

Present:

Premalatha Balachandran, Erica Covington-Ford, Kevin Cozart, Shaquita Curry, Emily Echols, Kimberly Gatewood, Gazel Giles, Lolita Gregory, Catherine Hultman, Mohamed Ali Ibrahim, Le'Tosha James, Flora Jones, Torie Marion, Je'Lisa McGee, Aretha Nabors, Sheila Padgett, Johnny Price, Precious Thompson, Camille Toles, Laura Vaughn, Jacqueline Vinson, Jason Wilkins, and Deetra Wiley

Absent:

Anne Scott Barrett, Patricia Coats, Jessica Coker-Hughes, Jeremy Cook, Leah Hanks, Tasha Jones, Anne Klingen, Natcha Knight-Evans, Michael Marascalco, Danielle Noonan, Steven Ridout, Erin Ridout, and Jason Shirkey

I. Call to Order

The January Staff Council meeting was called to order by Gazel Giles at 10:30 a.m. on January 10, 2019.

II. Attendance (sign in sheet)

III. Approval of Minutes – December

- The minutes are sent out via email. Any comments, questions, or changes should be emailed to Emily Echols (emily@olemiss.edu).
- Motion to approve minutes by Precious Thompson
- Seconded by Prema Balachandran

IV. Approval of Treasurer's Report – November

- The Treasurer's Report is sent out via email. Any comments, questions, or changes should be emailed to Danielle Noonan (dnoonan@olemiss.edu).
- The totals at the bottom on the November Treasurer's report were corrected.
- Motion to approve by Precious Thompson
- Seconded by Jackie Vinson
- The Treasurer's report for December will be approved at the next meeting.

V. Staff Member of the Month for January

- Staff members submit nominations through UM Today announcements and the Staff Council website.
- Jessica Coker-Hughes will be sending an email soon for Staff Council members to vote for the January Staff Member of the Month.

VI. Reports from Committees

- Emily Echols gave a report on the Red and Blue Celebration.
- The event is scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2019, at The Inn at Ole Miss ballroom.
- Taylor Grocery was selected to cater the event.
- Staff Council will pay for the food.
- A photo booth will be set-up with props and the Ole Miss script.
- The committee will meet again in March.

VII. New Business

- Staff Council Standing Committees
 - The Staff Council Executive Board is re-doing the Staff Council Standing Committees.
 - Gazel Giles will email a complete list of Staff Council Standing Committees and the Staff Council representatives on each.
- Chancellor's Standing Committees
 - The Chancellor's Standing Committees are different from the Staff Council Standing Committees.
 - As soon as Sue Keiser sends her the list of Chancellor's Standing Committees, Gazel Giles will share it with Staff Council.
 - Anyone interested in joining one of the Chancellor's Standing Committees should email Gazel Giles with their first and second choices.
 - Staff Council members that already served on their preferred committee were asked to give another member the option to serve.
 - New Staff Council members will be given first choice to serve.
- Chancellor's monthly meetings with the Staff Council Executive Board will continue.
 - Larry Sparks is expected to be Interim Chancellor for 12-18 months.
 - He will be making decisions and continuing business as normal.
- Potential goals and partnership opportunities discussed for Staff Council this year are:
 - Monthly Staff Appreciation Day/Recruiting Day
 - ◆ This event would serve as a way to thank staff for everything they do for the University and could be used to recruit Staff Council members.
 - ◆ The event would be similar to our annual Ice Cream Social and Holiday Reception.
 - ◆ Holding a monthly appreciation event would provide more opportunities for staff to be involved and feel appreciated.
 - ◆ Mohamed Ali Ibrahim suggested having a rotating group of Staff Council members designated to serve each month.
 - ◆ Gazel Giles will get feedback from Sue Keiser and will speak with Larry Sparks regarding funding for the event.
 - Expanding the Red and Blue Celebration to include those earning GEDs and diplomas.
 - ◆ Gazel Giles would like to get an idea of how many people this would include.
 - ◆ Staff Council may possibly hold a separate ceremony for this group.
 - Mentoring program for Custodial Service employees
 - ◆ Many custodians lack computer skills and don't have access to the University's free computer training classes.
 - ◆ Mentors could pair up with service employees at a designated time to tutor in areas such as myOleMiss, UM Today, registering for classes, etc.
 - ◆ The mentoring program could be promoted during the monthly Staff Appreciation/ Recruiting Day.
 - Pathways to Education lunch in March
 - ◆ Kevin Cozart reported that the Sarah Isom Center is partnering with the McLean Institute and M Partner to offer a Pathways to Education lunch for custodial staff in late March.
 - ◆ The event will last an hour and will provide information on Human Resources benefits and other essential information on how to obtain a degree from Ole Miss.

- ♦ The University's textbook scholarship and GED program at Northwest could also be shared with employees.
 - ♦ Aretha Nabors stated that local family resource centers help people obtain high school diplomas. Those lacking a few credits can receive a free high school diploma without taking the state exam. Services are set up in counties throughout Mississippi.
 - ♦ Gazel Giles is interested in Staff Council partnering with the Pathways to Education event. Staff Council's Staff Appreciation/Recruiting Day may be also incorporated.
- New Employee Orientation
 - ♦ Gazel Giles asked if anyone wanted to reach out to Human Resources to get on their New Employee Orientation agenda.
 - ♦ Staff Council could set up a table at this event and be a source of information to new employees.
- Food/Personal Needs Pantries on Campus
 - ♦ Personal needs pantry is available in the Sarah Isom Center to students and offers discreet service.
 - ♦ Food Bank is available to students and faculty in Kinard Hall. Food is also available after hours. Lindsey Abernathy is the contact person.
 - ♦ The Alumni Association received approval to open a food/personal needs pantry. More information will be provided once it's in operation.
 - ♦ Staff Council may be able to make an annual donation.
- Books and Bears
 - ♦ Increase donations for Books and Bears which provides toys and gifts to custodial employees and their children during the holidays.
 - ♦ Could donations for annual events such as Books and Bears be made throughout the year?
- Adopt-A-Basket for Thanksgiving sponsored by the Associated Student Body
- Christmas baskets for staff formerly sponsored by Facilities Planning
- Promoting programs, events, and benefits on the Staff Council's website
 - ♦ A link for donations to annual events like Books and Bears could be promoted early to increase giving.
 - ♦ Links to the food and personal needs pantries on campus
 - ♦ Link to Alumni Association scholarship and alumni benefits
 - ♦ Link to the Sarah Isom Center/McLean Institute's Pathways to Education program
 - ♦ Possibly including link to GED program and high school diploma programs
 - ♦ A list of benefits, events, programs, and resource contact information and locations with access to public computer use locations on campus would be helpful.
- Gazel will create a list of potential projects for Staff Council.
 - ♦ Send project ideas to Gazel Giles before the next meeting.
 - ♦ Staff Council will vote as a group on which projects to focus on this year.
- Gazel Giles is considering increasing the size of Staff Council.
 - Staff Council numbers have been down compared to the increasing number of employees on campus.
 - Physical Plant is an area not fully represented by Staff Council.
 - Staff Council Executive Board met recently and determined it would be difficult to redo the EEO categories.

- Johnny Price suggested appointing some at-large members.
- Gazel Giles stated that some schools are divided up by departments, but if we use that model, the council would be too large to manage.
- Deetra Wiley discussed the issues with redoing EEO categories.
- The Executive Board will revisit this issue again before Staff Appreciation Week.
- Kevin Cozart asked if a certain number of employees could be elected from each Physical Plant and Custodial Service zone.
- Gazel Giles would like to address this issue with the new Physical Plant director and encourage employees to have access to the same benefits.

VIII. Unfinished Business

- T-shirt Design Contest
 - The deadline for t-shirt submissions is March 1.
 - Gazel Giles is taking the contest board to display in the Physical Plant.
 - The flyer is posted in UM Today and can be printed to post in work rooms, etc.
- Staff Council Office Space
 - Gazel Giles is working with the Interim Chancellor to get a designated space in the old hospital for Staff Council use.
 - Several keys will be available to council members.
- Staff Council Bylaws
 - Staff Council Executive Board is continuing to update the bylaws.
 - Proposed changes will be brought before Staff Council for a vote.
- Staff Council Retreat Update
 - Catherine Hultman is getting quotes from Woodson Ridge Farms.
 - Staff Council voted to have a full day retreat versus a half-day.
 - A committee meeting will be held soon and more details will be presented to Staff Council.
 - A Doodle poll will be emailed to Staff Council to narrow down the date for the retreat, but early summer seemed to be the consensus.
 - Catherine Hultman and Emily Echols are co-chairing the Career Development Committee.
 - Kimberly Gatewood volunteered to serve on the committee.
 - Anyone else interested in serving on the Career Development Committee was asked to email Gazel Giles.
- Fundraising Committee Chair
 - Gazel Giles reported that she still needs someone to serve as Fundraising Committee Chair.
 - The purpose of the committee is to raise money for the Children of the Staff Scholarship.
 - In the past, the Council raised \$2,000 selling \$1 raffle tickets.
 - Precious Thompson suggested specifying what the funds are being raised for and put restrictions on it.
 - Torie Marion volunteered to serve as chair.
 - Council members were asked to send fundraising ideas to Torie Marion.
- Gazel Giles is working on getting business cards made for Staff Council representatives.

IX. Concerns/Questions/Comments

- Gazel reported that the mission of Staff Council is to support the mission of the University by serving as an advisory group to the Chancellor in matters that affect the welfare of the institution and/or its staff.
 - Staff Council isn't supposed to just do event planning.
 - Deetra Wiley reiterated this statement stating that if a staff member has an issue that needs to be addressed, it should be brought to Staff Council. The Executive Board will address the issue with the Chancellor, if necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

Next Staff Council meeting: Thursday, February 14, 2019, at 10:30 a.m. in the Facilities Management Conference Room.

Draft minutes submitted by Emily Echols on February 7, 2019.

Final minutes submitted by Emily Echols on February 13, 2019.