**STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**June/July 2021**

**10AM**

Present: Tasha Taylor, Randy Hollingshead, Bob Saas, Michelle Heath, Leanne Coen, Yodev Ocasio, Katy Zane, Chris McPherson, Michelle Stack, Dr. Evans

1. Presidents Update:

Provost position-failed search. The search did not yield the results for which he was hoping. The search is reopening in hopes the pool will be increased. Dr. Evans has reached out to National Registry. This is a list of folks who used to be Presidents, Vice Presidents and Provosts who make themselves available for interim positions while the institutions look to fill these types of positions. They are in the process of completing the search for new CFO (Vice President) for business and finance this week. Dean searches should be complete. They have consented and should be here soon.

Dr. Evans talked about a variety of staff concerns brought to his attention earlier this year. His goal is to be transparent with staff. One of the concerns was regarding the cutting of Administrative Assistant hours by shifting some Administrative Assistants from 12 months to 10-11 months and the lack of transparency in how those decisions were made. Some went back to 12-months and some did not. He did not want to undo changes that were made before he arrived and at that time, he fully supported this decision if it was a cost cutting strategy. After looking more deeply at the system and asking questions, it did not seem equitable. He was not comfortable with offices not being manned in the summer. Summer is a busy time in Higher Education, and there is plenty of work to be done. Therefore he is shifting back to all administrative assistants being 12-months.

Another concern was parking and the (un)fairness of reserved parking. After investigating, there did not seem to be a fair and consistent system in place. Therefore, starting August 1st reserved parking is for the President’s Cabinet only and all the handicap parking will remain in place.

Dr. Evan’s definition of Convocation involves welcoming students back. Therefore, the Convocation will be in September and focus primarily on freshman students and letting them know what to expect of this new year. A Faculty/Staff Institute is being planned to kick off the Fall Semester in August. The Faculty/Staff Institute will be mandatory for all staff and faculty. It will be a time to come to together to hear the same messages and updates. Breakfast will be available for employees. Cabinet members will share information and there will be opportunity for questions and answers, introduction of new employees and they will go over changes and updates in policies. Faculty Senate and Staff Council will give updates, as well.

A retreat will take place with the Leadership team as they charter their way ahead. There are concerns about low enrollment numbers. It is greater than what was originally anticipated. With this being the case, cost cutting measures and strategies will need to take place.

There are some physical facility issues with the roof on Main Hall. The roof needs replaced and will cost over 500k. Mr. Ullom has brought forth some issues with tennis courts which have been continually patched and can be patched no more.

He is listening to recommendations from the CIRT committee, however, he believes in shared governance and will listen to any ideas offered. Concerns about the Delta variant that seems to be hitting the US means we have to be ready for changes if necessary.

Opened questions from Staff:

Bre Blum stated that she was appreciative and thankful of Dr. Evans recognizing the worth of Administrative Assistants across campus. As an Administrative Assistant, she felt some of the ones whose hours were cut kind of got the shaft last year, even though it was understood the need to cut costs. However, as Admin. Assts. are the foundation of the Departments and the necessity to be there and available to the department heads they serve is crucial part of the University.

Dr. Evans has also been looking at salaries. He believes that when an institution has good people, they should do everything they can to keep them, and appreciated Bre’s comments.

Tasha Taylor asked about the Highlands Center and what Dr. Evans’ vision is for that space.

Dr. Evans mentioned that this will be a topic at the Leadership Retreat. He does not want to give up that Facility. We pay $300K a year for the space and it needs to be appropriately utilized. The management of the facility has been moved from Academic Affairs to the Division of External Affairs. He sees it as an opportunity for WLU to really engage with the community. Topper Station will be moved there, they will be looking at continuing classes and education there, possibly having a tele-health office there where people can call in and zoom in to get assistance. We are collaborating closer with K-12 so that dual enrollment classes can take place there; they are also looking into certificates for business and industry where we can provide training right at the facility. He would like to see an Office of Admissions there so people can go to that office and get the information they need as well as the Main campus. He stated that we have to do better with that facility. Professional studies and Interdisciplinary Studies will remain on site. He mentioned that we have to do a better job of marketing that site so people know it exists. They would like to implement new leadership as a site manager to oversee the facility. He is open to any suggestions that anyone may have for the facility.

Dr. Evans closed by stating that he values staff and the Staff Council’s role at the University. ”There is no big I’s or little u’s, we are all in this together!”

II. Meeting minutes will be approved via email and posted to the website.

III. ACCE Update: Yodev Ocasio will be new representative. He will be attending a retreat later this month in Canaan Valley. He will update at next meeting in August.

IV. BOG update: No update. Waiting to hear from new Rep, Ryan Glanville.

V. Old Business-Staff Picnic was a success. Everyone seemed to enjoy the time to get together on a social level. Some suggestions for next year is to have it revolve around the lunch hour in order to have an extra hour to socialize and play games which would also make it closer to a meal time. June meeting was short. Discussion regarding the picnic plans took place and meeting was adjourned.

VI. New Business-

1. Nominations and election of Vice-Chair and Secretary. No volunteers and no nominations. Positions to be determined at next meeting.
2. Vote in Group 3 representative-Kelly Baker was voted in unanimously. Bre Blum and Kelly Baker are Group 3 representatives.
3. Group 2 replacement-Vincent Siriani resigned his position. With Sara Sweeney gone, he felt his responsibilities would keep him from being a proper rep. The chair will reach out to Jason Coleman, Group 2 Representative to have him reach out to his group to ask for volunteers for the position.
4. Staff Scholarship Updates-Eric Burkle is the Chair of the Staff Scholarship Committee. Discussion about how much of the General Fund would be added to the Staff Scholarship. It was decided that a minimum of 50% would be added to this year’s scholarship for awards. We will reassess this amount annually and as fundraisers are completed to increase the fund.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35am

Bre motioned and Chris seconded the motion to close the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Tasha Taylor