

Staff Senate Minutes  
August 9, 2023 3:00 PM  
CORD 349

- I. The meeting was called to order by chair, Roy Cordell, at 3:03 p.m.
- II. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adopt the agenda.
- III. Roll Call – Travis Hefley
- IV. Campus Updates
  - A. Legislative Processes – Randy Massanelli and Rebeca Haley
    1. Overview of accomplishments and future initiatives
    2. Work with state legislature and every state agency, other higher education institutions, and the federal government
    3. Work with researchers on campus on federal projects and agency budgets
      - a. Work with program managers acting as interpreter
      - b. Units come to them looking for discovery on what they are working on
      - c. Sometimes researchers work on phased projects as “plus-ups” on budgets
    4. State side
      - a. Legislature meets every year, but every other year (odd years), session is longer – biennial sessions – can pass any law they want to pass
      - b. They’ve started fiscal sessions in even years
        - i. Can only take up issues related to the budget and fiscal matters
      - c. Regular sessions
        - i. Sometimes file approximately 1100 pieces of legislation, and Randy and Rebeca read every one of the bills and develop plans to respond
        - ii. Can have budgets held by a member if they don’t like something the campus does
      - d. Every health care bill has some effect on our health care plan
        - i. Was able to exempt out of bill on self-paid plans saving on increases
        - ii. Chancellor was able to eat the cost of insurance increases this year
      - e. Tracking every piece of legislation because they affect the University: public health, state agencies, personnel bill, unemployment, law enforcement, retirement, leave, worker’s compensation, licensure, plumbing, electrical, teaching, nursing, etc.
      - f. Worked to get all staff in a non-classified status.
      - g. Looking to next session to begin to make plans.
      - h. Interim study proposals to put them on hold to spend the next two years to study
        - i. Looking into the next session to begin investigating interim study bills
      - i. State funding for the U of A
        - i. \$134M in general revenue from the state
        - ii. EETF – give higher ed more support without it coming out of general revenue.
          - a) Up to \$13M because of performance funding signed into law by Hutchinson

- b) Can't lose or gain more than 2% of funding. The University has exceeded the performance mark every year
      - j. General assembly approves every contract greater than \$50,000 for the University
    - 5. Questions/Discussion
      - a. Question about the bonus staff could receive from getting their degrees – expired in June
        - i. There were previously restrictions for classified employees. Now that everyone is non-classified, it can become a policy on campus and still be a practice
      - b. What is the University doing regarding the Learns Act and the Libraries Legislation
        - i. Exempted Higher Ed out of the original Libraries Bill
      - c. How to handle conversations about potential budget shortfalls due to new legislation
        - i. If they have all of the evidence of the impacts, they would discuss with legislators the potential financial impacts on their constituents
  - V. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the Staff Senate July minutes
  - VI. Treasurer's Report – Autumn Parker
    - A. Autumn presented report with new salary expenses incurred
  - VII. Committee Reports
    - A. EOQ/EOY – Ashley Reeves
      - 1. Newswire for EOQ will run 08-10-23
        - a. Category I - Professional/Non-Faculty - Academic – Melissa Erwin
        - b. Category I - Professional/Non-Faculty - Administrative – Mercedes Gazaway
        - c. Category II - Secretarial/Clerical – Jan Warren
        - d. Category III - Technical/Paraprofessional – Ashley Mitchell
        - e. Category IV - Skilled/Service/Maintenance – No nominees
      - 2. Now voting for EOY
    - B. Legislative – Trish Watkins
      - 1. Act 511
        - a. Prohibits public schools and colleges from requiring implicit bias training for employees
        - b. The University has never required it, but there may be verbiage changes to some policies as a result.
        - c. There is an exemption for requirements for licensure or accreditation
      - 2. Questions/Discussion
        - a. Is Ouch! training a part of this?
          - i. Required by some units but not others
          - ii. Trish will ask
- VIII. New Business
  - A. Scholarship Naming – Roy Cordell
    - 1. Scholarship committee chair will present a proposed bylaws change at next month's meeting to name a new scholarship in honor of Valerie Pryor
  - B. Questions/Discussion

1. Question about scholarship disbursements for the fall
    - a. Roy is looking into it
  2. Suggestion for a campaign to raise funds for scholarships. Jen suggested working with Advancement to set it up
- IX. Old Business
- A. None
- X. Chair's Report – Roy Cordell
- A. Class comp study is about 60% complete
    1. Your unit should be going over employee mapping at this time
    2. Can expect compensation philosophy news story sometime soon
  - B. Meeting with Robinson
    1. Best advice was to be careful when operating in the DEI space.
    2. Not beyond realm of possibility for the state to pull back any position with DEI in the title.
    3. No intention of reducing or eliminating DEI training (other than implicit bias)
    4. Academic freedom is not under attack at this time
- XI. Upcoming Meeting
- A. September 13, 2023, 3:00-4:30 p.m. – CORD 349
- XII. Around the Senate
- A. Discussion about whether the University is transitioning to general PTO rather than sick vs vacation time
    1. Roy will look into it
  - B. Concern about parking and traffic at the closed bank at the corner of Dickson St and Arkansas Ave. Some campus personnel are using it for parking, but there is no directed flow of traffic, causing near-accidents
  - C. Concern about parking near Douglass, Greg, and Maple
  - D. Concern from a faculty member who was unable to park in a handicap spot near his building between Kimpell and Yocum because of move in
- XIII. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn at 4:28 p.m.

**Senators in attendance:** Wayne Bell, Karmen Boddie, Jen Boyer, Chris Butler, Erin Butler, Garry Butler, Vince Capps, Becca Clifton, Roy Cordell, Michela Cupello, Tracy Deffebaugh, Kim Gillow, Walter Green, Hershel Hartford, Travis Hefley, John Jackson, Alli Johnson, Elizabeth Miller, Katherine Miller, Ruth Parcels, Autumn Parker, Rachel Piontak, Ben Pollock, Allen Porter, Ashley Reeves, Kaitlyn Riggin, Stephen Ritterbush, Amber Roth, Amy Shell, Trish Watkins, Carrie Whitmer

**Senators not in attendance:** Alisha Gilbride, Cindy Ryan, Myrlinda Soedjede