

Staff Association Agenda

April 12th, 3:00pm

Eder 213



Attendees: Amber Halstead, Alana Tackett, John Vanderpool, Emily Ludwig, Kasey Schmoe, Aubry Carpenter, Derek Evans, Debbie Vaughn (zoom), Roberta Dias (zoom), Amanda Kimler (zoom),

Absent: Jessica Frogge

Invited Guests

- Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy, President in Kansas City
- Dr. Laura Reynolds, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - General Updates
 - The whole month of April is bananas – around nine events on April 28 alone
 - Academic Affairs appreciates the staff and faculty that work on events: setting up, collecting RSVPs, running, and getting people to the events
 - Commencement
 - A lot of people have feelings about Commencement being held at Civic Arena instead of campus. It isn't as convenient, but we don't have to make a last-minute weather call, which is no fun. The event is going to be lovely, and they're doing another Civic Arena walkthrough on Friday. The Civic Arena has been refurbished, and everyone has been working hard on it. They're also working on a courtyard across the street. Dr. Reynolds thinks people will be very pleased.
 - Academic Affairs is going to send out calls to help. We are smaller than we were the last time we held it at the Civic Arena. They are making sure people are nailed down on volunteer jobs. Students will be seated in their colleges/departments in alphabetical order. We want students to graduate with their areas so the Dean can shake their hands and the reader doesn't have to recite every degree with the names. Employees and students, please sit where you're assigned to make everything easier.
 - Apple blossom parade is immediately beforehand - it's a big day.
 - Fall Registration
 - Registration numbers are being monitored - doing better than last year at this time, and we know more about where people are not registering (education majors who can't register because of holds until they finish the semester etc.). We know why things look the way they look and why they are happening.
 - Foreshadowing Summer
 - Derek Evans and his team in Student Success and Academic Advising with Academic Affairs, Student Life and Admissions are going to throw quite a set of GOs. We are putting on GO in a new way this year. Going to do it up this year. Our guests will have a lot more information at the start so we can help them better along the way.
 - We're short on Ambassadors, GO leaders, and Transition Mentors. Many are graduating. The job positions are posted, but be on the lookout if you know a student. It's a nice job over the summer where you can stay on campus. If you know any students interested it would be a huge help. The events will play out all right.
 - Academic Affairs Candidates
 - Zooms and faculty candidates in Dr. Reynolds's office for new positions at both instructor and faculty levels. For example, an instructor in developmental writing

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and developmental math. Academic Affairs is trying to spend time with all of them and talk about applied learning and advising. How do they conceptualize their classes as fitting in with the larger campus culture? Trying to get a better understanding of how they will fit in overall.

- Campus Construction
 - Vartabedian Hall: The work will tentatively finish on time and not over budget, which rarely happens. We haven't yet decided with the budget what we're doing housing-wise, but having Vartabedian as an option will be a relief – and we just hope nothing else happens.
 - Potter Hall: Potter Theatre is good to go - internal and external events are allowed. Having the theatre back up and running will be a huge help in recruiting students and having external groups here.
- Prescribed Prairie burn
 - The prairie was burned, intentionally, recently. The rain has been good weather for it. In the next week or so it will start to come back and green up. Expect to see new growth takeover in 2-4 weeks. Within the next month or two it should be in good shape.
- New Academic Affairs Areas
 - Spending some time with folks in Advising, CAS and Registrar getting Academic Affairs set and figuring out how they're going to do things and how best to work together. It's hard to do anything in the middle of the semester. Academic Affairs would like to think about next year: envision how they want meetings and work times together to look so they can be booked in calendars ahead of time in a way that makes sense, so they're not trying to find time in the middle of the semester to do anything. Staff and faculty will plan who needs to be where and be doing what.
- Employee Raises
 - Talked at the meeting between Staff Association Eboard and Administration about a one percent raise. Amber will talk more during her report. It's pretty fantastic because we spent a lot of time cutting a lot of stuff to get a balanced budget. We got a balanced budget and preserved the one percent raise. It shows that the university is committed to something, and making sure people get something because it's about the people. The raise costs about \$300,000 or \$400,000. It's not a lot of money, but it shows commitment, and intentionality is meaningful.
- Budgets and Investing in People
 - Currently putting together board books. Board of Governors meeting is coming up. It will be a tight budget next year, but Dr. Reynolds is hopeful that we will increase retention and that we can pull out of this. Every other campus is doing something similar, and community colleges are worse than us. We have to play closer to the vest because we're not big. We hope to be able to reflect some stability. We're not spending money in some ways, but we're spending in other ways. We're investing in people. We're keeping people. We're making sure we can use our facilities to recruit students. Breaking ground on CTAC will be very helpful because it's not a cost to us, but it's an attractor of people. These are the

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investments we need to make to turn a corner. With leadership changes, it can be worrisome, but we want to work on feeling solid in the upcoming year. We want to get comfortable again. It's been a hard couple of years, but we need to get our rhythm back.

Faculty Liaison Report

- Dr. Ed Taylor (Faculty Liaison)

Previous Meeting Minutes Approval

Emily Ludwig motions to approve, Alana Tackett seconds the motion. Motion passes by unanimous consent.

Committee Reports

- Salary & Fringe
 - No report
- Constitution & Bylaws
 - No report
- Welcoming
 - No report
- Election
 - Nominations are open right now for the next senator election. In May, we will have all staff vote on nominations to elect new senators. Newly elected senators and returning senators will meet in June to elect Eboard. If you know anyone interested in becoming a senator, nominate them. You can nominate yourself. Send nominations to Alana Tackett, Amber Halstead, or Barb Harris. Four exempt and four non-exempt positions are open. Terms are two years. We have two other seats open that have one year remaining – one exempt and one non-exempt.
 - Aubry Carpenter asked if there was a deadline for nominations. Amber Halstead replied that a Staff Association listserv message will go out with details.
- Professional Development
 - No report
- Employee Engagement
 - No report
- Care
 - No report

President's Report

- **Policies and Procedures for Staff Reassignment**
 - In the past month or so we have had several staff members ask about policies or procedures for reassigning staff members. (Reassigning as in title change, demotion, promotion, adding or removing duties for a specific position, moving departments, etc.)
 - We spoke with the Administration about this yesterday. The key points to note:
 - A majority, if not all, of us have “other duties as assigned” in our job descriptions. This covers picking up extra work when departments are down a staff member or

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when we have some one-time event that needs to be taken care of. For moving departments, these are need-based, lateral moves and the positions should be similar enough that it isn't an issue.

- For demotions and/or separations: There should be conversations taking place about employee performance. If there is an issue, there should be a plan in place - this does not have to be a formal plan like a corrective action plan, it could be informal, something as simple as a conversation surrounding the issue and discussion on what needs to be done to improve.
- For Promotions: All staff members are allowed to apply for positions that are open and posted. When it comes to interim positions, these will be case by case. Sometimes interim will be removed from the title and that staff member will be kept in that position. Other times the position will be posted and there will be a search to fill it.
- Administration is working on bringing back Employee Evaluations. It's been several years since we have had formal, required, evaluations. They are looking at creating a performance management program or process.
- Aubry Carpenter asked if employee evaluations were coming back this year or next. Amber Halstead replied that Administration made it sound like they would come back next year.
- **Professional Development Follow up**
 - Amber reached out to Darrell after our last meeting to get an update about professional development funds. Staff Association will not be in charge of distributing Professional Development funds to individual staff members. This should be left to the departments.
 - Staff Members should work with their supervisor to review the department budget to see what is available for professional development opportunities.
 - The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is also a great resource as they offer workshops, training sessions, events, etc. during the year. Maybe in the future we can collaborate with CTL to plan professional development events on campus.
 - While we cannot distribute funds to individuals, we do still have a budget that can be used for events open to all Staff members. Maybe the Professional Development Committee collaborates with the Employee Engagement Committee to offer a staff wide Professional Development opportunity.
- **Staff Association Feedback Survey results**
 - We have results from the Staff Association Feedback survey that EBoard shared in January/February. Printed copies of the results were available for in-person attendees, a slideshow was shared with attendees on zoom.
 - Emily Ludwig – The responses to the question about knowing who their senator is and being comfortable sharing responses beg the question if the senators are over the right areas
 - Alana Tackett – We can do some shuffling if we need to reassign staff members to senators
 - Aubry Carpenter – Should we require short one-on-one meetings with new staff members and their senators? Just something short – 15 minutes – to get to know each other?
 - Emily Ludwig – Maybe drop-in meetings once a month for “snacks with the

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senators” etc. casual, informal

- Derek Evans – We could send a view-only list of the senator assignments to staff members – “if you have questions, here is your senator”
- Aubry Carpenter – Is there any intention to do a follow-up survey?
- Amber Halstead – We can if there is interest. As a senate, we can work on questions to do a follow-up survey. This could be a summer project or something to pass along to the new senate – share what we did, share follow-up ideas, and let them run with it
- Questions for the President:
 - Emily Ludwig – Is the one-percent raise campus-wide?
 - Amber Halstead – It is part of the compensation plan – one percent this year based on the budget. It is for faculty and staff, not Administration.
 - Derek Evans – Have the institutional committees been finalized?
 - Amber Halstead – All have been finalized except for University Assessment Committee. Administration was waiting to see if the Director of Assessment and Accreditation position would be filled. It probably won’t be filled at this time, but Dr. Reynolds is moving forward with committee appointments. Amber is under the impression that everyone assigned to committees got an email that they were on the committees. Some may not have, though.

First Vice President’s Report

- Alana Tackett reported that Amber Halstead ordered some welcome cards for \$1.12. \$3301.48 in our budget

Other Business/Open Discussion/Announcements

- Emily Ludwig – Hoping to have an Esports Director candidate coming soon.

Derek Evans motions to end the meeting, seconded by Aubry Carpenter. The motion passes unanimously.

Mark your calendars: Next Staff Association meeting is May at 10th 3:00pm in Eder 213.