet with their academic colleges, meet with faculty and staff from those areas, and learn what is expected of them in college. There are sessions on financial aid, health services, residence life and dining services. They learn about their majors, receive their common book and register for classes.

Transfer orientation

Students are required to attend one of the sessions. We hold 4-full day sessions, which the students have to attend one of these.

Post-Traditional orientation

This is for our 25 and older students. They are required to do a half-day or full-day orientation.

We also have a Family Orientation, which is a one-day session. The family arrives with the student and then separate. The President also addresses this group. During this time, the families can meet with

other families, spend time with faculty and staff, attend presentations from the academic colleges and learn how to prepare their students for college.

What to do if you see these folks on campus: garnet lanyard means this is a student, gold lanyard means this is a parent. This may come in handy if you run into a post-traditional student. Greet them; assist them with directions, if needed. Also, answer any questions if you can and include a positive Winthrop message.

Google Play has an app for orientation schedules and times of events.

Josh Sides- Esports made a presentation regarding this new sport. Esports is competitive video gaming. Esports athletes will be top performers with elite skill set and hand/eye coordination.

Esports are growing faster than traditional sports. The buy-in at some competitions this year was \$20 million. You can watch some events on ESPN2. Twitch.tv, which is a live streaming service, has events.

62% of 18 to 34 year olds watch Esports. The institutions are slow to add this as a sport. We are actually ahead of the curve and we can be a market or even a regional leader.

The team will consist of 15 students. The games played are "League of Legends" and "Overwatch." It is a coed sport, but it is male dominated. Sides discussed the sometimes toxic environment toward females in this sport.

Approximately 170 to 180 schools will have Esports this fall, with 70 schools over the past year having added it. Enrollment driven schools are adding this.

Esports will be based in the basement of Dacus Library. By the end of July they should be up and running.

Recruiting is done by a national search and the word it put out on a discord site, cold calling and networking. There will be try-outs online for these students.

The space in the library is limited so the team can only be 15 at this time. The space needs will be reviewed by the end of this year.

Will these athletes leave school early if they are considered "elite"? If they are that good, they could go professional.

There will be scholarships offered, not full scholarships, but they will be available. He currently has a scholarship budget of \$20,000.

These students will be able to use athletic resources, such as study hall and academic advising. There are tournament requirements, such as GPA standards and being a student is the first priority.

There will be required practice times.

These students also have very diverse majors, such as computer science, art and business.

Prize money is awarded to the winners; the funds will be distributed to the students through their student accounts.

There should not be a lot of travel, as the tournaments can be played online.

Katie Price and Jamie Ray announced that the new Winthrop website would be going live May 31. An email will be forthcoming regarding this update and about training, which will be held in June.

#### Committee Reports:

Elections & Nominations – still looking for nominations.

Media & Communication- last Staff Stuff was emailed at the beginning of May. The next edition will be in August.

Staff Development – The conference is scheduled in June and you can register on the TLC site. Topics include how to present your best self, pave way to success. Lunch will be offered the first day.

Feedback Committee- Whitney Hough is the new chair for this committee. If interested in joining, please contact her.

Recognition Committee – We had six nominations this month and the winner was Carol Adams.

Next Staff Conference will be at Dina's Place on Tuesday, June 18 at 2 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.