

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 29, 2022, 2:00 PM

Hybrid: TC 106 / www.fairmontstate.edu/StaffCouncilMeeting

Minutes transcribed by Dalene Horner, Secretary

I. **Call to order**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, George Herrick.

II. **Roll call**

The roll was taken by the Chair with all representatives being present with the exception of the SGA Representative. John DeVault, the newly elected ACCE Representative, was present in lieu of Robin Yeager, the outgoing ACCE Representative.

III. **Approval of the minutes for the May 25, 2022, meeting.**

The Chair asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes of the May meeting. The motion was made by Shana Bock and seconded by Spencer Flanagan. The Chair declared that the motion carried and the minutes stand approved.

IV. **Announcements and Reminders**

The Chair reminded the Staff that historically we do not hold a July meeting. The Chair also announced that we have the final results of the special election for an interim ACCE representative which is John DeVault. There were 10 nominees (3 which declined their nominations and 7 who actually accepted) with a total of 62 people voting. The Chair thanked all the nominees and those who voted stating that it was a good election since we had so many running and with everyone receiving votes.

V. **Presentation**

Dr. Han presented “Resilience –The key to personal and professional success”. A presentation regarding work challenges and building teams. This agenda item was moved up on the schedule since Dr. Han had another previously scheduled meeting during the normal presentation segment.

VI. **Administrative Reports**

- Report from HR - Ashley Maxey
Ashley introduced Sierra Spitzer as our Benefit Coordinator in HR. She also reported that we should be receiving new health insurance and vision cards in the mail. Deductibles will start over July 1st. Also reminded the staff that since July 4th is a holiday, we would for that week we will be returning to regular 8am – 4pm schedule for Tuesday through Friday. She also talked about the survey that went out for the 2023 calendar with 94 people responding. Of those, 33 people picked option 1 which was for all staff receiving the full week off at Christmas and no forced use of annual leave in December. 8 people picked option 2 and 53 people picked option 3 which was for two full weeks off in December and using 4 days of annual leave and having the Memorial Day holiday on its standard date and move Spring Holiday (Good Friday) to December. There have been some concerns on this regarding option 2 where we would use annual leave and that the university will be closed for 2 weeks. Ashley revealed that a lot of staff might have misunderstood option 2 and for that she may send out the survey again. She also revealed that the concept of forcing annual days at Christmas causes some problems for new employees concerning the amount of days they have to use and that the Enrollment Management has some issues with this option with regard to recruiting.
- Report for IT – Christa Kwiatkowski
A reminder for employees to set up their multi-factor authentication for logging into some application.

- Report from Facilities - Stephanie DeGroot and Dr. Han
Paving project on Squibb Wilson complete. Working with the city of Fairmont to stripe the rest of the loop around campus. Colebank gym floor is here, but installation crew has been delayed but should be completed by August 1. Next large project will be parking garage maintenance (top deck and part of 5th floor). Also working on redesigning space for nursing and the student health at Falcon Center. And working on a sustainability shelter that is a grant project. Dr. Han reported that summer has been busy for the 4 grounds team and majority of our grass in on an incline and this has impacted the grass mowing/weed trimming on the hillsides. Because of this they are moving to the hillsides being more of a natural West Virginia landscape which is good for bees, hummingbirds, etc.
- Report from Student Success – Alicia Kalka and Ken Fettig
Currently have 759 students enrolled for fall. Pointed out that the recruiting territory is expanding beyond West Virginia due to our population decline. Also working on expanding our Grad Programs. Ken Fettig also reported for Financial Aid. Jason McCoy is the new Director of Admissions Services replacing Barb Phillips who transitioned to IT. The Navigate Programs is going through the implementation stage. A new software is also implementing for the fall to do a better job of managing and putting our student clubs, organizations, and student life events into one place. This will also allow students to share with employers what they did as a student. Study abroad and international trips are also being considered again.
- Report from Student Government
None. The Student Government Representative was not present since the Spring Semester had concluded.

VII. Council Reports

- BOG Rep Report – Jon Dodds
June 10 was a special Board of Governors Meeting that went into Executive Session to discuss the Bridgeport Air Center. Pierpont's BOG requested that we entertain granting them one more year of a shared facility. Both are important to Fairmont State University and Pierpont because you cannot fly airplanes if you don't have someone to fix them. The one more year extension was granted with things still to be worked out with regard to moving program from those grounds and payment for the shared space and managing building maintenance.
- ACCE Rep Report – Robin Yeager
Jon Dodds, reporting for Robin Yeager in her absence, reported that the last ACCE meeting was hosted by Fairmont State University. George Herrick, Jon Dobbs, and Dr. Phillips welcomed all those attending. It was reported at the ACCE meeting how our Staff Council has greatly increased participation and meeting attendance. Those present were impressed with these facts, as well as our website, and encouraged other schools to take the same initiative.
- **Committee Reports**

Staff Development Committee – Spencer Flanagan
Hoping to have more projects to boost morale. A proposal was put together for an employee picnic which would be a joint project between the Staff Council and the Office of Human Resources. The picnic has been scheduled for July 12, noon to 3pm on the Falcon Center Quad (rain alternative is in Falcon Center Gym 1). There will be food, music, and games.

VIII. Unfinished Business

We will continue to work on having hybrid style meetings. Hopefully, we will work out solutions for the various problems we have encountered. We will always include an online option.

IX. New Business

Question was asked about pay raises passed by the state legislation/governor. Christa reported that this would be brought up at the next Board of Governors meeting, not the July 8 meeting, but the next one because this requires their approval. There is not a mandate that the funds are utilized for raises. What funds are given to us must then be doubled and we must find the amount in our budget to cover that level of raise. So historically, the raises that were given have not

been at the level that was articulated by the state. To give every full-time employee a \$2,550 raise would cost the institution about 1.2 million dollars.

HLC – Dr. Rick Harvey/ELT Reported that the Fall Academic Calendar for '22 is not changing. Looking at tweaking Spring and Fall '23. The HLC assessment/accreditation of our school is again under his direction. The HLC visiting team will be on campus October 17, 2022. There may be a meeting with staff council and students. Pointed out that everyone should be aware of our Mission Statement. For example, a random person on the sidewalk, i.e., student, employee, faculty, could be stopped and asked if they are familiar with this Mission Statement. – “Fairmont State University is a comprehensive, regional university committed to educating global citizen leaders in an environment distinguished by a commitment to excellence, student success and transformational impact.” This should be about a one-day meeting.

PeopleAdmin – Ashley Maxey reported that the new version of PeopleAdm was rolled out. Everything is not updated. Adjunct contracts and temp appointments are different. Now must go through creating the position description, posting internally, sending prospective employee a link for them to apply for position, and then continue the hiring process. Once the application is created by the employee, when they apply for another position, it will be a simpler process. This process allows the applicant to see what they are applying for. The rollout for this change was not as planned, but the old version was no longer going to be supported so we had no choice. The new system changeover was started last fall. The person to be the System Adm for this program left Fairmont State University. The new piece of the Performance Evaluation in the new system is not ready to go live.

Hybrid Work Policy – George Herrick reported that the question has been brought up by many Staff members as to why we do not have a hybrid work policy. A Staff Council proposal has been drafted for ELT consideration but it is still in the early stages of development. The proposal would satisfy those believing that a hybrid work policy would be the right direction to head in. The Staff would be divided into one of three categories... those who can easily work remotely, those who can work remotely but not all the time, and those who cannot work remotely at all. If you can't work remotely, or in a hybrid arrangement, then you would be given the opportunity to negotiate a more flexible schedule. That is an oversimplification of the proposal, of course. We tried to work in a way that is fair to all Staff members regardless of the nature of their job while maintaining productivity. There is, of course, many IT-related issues involved that we will have to consider. Most of the Staff members who would fall into the “can easily work remotely” category do not work with the public or other Staff members much, if at all. The Staff members that are hybrid would stagger their remote days with others in their areas, so there would always be in-person Staff to deal with the public. So, there should not be any bad optics. This proposal, of course, would be voluntary, would need supervisor approval, and would be part of the annual employee evaluation process. Like it or not, this is the future of employment. Public and private entities are dealing with this new way of working since the pandemic proved it was feasible. To be able to recruit and retain quality employees, we are going to have to come up with a policy concerning this. We have already lost a lot of good Staff members to other jobs because the other jobs offered them this flexibility. It is becoming as important, if not more important, than salary, since they are saving money on gas and not to mention things like childcare.

X. Open forum for the staff to make comments, ask questions, and/or address issues (No senior administrators will be present).

The Chair opened up the floor for any and all staff with no one take taking advantage.

XI. Executive Session (if necessary or requested)

The Chair asked if there was a motion to move into an Executive Session and no such motion was made.

XII. Next Meeting

Historically, there is no July meeting. The next meeting will be in August with the actual date to be determined.

XIII. Adjournment

The Chair asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Jon Dodds made the motion and John DeVault seconded it. The Chair then adjourned the meeting.