

STAFF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - Wednesday, March 13, 2024

Voting Members Present:

Executive Board: Jill Ballard (Vice President), Amy F. Joseph (Clerk and Meeting Recorder), Melissa Thompson (Immediate Past President)

Staff Council Members: Danielle Castillo, Kimberly Bruno, Janice Chuakay, Erin Echols, Ella Frazer, Corey Kowalczyke, Carolina Martinez, Elisabeth Merkel, Mark Papadopoulos, Tina Ricafrente, Alexandra Schaeffer, Ken Yoshioka

Voting Members Absent: Claudine Bibeau Parks, Steven Bosso, Domonique Crosby (President), Will Vitagliano, Nicholas Ynami

Guests in Attendance: Staff Members

I. Welcome/Roll Call (Determination of Quorum)/Approve Staff Council Meeting Minutes 2/14/24 – Jill (5 mins)

- Meeting called to order at 12:01 PM by the Staff Council Vice President.
- Notice made that the meeting is recorded for note-taking purposes.
- Bylaws state meetings are open to all staff including the President's Cabinet and Leadership Team and there will be a Q&A/open discussion session during the meeting for all staff in attendance.
- Staff Council Member roll call conducted: 15 present, 5 absent, quorum reached.
- Approval of Staff Council Meeting Minutes for February 14, 2024 meeting.

Motion

- Meeting minutes from the February 14, 2024 meeting were approved. The motion to approve was made by Amy Joseph. Second motion was made by Melissa Thompson. Motion carried.

II. Updates from Executive Board – Jill and Executive Board (5 mins)

- The Vice President updated the Staff Council on the election process. Staff Council held two tabling events outside of the Market Café last week, as well as left some flyers in the Staff and Faculty Lounge. The [nomination form](#) went out in the newsletter and will go out to all staff next Monday. We have extended the nomination due date to March 25, 2024, at 5 pm. The Vice President encouraged Staff Council members to spread the word.
- The Clerk announced the results of the recent Bylaws vote, with the voting results listed below.

Vote: Passed with 18 “Yes” and one abstention.

ARTICLE VI: THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. Executive Board Members

The Staff Council Executive Board shall consist of: President, Vice President, Clerk, Treasurer (if applicable), and Immediate Past President who shall be a non-voting ex-officio member. **The Staff Council shall strive to ensure that Unionized Staff hold at least one seat on the Executive Board.** In the event that the Staff Council is provided a budget, the position of Treasurer shall be added to the Executive Board following the election procedures outlined in this Article.

Vote: Passed with 18 “Yes” and one abstention.

ARTICLE X: MEETINGS

Section 6. Attendance at Meetings

Staff Council members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings unless written notice to be excused from a meeting is submitted to the Staff Council Executive Board members within 48 hours of the scheduled meeting. Any member who exceeds four (4) unexcused absences **or six (6) total absences** within a term (June 1 and May 31) will default their position. If the position is defaulted, then that member is not permitted to serve on the Staff Council the following year.

Vote: Passed with 17 “Yes” and two abstentions.

ARTICLE XI: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEES

Section 2. Subcommittees

F. Change “Institutional Effectiveness and and Safety Committee” to **Campus Accessibility and Safety Committee**

- The Clerk announced the [bylaws changes](#) have been posted to the Staff Council website.
- The Vice President noted the State of the Staff report was submitted to the Board of Trustees in time for their March meeting. The report was also posted on the [Staff Council website](#). The Executive Board will leverage the submitted subcommittee reports to complete our Annual Report at the end of term, including any additional completed action items. The Vice President also thanked all the subcommittees for their hard work and for getting their reports in on time.
- The Vice President stated the Executive Board’s regular meeting with Diane Nelson, Staff Council liaison, was rescheduled and will take place tomorrow. Other than the Executive Board’s consultation with Diane regarding the bylaws changes, there is nothing to report at the moment.

III. Update on the Staff Council Subcommittees – Jill (10 mins)

Awards and Recognition – Ken Yoshioka (Chair)

- o The chair reported that Awards and Recognition will be setting up a time to meet with HR Project Manager Mara Krasts to discuss the Service and Merit Award event and how the subcommittee can participate in the ceremony.

Communications - Ella Frazer (Chair)

- o The chair reported the newsletter went out this past Monday. The subcommittee has shared a document with the other subcommittee chairs to help plan features or new information for the April newsletter. Subcommittees should submit items by March 28th.

Elections & Governance - Carolina Martinez (Chair)

- o The chair reported the Staff Council nomination email is going out to all staff next Monday. The nomination form is live and was previously circulated in the newsletter and posted to the [Staff Council website](#).

Inclusion, Diversity for Education and Accountability – Corey Kowalczyke (Chair)

- o The chair reported the Vice President joined their most recent meeting to help them strategize. At their next subcommittee meeting, they will be meeting with Ifeoma Nzerem from the [ADEI office](#) for their regular semester check in.
- o The subcommittee has received more clarity around staff affinity groups, particularly the [Asian and Asian American Staff/Faculty Council](#), which is up and running again. They had their first social on February 20th.
- o The subcommittee continues to look at building mental health resources for staff, using the October Staff Survey as a reference. For example, what does a culture of wellness look like at USF? How do staff balance their workload? They are also researching other institutions’ practices.

- o The subcommittee also hopes to collaborate with the Campus Accessibility and Safety subcommittee about proposing a staff accessibility office.

Campus Accessibility and Safety - Claudine Bibeau Parks (Chair)

- o Another subcommittee member provided an update, as the Chair was absent. They reported there was no USF Health and Safety Committee meeting this March, so they will have an update in April.
- o The member noted the subcommittee's new name, Campus Accessibility and Safety.
- o The subcommittee is working with Greg Yee/the Campus Resilience office to create a certificate staff can obtain, such as building marshals or others who have gone through established trainings.
- o The subcommittee is working on a recommendation for a staff accessibility office.

Professional Development – Mark Papadopoulos (Chair)

- o The chair reported the subcommittee is talking about ways to boost campus morale that would not cost money. They are brainstorming ways to create bonds and a sense of school pride among staff, faculty, and students, including people new to the community. Staff retention was also discussed in light of more staff engagement.
- o The Staff Council Welcome letter is complete and will be forwarded to Diane Nelson via the Executive Board. The letter is available to Staff Council members in the Staff Council shared drive.

IV. Update on Other University Committee(s) (5 mins)

University Budget Advisory Council (UBAC): Elisabeth Merkel

- UBAC met in late February to discuss a variety of things, including budget assists. Budget assists are from units looking for additional funds throughout the course of the year. UBAC reviews these requests and votes to put it forward to the President, CFO, and Cabinet for review.
- UBAC also looked at the endowment's spend summary and asked questions, such as how much money the endowment generates and where that money is being spent. They hope for more answers about that in the future.
- The committee also reviewed savings and allocations for the fiscal year, including the methodology used by units for such savings. Some units have already started reporting back to staff, including the Arts and Sciences Dean's Office, which recently held a meeting for staff to report on budget savings.
- UBAC hosted Provost Fung and Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management April Crabtree and asked questions, particularly about enrollment and its budget implications. Tuition rate increases were also discussed.
- Also discussed were possible department/program consolidations, which could be of benefit to various units and the university.
- UBAC has formed a communications team, as they recognize there may be a gap in terms of staff's understanding about the budget process. The team is thinking of creating a presentation to share with the broader campus community to help inform how UBAC and the budget process work.

V. New Business/Q&A/Open Discussion (12 mins)

Topic: Staff Council Elections

- The Clerk reminded staff that the Staff Council website [details the commitment](#) required for the Staff Council, should interested staff have any questions.
- The IDEA subcommittee chair asked about the one-year tenure required for new Staff Council members. The Immediate Past President stated that the one year is measured from the staff's hire date to the first day they serve on Staff Council (all terms start June 1st).

Topic: Posting New Staff Welcome Letter to Website

- A member of the Professional Development subcommittee suggested adapting the Staff Council new staff welcome letter to post to the Staff Council website.
- The Communications subcommittee chair suggested we could also adapt the letter to distribute for the first Fall newsletter. If HR has a new employee page, it might work there as well, to ensure we are sending staff to the right places.

Topic: Zoom Bombing Event at Global Feminist Forum

- A Staff Council member noted that the communication that went out about the Zoom bombing event did not consult the instructors who were giving the presentation at the time. The presenters were distressed that it appeared they hadn't taken precautions, when in fact, the security settings were appropriate for the public event. ITS worked with them to manage the situation, but wanted to make clear the presenters and event organizers did everything right and should be commended. Communications such as this should involve the full story before being distributed to the community.
- The Vice President suggested perhaps something could go out to staff about event security and Zoom bombing in a future newsletter.
- A staff member commented that they were wondering about the communication as well, particularly since it might be better not to publicize Zoom bombing events, because it gives the bombers the attention they are seeking. They agreed the communication should have included the presenters and perhaps limited the information revealed.

VI. Announcements (0 min)

- No announcements.

VII. Meeting Adjourned at 12:38 PM by Jill Ballard, Staff Council Vice President

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 10, 2024

Full schedule on [staff council webpage](#)

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

- Meeting minutes from the February 14, 2024 meeting were approved. The motion to approve was made by Amy Joseph. Second motion was made by Melissa Thompson. Motion carried.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- The Campus Accessibility and Safety subcommittee is working on a recommendation for a staff accessibility office.
- The Executive Board will send the Welcome letter to Diane Nelson.
- The Staff Council can consider posting an adapted Welcome letter to the Staff Council website.
- A future Staff Council newsletter might address security and Zoom bombing to help support staff.