Staff Council Meeting – May 23, 2024

In attendance – Brent Dotson, Melissa Graham, Angie Burgy, Pat Harris, Cyndi Dotson, Elizabeth Knick, Al Collins, Jackie Bennett, Sami Kincaid, Sam Copen, Abby Campbell and Kim McFee.

Brent Dotson – Call meeting to order.

Did everyone get a chance to review the meeting minutes for Feb, March and the Assembly in April?

Melissa – Approve all

Angie – Second

Brent – Cody is not here today and did not share his Board of Governors report with me, so we will have to table that until next time.

I have just a quick note on the President’s Cabinet meeting. We looked at revisions to the Academic Calendar and approved those revisions. There were only a couple changes, one was a terminology change from “Payment Plan” to “Installment Plan” and the dates for the students being dropped for non-attendance and the Financial Aid Processing. The original timeline for that was Thursday with registration turned off all weekend long. So, we have decided to change that deregistration to Wednesday. So, the deregistration date has now been changed to the Wednesday prior to the Financial Aid processing. This way students are dropped for non-attendance on Wednesday, we process Financial Aid on Friday and registration can be turned back on so that students can access registration over the weekend.

We also reviewed the Strategic Plan and what areas were responsible for what pillar.

Melissa Graham (ACCE) – Other campus’ have a hard time getting support for staff council, but they are really wanted us to push staff council, especially to new employees.

Everyone is aware of the FAFSA right? Higher Ed has increased from $3300 to $3400. Promise Scholarship went from $5200 to $5500.

HEPC was still waiting on a few schools to send their job descriptions for the Market Study, they are pulling stuff from 2017 but it should not be any more that 2 years old. They have been having bi-weekly meetings with the benchmarking team but that’s the only update we received at this meeting because nobody from HEPC could meet with us.

One college is doing an interactive map for their campus to show where you are allowed to conceal carry and where you cannot. I don’t know if that’s something that we can do.

Al Collins – There are only 2 places where you cannot carry. Caperton and the ATC buildings. In the Main building it’s only Kurt’s office and my office.

Brent – What about Nursing? Did we ever get an answer for that?

Al – They do not have oxygen tanks, they just have air.

Melissa – I don’t remember what the policy was on state cars?

Al – You can. The only place that you can’t is where there are flammable chemicals or anywhere where there is disciplinary hearing or counseling. And with the Caperton Center because it’s half owed by Wood County Schools. The ATC is because of the gas tanks. The science wing did not meet the requirements because they don’t store 55-gallon drums of chemicals.

Melissa – Is everyone aware of the new policy they were trying to put through with the Fair Labors Act?

Brent – It’s the Exempt threshold. Right now, the Federal Exempt threshold is $34 or $35,000.

Melissa – They want to raise the minimum, starting July 1, 2024 $43,888; and by Jan. 1, 2025 $58,656; but Texas businesses have filed a suit in Federal court today. This is the threshold to determine whether you are exempt from over-time or not. This could cause some of our hourly employees to become salaried employees.

Brent – And it could also take some employees who are salary and kick them back to hourly. Basically what that is saying is if you make over $35,000 a year your employer can make you exempt from over time and put you on salary.

I can see them wanting to raise it a little bit but I don’t agree with them changing it as much as they are wanting to. They are wanting to raise it to $58,000 by January and have it jump every 3 years from there. Your hourly doesn’t increase that fast. You’re ultimately going to end up hurting businesses and in general, higher learning.

Melissa – That’s why Texas filed the suit, to stop that.

Brent – Does any one have any questions for Melissa regarding her ACCE report?

Vanessa is not here for her Treasury report, but she did share it with me.

We did have a staff member that needed some emergency assistance in April, it was above the threshold that we have agreed on prior, it was $350.00, I did communicate with 3 other Staff Council members to approve the higher amount. And the staff member that needed the assistance has agreed to repayment and has already started to repay that money.

(I have attached the Treasury Report) There is also a breakdown of the Purse Bingo Expenses and proceeds.

We had a Fundraising meeting after Purse Bingo to finalize everything and throw around ideas but we didn’t land on anything specific and we haven’t had another meeting yet. If anyone has any ideas for fundraisers or would like to be a part of the fundraising committee please reach out to me or Angie Burgy.

Does anyone have any suggestions for any new committees? I have one. Employee handbook.

It has been worked on in the past but never really went anywhere. I need individuals to review it.

I wanted to tough base on the Staff Evaluations. Does any one have any feedback on the new process? Has anyone been evaluated by their supervisor yet?

Sami Kincaid – The only thing I have noticed is the supervisors have been printing out and signing the evaluations and turning in the paper form to Dr Lancaster. And he would like to have it a fillable form.

Elizabeth and Brent – You can sign them digitally rather then printing it out.

Jackie Bennett – That was the whole point of why we did it this way. It will be better in the future.

Brent – That’s why I want your feedback so that we can fix what isn’t working.

Jackie – I will make an appointment with you and I will show you what to do and how to do it. Just send me an email and we can set it up, it will take maybe 5 minutes.

Kim McFee – I had someone that gave me feedback and she said there were some questions that could be done away with, repetitive.

Jackie – That’s the thing, once all this is over then we can have another meeting and talk about everything.

Brent – We will send out another questioner after the deadline for Evaluations is complete. And then we can re-evaluate and see if we need to make any chances.

Do you have any feedback Al, on the Supervisor end?

Al – I felt like half of it was repetition.

Brent – How did we put that thing together and not see that?

Jackie – Kim kept telling us over and over “You gotta have 8”. If it would’ve been up to us we would’ve only had 4 or 5.

Al – I would’ve said 5 max. Granted we went from 15 down to 8, but I’ve always thought that 4 or 5 things and I can tell if you’re doing your job. I was always more interested in the goals that you have for next year, more that “Are you communicating well with everybody on campus” are you doing customer service. I don’t mind the ones we picked but I’m with you (Kim), I would answer one and then go to the next one and think, I just answered this same basic thing already.

Brent – So is it the competencies itself or is it more the outlier of the competency that’s the repetition?

Kim – I think it’s more what was under each competency that is the problem.

And we only had 5 to start with and then we added one for Alice and added one for the President.

Brent – That’s definitely a lot of good feedback and it will give us something to look at when we come back together.

Al – That being said, it’s 1000 times better than what we had.

When they re-do the next one, have them go from 8 competencies to 5. And then the next time from 5 to 2 and then it will be perfect. Lol

(Everyone laughed)

Brent – Any new business? Anything new that you want me to look into, move forward or ask questions?

Melissa – I have a question.

When we do our fundraisers are there certain stipulations on what we can or cannot do fundraisers for?

Like the Emergency Fund, or for maybe the Outdoors Club to be able to put more into the walking path to fix it up?

Brent – No. We are not limited in that respect.

Jackie – That’s what we did with PopCon, it had to be used for something related to the college. We thought about doing a donation to like United Way or something like that and it was a no. It has to benefit the college.

Brent – Yes, we could definitely do something with that as long as you got people who would be willing to help with that.

(Discussion about what needs to be done to improve the path)

Melissa – There are a lot of students that utilize that trail.

(Talked about the Pavilion that the President is proposing to have installed in the back behind the cafeteria. It will be a concrete pavilion that will hold 1000 people. To be used for graduations and large events.)

(Talked about the parking lots and needing to be fixed)

(Talked about the sign at the farm. You can’t make it out)

Brent – One more thing, I did not announce who the winner of the Board of Governors Rep was, but it was Cody. So he will be the next Board of Governors rep for the next 2 years.

Did everyone see that I got the Employee of the Month on the monitors?

Employee of the Month for June is Kim Yeager.

Next meeting is June 20, 2024 at 2pm.

Brent – Call to adjourn meeting.

Melissa – Motion

Angie - Second