

September Staff Senate Minutes

The MSU Staff Senate met on September 13, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. in Dillard Room 178. Members present included: Laura Hetrick, Ashley Hurst, Elizabeth Ysasi, Dottie Westbrook (Virtual), Shane Perry, Chantin Miles, Stephanie Estrada (Virtual), Melissa Miller, Kristin Grassi, Kamy Holloway, Richard Elliott, Melanie Whitbey, Juan Maya, and Toni Smith. Not present were: Alonzo Burris, Paige Chumley.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Ashley Hurst.

Introductions: Executive Committee introduced themselves. Because there were many new members present, everyone introduced themselves.

Make a Difference Award: Ronnie Freeman was not present to accept her award.

Connie Nolen was not present to accept her award, but it will be sent to her.

Sammy Smith was not present to accept their award, but their spouse was available to accept on their behalf.

The Staff Senate portion of the MSU website has instructions for submitting nominations for this award.

Guest Speaker: Ashley Hurst introduced Dr. Stacy Haynie. Dr. Haynie shared how excited she is to be back at Midwestern State University. Spoke about budget challenges, declining enrollment, and forthcoming conversations would be had about maintaining budget. How to create a welcoming environment for students, provide access, and setup for success. Trying to move toward attracting talented staff and faculty. Improve partnership with SAFB. Being thoughtful of local students, recruit incomplete degree seekers, and knowing that high school graduates ready/interested in going to college is decreasing nationwide. VP for Finance resigned; President taking on responsibilities of financial duties. Moving forward with Provost search; must fill first to be able to secure the other positions.

Approval of minutes: The minutes from the August meeting were moved to a virtual approval process. Motion: Ashley Hurst; Second: Elizabeth Ysasi; Unanimously passed.

Correspondence: There were two suggestion box items that were shared.

1. "I would like for Staff Senate to speak on behalf of the existing employees (in effort to retain them) for the administration (new President) to find funds to provide a cost of living raise. The existing (current) employees deserve something even if it is only 2%. They are picking up the slack for all of the turnover on campus to keep the university going."
2. "Would going back to 4 day work week in the Summer help with the university's overall utility costs? Seems it worked through the prior years. Just a thought."

Committee Reports:

- **Staff Senate Executive Committee (Ashley, Richard, Elizabeth, Chantin (CJ))** – New Business Items

Discussion:

- Correspondence that was submitted to Suggestion Box was discussed.
 - Richard added that Dr. Haynie is aware of how much it would cost to raise 2%. Kamy Holloway brought up the "Fridays" off. Richard brought up talking with Human Resources of empowering supervisors to make decisions that are best for their

department instead of a one-size fits all. Laura brought up how can we retain employees. Kamy and CJ brought up morale being low on-campus.

- CJ tabled the discussion until next meeting. Ashley brought up inviting HR to speak at a future meeting.
- Richard discussed proposal to revise of “You Make a Difference Award,” to have Staff Senate vote and pick one winner per month. Monetizing the award. Motion: Richard Elliot. Second: Shane Perry. Unanimously approved.
- Richard motioned that committees were redundant and to revise. Ashley suggested that committee nomination occur virtually.
- Announcements were made:
 - Family Day Weekend is occurring on Friday, September 22nd through Saturday, September 23rd.
 - MOSAIC is requesting Staff Senate contribution toward rebrand.
- Melissa brought up “Emergency Assistance Fund for Staff,” on behalf of Garrett Holland and Ashley requested that he be the guest speaker for October’s meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.