

## STAFF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

1:30PM – 3:00PM

AQU 210

**In attendance:** Michael Andregg, Laurie Dimond, Carol Hagen, Lisa Keiser, Travis Putrah, Pat Reinhardt, Joanne Rhoades, Nate Rolloff, Erin Thigpen

**Absent:** Linda Lee Borovansky, Chris Cognetta, Kimm Thiboldeaux

1. Michael gave the opening reflection.  
Laurie will do the opening reflection for the May meeting.
2. The February and March minutes were approved and have been added to the Staff Council web site.
3. Staff Appreciation Breakfast recap:
  - a. Next year:
    - request colored napkins
    - add balloons for decorations
    - changes to invitations – 1) make it clearer to staff that they should RSVP, regardless if will attend or not, to be eligible for door prizes; 2) reword "charity" section to include that this is part of the Staff Council mission and that it is not required to donate; make its less visible on the invitation
    - (from February meeting) present an annual Staff of the Year award, seeking nominations and have staff vote as part of the RSVP
  - b. Laurie will send Thank You's to:
    - Administrators
    - Those that donated a door prize
    - The "Just Show Up" band
    - Food Service
    - Linda Shields, for sending out and collecting the ballots for Linda Lee
  - c. General feedback on the highlighter, the small gift for each attendee on the table, was that it was a good idea but the color (purple) was too dark.
  - d. Some staff feedback on the door prize drawing was that there should not be a break in between the drawings; after some discussion it was decided that this was the best way to do it.
  - e. Several staff that could not attend requested on the RSVP to consider having it other than as a breakfast. Because the open constituents' meeting in October is a lunch, it was decided that it is best to keep this event as a breakfast.

Overall, the breakfast was well received.

4. Feedback on reclassifications:

Travis heard indirectly that a reclassified employee would like to come to the next Staff Council meeting because of their concern about losing a paycheck. As Pete Ronza had explained to us at the February meeting, no person that is reclassified will loose out on a paycheck; rather, they will be paid on a new schedule. The employee, or any reclassified employee with this concern, should follow up with one or more of the following options:

  - email the Staff Council web site; be sure to include name so that Laurie can respond to them; or
  - check the Human Resources/Compensation FLSA (Fair Labor Standards Act) website at [www.hr.stthomas.edu/compensation/flsa.jsp](http://www.hr.stthomas.edu/compensation/flsa.jsp); or

- contact your HR partner; or
- contact Pete Ronza, Compensation and Benefits Manager

5. Questions from Constituents and Web responses:

Four anonymous questions were recently submitted to the Staff Council web site. Unfortunately there is no way to respond to the requestor. Laurie recommended that we add a section to the Staff Council web site for responses to anonymous questions. It was decided to call this new section "You Asked". It was suggested to date each question & response, and archive it after a designated amount of time on the web site. It was also suggested that the most recent question is up front.

6. Communication/Web Site for Questions to Administration:

If a staff member does not want to go directly to an administrator with their question or concern and wants the Staff Council to act as a buffer, they should submit it through the Staff Council web site, [www.stthomas.edu/staffcouncil](http://www.stthomas.edu/staffcouncil).

7. Signage on campus:

Kimm and Pat raised the issue of the lack of signage around campus. Laurie will construct a letter to Mark Dienhart with this concern and suggestions from council members to address this issue.

8. Study Abroad for staff:

A constituent asked Kimm to look into tuition remission for staff that study abroad, proposing eligibility consideration given to staff that have been with the University for 10 years or more. It was suggested that this issue be brought to the Fringe Benefits committee. Lisa and Joanne said that study abroad is not eligible for tuition remission because international travel is not part of a UST cooperative tuition exchange program (ACTC, CCCTE). Laurie will reply to Kimm and copy Charlie Keffer.

9. ACTC Joint staff meeting;

Laurie will organize a joint ACTC staff council luncheon meeting at St. Thomas; she will suggest that the meeting be some time in June. Even though Laurie will no longer be a Staff Council member in June because her term has expired, there was no objection that Laurie be a part of this joint ACTC staff meeting.

10. Committee reports:

- Affirmative Action:** Carol reported that they will meet tomorrow.
- Budget Advisory:** no report
- Charitable Giving:** Erin reported that at the breakfast, \$188 was raised for the Tsunami Relief Effort and \$70 for the Red Lake Reservation assistance fund.
- Diversity:** Pat reported that a search committee has been formed for the position of Director of Diversity Initiatives.
- Elections:** The following new members were elected for the 2005-2007 term:
  - Mary Madigan replaces Chris Cognetta – Mpls/Chaska/Gainey seat
  - Catherine Crowell replaces Laurie Dimond - Academic seat
  - Carol Wilkie replaces Erin Thigpen - Administrative seat
  - Crixelle Suteria replaces Joanne Rhoades – Minneapolis seat
  - Kimm Thiboldeaux elected to first full term – Food Service seat
- Fringe Benefits:** Joanne and Lisa reported that there is a new tuition remission program initiative pending for next year.
 

NOTE: it was later reported that there will not be a new tuition remission program for next year.
- Minneapolis Operations:** Travis spoke with Sharon Fischer about this meeting coinciding with the Staff Council meetings; she will email Travis the minutes.

- h. **UCW:** Pat reported that this group is working on developing and implementing a mentoring program.
- i. **Web Page:** Nate reported that he is working with Donna Baisden to add a Question and Answer page to the Staff Council web site.
- j. **Treasurer's Report:** no report
- k. **Healthy U:** Lisa and Nate reported that there will be a spring luncheon on April 28<sup>th</sup> at noon in MHCC 304; they will recognize step winners and do some planting.
- l. **Mission:** no report
- m. **HRAC:** Laurie reported that they are working on writing new policy for hiring and compensation (IODP).

11. Other Business/Constituents concerns:

- a. Reminder to check out the workshops through the Leadership Academy. Several council members have attended a LA workshop and found them to be beneficial to their job as well as helpful to them personally.
- b. Travis was contacted by a constituent about losing vacation earned for overtime hours with the implementation of Banner. He was informed that no staff earns vacation for overtime hours; this is a federal law and not UST policy. Travis feels that staff required to work a substantial amount of overtime hours, such as Public Safety, should be compensated in some way. It was noted that the vacation accrual rate has not changed since 1991 when PLT was implemented. Laurie will email Pete Ronza, asking that the Benefits Committee address review of the vacation accrual rate and to consider some form of compensation for those that work substantial overtime hours.
- c. The May meeting (May 11<sup>th</sup>) will be a transitional meeting for the outgoing and newly elected members; lunch will be served from 12:30-1:30 and the meeting from 1:30-3:00. Laurie will extend an invitation to the new members and order lunch. Nate will extend the room reservation for AQU 210. Lisa will get a gift for the outgoing staff council members.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00PM.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Reinhardt