

Staff Advisory Committee
January 16, 2025 – 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: Brian Allen, Joyce Arnold-Hesson, Christa Blair, Eric Carlile, Jennifer Dewar, Emily Disbrow, Joni Gilmore, Liam Harder, Melanie Mabrey, Amy McCoy, Peggy Nettenstrom, Lisa Norsworthy, Lisa Rice, Noel Stojkov, Catherine Warren, Denette Way, Deborah Yu

Members Absent: Gary Stafford

Others Present: President Oldham, Kevin Vedder, Lee Wray, Aleta Cannon

Summary:

Approved Agenda

Approved October 31, 2024 minutes

Discussed Staff Day planning for 2025

Discussed Bi-Weekly Pay Schedule

Comments by the President

Proceedings:

Lisa Rice called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm. Joni Gilmore motioned to approve the agenda for January 16, 2025. Jennifer Dewar seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Deborah Yu motioned to approve the October 31, 2024, minutes. Melanie Mabrey seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Lisa Rice explained that the planning committee met briefly before the winter break to plan for the 2025 Staff Day. The committee needed a t-shirt design to begin working on t-shirt order details. Some raffle prizes that had been discussed were another gold parking pass, season tickets to football and/or basketball games, and a semester meal plan. A date had tentatively been decided on for the event: Friday, August 8, 2025. Christa Blair noted that that week was new faculty and employee orientation week, and it would be a full schedule. Rice made a note that the planning committee would look at planning for Friday, August 1, 2025, instead. Another planning committee meeting would be scheduled soon.

Joyce Arnold-Hesson asked about the upcoming bi-weekly pay schedule. She stated there had been concerns from other employees in Athletics about the new payroll schedule. The changing schedule would not align with monthly expenses and could cause issues for employees. She asked if it was possible to opt out of the new payroll schedule, and Kevin Vedder replied that it

was not possible. Payroll was the subject matter expert, but he explained that the payroll schedule was designed to assist employees and was based on survey data. A survey had gone out campus-wide to see whether clerical and support staff would prefer a bi-weekly schedule, and the results were in favor of moving to that schedule. Mabrey suggested that it might be helpful to have someone to assist with financial planning for employees that were worried about moving to this schedule. Vedder said he would work with Payroll and the Business Office to see what the options were for this. Lisa Norsworthy asked why the schedule had not been set to specific days, such as the first or fifteenth of each month. President Oldham explained that he believed the reason that was not being done was that it would decrease the number of pay periods to 24 rather than the 26 the upcoming plan would have. He also noted that there would potentially be a bonus before the new schedule began to help with the transition period. This payroll schedule would also help newly hired employees and student workers get paid faster, rather than having to wait almost two months before receiving pay.

President Oldham welcomed everyone back to campus and hoped they had a great break. Classes started back today and there was a lot of excitement, particularly for football as they had recently won a championship. In the pre-season rankings, they were ranked 19th out of 20, which was good for our team. Spring enrollment was up 6% over last spring and retention from fall to spring was at 92%, which were great statistics. Increasing enrollment meant that things would get easier overall. Of course, more students could lead to more needs, but overall increased enrollment was a good thing and enabled campus to receive more resources. The legislative session was starting up soon and Oldham explained that he would give any updates he could on issues that impacted campus, and if anyone had questions to let him know.

Oldham provided an update on the pedestrian walkway, which was almost done and the date for substantial completion was February 17, 2025. Next week campus would be closed on Monday, January 20, 2025, for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday. There was a full week of events surrounding the holiday such as a silent march and other programming. Oldham asked that everyone participate if they wanted and were able to. Oldham also noted that February 13, 2025, was Awesome Eagle's 100th birthday. There would be an event to highlight his birthday as well as dedicate Poppie's Ice Cream Shoppe on Tuesday, February 13, 2025, during dead hour. Everyone was invited to come to the event and grab a free ice cream. Poet's Tech, replacing Au Bon Pain café in Volpe Library, was slated to be completed on January 18, 2025. Taco Bell would hopefully open on campus in about two months.

Catherine Warren asked for an update on the pedestrian crossing between Jere Whitson and the new Soul Craft coffee location. Oldham stated that was the City of Cookeville's decision and Lee Wray said they had not gotten back with them about this. They would continue to inquire about it. Mabrey mentioned that the city had installed speeding signs in front of Foundation Hall, and they had been effective in that area and others agreed. Arnold-Hesson asked for an update on the Noble Cody Circle traffic signage, and this was not complete yet. Mabrey asked what was needed in the area so she could ask the director of Auxiliaries, and Arnold-Hesson explained that bright, neon lettering on the road would help. Gilmore explained that a section of the roadway near Southwest Hall had been closed off and people often entered the wrong way. Mabrey noted that she would also ask about directional arrows for the Southwest Hall area as well.

Vedder informed the committee that phase three of the Compensation Plan is in development. The current plan was for it to be implemented with merit raises on July 1, 2025. There was a Talon Business Partners Network meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 2025. Human Resources, Business, and Finance were deep in the current processes of ERP. On April 23, 2025, there would be a Talon Town Hall event from 2:00 to 3:00 pm. The “go live” date was now less than a year away. Tennessee Tech was voted a “Best Place to work in Tennessee” and Human Resources was proud of this achievement. A survey had gone out to employees on campus to collect data about working on campus, and it was great that there had been such a positive response. Vedder thanked everyone for contributing to this.

Human Resources planned to have both a winter and spring event like the employee appreciation events held last year. The Spring Fling event would return this year, and they would be planning something for the winter. Additionally, the Human Resources Office was temporarily housed in the Ashraf Islam Engineering Building in room 311 until construction and cleanup of the auditorium area in Derryberry were complete. Blair noted that Jet Dental would be on campus to perform cleanings on January 28, 2025, by appointment. This would work with employee dental insurance.

Peggy Nettenstrom motioned to adjourn. Arnold-Hesson seconded. Adjourned at 2:08 pm.

Documents on file:

Agenda, January 16, 2025
Minutes, October 31, 2024

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