

HSU Staff Senate Minutes
Wednesday, May 9, 2018

Members Present: Krystal McLane, Leah Sexton, Erin Poe, Patrick Shepherd, Jacob Mills, Karen Spradlin, Jennifer Wright, Chanda Hooten, Ermatine Johnson, Stacey Howard, Jordan Bell, Heath Sims, Mallory Turner, Susie Kirk, Jacob Bland, Christina Jones, Jennifer Sigman, Kate Hawthorn, Nikki Laird, Reo Cummings, Jimmy Elgas, Phil McDaniel, Tamara Horn, Jewelie Mills, Belford Williams

Members Absent: Kris Dunn, Jordan Argo

The regular meeting of the Henderson Staff Senate was held on May 9, 2018 in the Cabe Room. President Reo Cummings called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

I. Minutes from the April 11, 2018 meeting were approved as amended.

II. Guest Speakers: Dr. Brett Powell and Dr. Stephen Adkison

President Reo Cummings welcomed Dr. Brett Powell and Dr. Steve Adkison and opened the floor for questions. Dr. Adkison opened with the concerns staff members have about the seven positions that were cut and the concern of more possibly in the near future. Dr. Adkison assured the Senators that these are the only seven positions to be cut and non-further to be contemplated for reduction. Dr. Adkison informed the Senators that the conversation started last spring about non-instructional prioritizations. No cuts to faculty will be made and the adjunct faculty budget will be reduced 35%. Dr. Adkison stated for instructional spending, all vice presidents of departments were tasked to look into specific areas and some decisions were highlighted in the non-instructional areas such as the MMLC which is a tradeoff. He commented that Jennifer ran the Center effectively for a long time but that positions were not directly related to student success and therefore the decision had to be made to close the budget. Dr. Adkison stated that he and Dr. Powell made the decision to give the seven people time to make adjustments by notifying them two months in advance. Dr. Adkison stated the conversions have to be made by July 1st. He stated that they told them they would be glad to either help them find another position on campus or help them with finding other opportunities off campus.

Dr. Powell stated he knows this feels sudden but that conversations have been going on for twelve months and that they did not anticipate in spending more money than we had. He noted that the enrollment didn't meet budget so he had to close the gap. He said that when enrollment is down 11.5% you have to make adjustments. Dr. Powell stated that he met with the Planning and Budget Committee for four months to process and identify ways to reduce spending and cut cost. He said this was not done in private and that it can be found online. Dr. Powell stated no one wants to reduce but it has to happen. Dr. Powell said, "This has been an eighteen month conversation. We all know these are what we've talked about." He also stated that the communication on campus and the rumor mill is killing us. The rumors are being spread out to the public and can only do us more harm. A Senator noted that we weren't given the facts. The email from President Dr. Jones came later after the fact.

A Senator stated that she's glad to have come to work at Henderson and she felt that we should come together instead of getting upset about the cuts in personnel. That these sort of things happen all the time and we should focus on why we are here. Another Senator stated that they understand that sometimes cuts need to be made, but we want to make sure that they are the right cuts. Staff members also have a very important impact on the lives of the students. Another

Senator stated we understand that tough decisions have to be made but administrators don't always see the one on one that the staff members have with students on a daily basis. Dr. Adkison stated that it is his job to know what interactions those have one on one with students and there is nothing that he is not aware of.

Faculty Senate Representative Dr. Peggy Woodall commented that she read past Staff Senate minutes and there were no indications of rifts of positions but that the positions from those that have left or retired, would not be entertained and replacement would be rearranged. Dr. Woodall suggested site based management moving forward and that we would all be involved and give input on what needs to be done. Dr. Adkison stated that he announced at the Faculty Senate meeting that staff positions would be lost. President Reo Cummings explained that the cuts were based on the coming year's budget rather than the current year which had been balanced with other cuts rather than eliminating positions. President Reo Cummings stated he had no prior knowledge of positions being cut.

Senators voiced their concern of the Multimedia Learning Center closing and/or outsourcing. It was noted that several students, faculty, staff and public citizens use the facility in different capacities. Dr. Adkison stated that the services at the MMLC are not going away, "We just can't afford to do it anymore." A Senator asked if they looked at the MMLC and possibly adjust prices to cover the universities need? Dr. Adkison stated that he thought about it and wondered whether or not to provide services on campus period, at any price. A Senator stated that we need this community and the MMLC is a service that we provide for them. Dr. Powell stated that there are two prospective organizations that they are looking to outsource with; BBA and Dawson. BBA operates the Reddie Bookstore and the Post Office services and is owned by a member of the Board of Trustees. A Senator voiced concerns about BBA being a conflict of interest. Dr. Powell said, "Conflicts happen at universities all over the place." But he completely agreed and an investigation is being conducted to see if it indeed would be a conflict of interest. Dr. Adkison stated that the time line for something to be in place with the MMLC is July 1st.

Tricia Wempe (guest) thanked Dr. Adkison and Dr. Powell for voicing everything but she also stated that during her time at Ouachita Baptist University, Dr. Powell was the VP of Finance and Administration and he did the same thing over there. She stated at one point he reduced her contract from 12 months down to 9 months and it hurt her family. She noted that verbally and secretly, those making six figures are not suffering the same way as the rest of us and that there is a political gap. She stated that we would all react differently if we were all penalized at the same time on the same level. She felt as if the gap is a political sentiment and that we have to speak to that gap. Dr. Powell asked in what terms was she speaking and a Senator answered \$100,000. Dr. Powell stated that it wasn't true that everyone on the third floor of Womack made six figures. Dr. Adkison stated that his travel budget has been zeroed out and that his retirement will be affected as well.

President Reo Cummings asked if there would be any raises given this year. Dr. Powell said, "No one is getting raises and no one will be reduced at this time." Dr. Powell stated that raises were given last year to cover the rise in cost of insurance, but the university couldn't afford it. He noted that some are overpaid compared to their peers. How you get compensation for new hires is by making sure the right people are put in the right place. Dr. Adkison noted that the only raises are for faculty promotions such as assistants to associates, etc.

President Reo Cummings asked the question on the behalf of the Senators, “What’s next?” Dr. Adkison stated that if we have a lower enrollment in the fall we will have to reduce spending again. Spending will have to follow revenue. He stated that we would have to get into faculty reduction. Enrollment projections are conservative and sound. Expectations are positive. The year with CRM has taken hold and we are getting students that are a better fit and impacting retention rates. He also stated that we will see a positive effect on the investments made in the admissions department. The registered and pre-registered students for Heart Start are positive. Dr. Powell stated that the biggest driver for the budget is to budget conservatively based on enrollment for next year. Engagement of faculty and staff with visiting students is needed more now than ever on campus and off.

A Senator asked if there has been communication with Alumni on the current situation. Alum are hearing about this after the fact and on the media. Some have addressed their concerns about how they had found out. It was stated that the Alum would be notified.

A senator asked about the International Program. Dr. Adkison stated that it is not shutting down and that they are still working on it just as the MMLC. He noted that the faculty responsibilities have not changed but that they are using completely different strategies. It was stated by Dr. Powell that competing for international students is like a “war zone” and “next to impossible”. At this point in time families want to be sure that their students will be safe. Dr. Powell stated that Henderson has not paid a dime for trips to China which has the largest international study in the world. He said that the students want to come to Henderson because of the programs, cost, and location. Dr. Powell mentioned the Summer Music Festival that will take place this summer in which China students will attend.

President Reo Cummings and Senators thanked Dr. Powell and Dr. Adkison for taking time to come and answer questions concerning the conditions of the universities budget issues and cuts.

III. President Reports:

The President’s Report was tabled until next meeting.

IV. Treasurer Report:

No report given.

V. Committee Reports:

- A. Election Committee: No report at this time.
- B. Textbook Scholarship: None at this time.
- C. Staff Handbook Committee: No report at this time.
- D. Survey/Shared Governance: No report at this time.
- E. Staff Emergency Fund Committee: No report at this time.
- F. Faculty Senate Report: No report at this time.

VI. Old Business:

All old business was tabled until next meeting.

VII. New Business:

All new business was tabled until next meeting.

VIII. Announcements:

President Reo Cummings and Vice President Leah Sexton encouraged the Senators to attend the Staff Awards Luncheon on May 29th at noon. They explained there was a taste testing for the dinner meal and it will be delicious. Also a reminder about the workshop afterwards was noted and Dr. Powell reminded Senators those that plan to attend the workshop to sign up.

IX. Adjournment:

A motion was made to adjourn and second. Meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

The next Staff Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 13, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. in the Cabe Room at the Garrison Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Krystal McLane

Staff Senate Secretary