

Ball State University Staff Council
Meeting #6
Thursday, February 17, 2011, 1:15 p.m.
Student Center, Room 310 A-B

Members Present:

Brenda Ayers, Shannon Bell, Maria Bumbalough, Amanda Collins, Kay Collins, Cathy Cunningham, Marilyn Davis, Kathleen Harrold, Bradley Johnston, David Kaufman, Sarah Kreps, Sarah McKillip, Kate Murray, Lee Anne Shore, Loretta Smith, Judy Stearns, Jo Turner, Melanie Turner, Marilyn Waldo, Angela Zahner

Alternates Present: Carl Burgess, Robert Cope, Bartley Hainz

Excused Absences: Jon Buchanan, Terry Burgess, Julie Moody, Angela Pickett, Delana Ulmer

Guests: Kevin Kenyon, Associate Vice President, Facilities Planning and Management

- I. **Call to Order** – President Loretta Smith called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.
- II. Vice President, Kate Murray, introduced Kevin Kenyon, Associate Vice President, Facilities Planning and Management

Mr. Kenyon spoke about the recent inclement weather and cited several facts in regarding the snow removal on campus:

- Every snow storm is a little different
- There are 15 miles of roads on campus to be plowed
- The University has an agreement with the City to plow several roads off-campus, such as the blue loop and areas leading to the University apartment complexes, etc.
- 1,000,000 feet of sidewalks to clean – does not include ramps, steps, curb cuts. These last three items are a priority
- 4,000,000 sq.ft. of parking lots, drives, access roads. They are mostly full all the time. Yellow and Red lots are the only ones they can get into to clean off and that depends on how quickly they get there.
- Custodians are responsible for 10 feet outside the buildings. They treat these areas before they leave at 7a.m.
- 287 tons of salt used (\$24,000) for streets
- 154 tons of ice salt for sidewalks used
- Total salt for one year: \$67,400
- Sand is not an option because of the high-tech storm sewers in place. Sand plugs them up.
- There is a priority system, including arena and auditorium (Worthen and Emens) events. This is in addition to the classroom buildings
- The equipment available on campus can only handle a 5-6 inch snow. Anything over this is beyond their realm of work and they are unable to keep up.
- There have been well over twenty claims for injuries

Discussion ensued around who actually makes the decision to close the campus and the ramifications for doing so. Judy Burke, Director of University Human Resource Services, commented that it is a large financial decision because everyone was paid when the university closed and those essential employees are paid overtime. Many staff council members thanked him for the service that was provided and that given the severity of the event, the department did an excellent job.

III. **Roll Call** – M. Turner called the roll of representatives and alternates. Roll called showed 20 representatives present, five excused absences, and four unexcused absences.

IV. **Approval of Minutes of January 20, 2011**

Kay Collins is listed twice in the members present section of the minutes. A motion was made and seconded (Zahner/J.Turner) to approve the revised minutes.

The motion carried.

V. **Committee Reports**

- a. **Employee Relations** – M. Bumbalough. No report.
- b. **Public Relations** – A. Collins. No report.
- c. **Elections** – L. Shore. No report.
- d. **Hospitality** – J. Stearns. No report.
- e. **Research** – C. Cunningham. No report.
- f. **Salary and Employee Benefits** – D. Kaufman. No report.
- g. **Special Committees**
 1. **A. Jane Morton Award** – Kate Murray. Kate reported that deadline for submission of nominations is 3:00 p.m., Friday, February 18. The committee will begin their work after that date.
 2. **Angels for Life** (AFL) – Marilyn Waldo reported that the Indiana Blood Center collected 65 units of blood with 12 deferrals on the first day of the blood drive and 86 units and 13 deferrals on the second day. The Staff Council Angels for Life Blood Drive is the largest blood drive across the state and is the largest of any university. It is important that we continue to be a part of this worthwhile effort. She encouraged members to contact their constituents when it comes time to work at the registration table.
 3. **Public Safety** – Marilyn Waldo. Marilyn reported that there will be another safety tour at the end of March. Please e-mail her with any concerns seen on campus. Some ideas that were presented at the last Staff Council meeting: 1) the stop sign at Neely and the Health Center – she will talk with Jim Lowe at Facilities Planning and Management to confirm a sign can and will be placed in that location. 2) Another concern from a member of the Staff Council was the speeding around Carmichael Hall. Gene Burton, Director of Public Safety, reported that speed bumps are not an option because of plowing during snow removal, but speed limit signs will be posted reducing the speed limit to 15 mph. 3) The Christy Woods sidewalk and curb continues to be a problem. The City and University cannot reach an agreement as to the responsibility of the sidewalk and curb.

VI. **Unfinished Business**

A. Follow-Up to RFI #35-2009/2010 – Weekend parking situation for library employees with restricted pass for Emens garage. After discussion in June, referred back to Research Committee for creation of a small task force to try to work out a resolution with Parking Services.

Response: Cathy Cunningham, chairperson of the Research Committee, reported the committee has a meeting with Nancy Wray and Gene Burton on February 22 to discuss the survey of the employees, observation of the spaces in the garage, etc. She hopes they will have a better understanding of the situation so that it can be resolved.

B. Follow-Up to RFI #36-2009/2010 – Differences between recognition dinners for staff personnel and service personnel. Referred to Hospitality Committee to work with UHRS in the fall to explore options for a menu/service style change for the staff recognition dinner.

Response: Judy Stearns, chairperson of the Hospitality Committee, reported that the survey has been completed and was sent to Judy Burke in University Human Resource Services for her input. The survey should be available next month for review by the council.

VII. Request for Information/Policy Change:

a. RFI #14-2010/2011- Why do we have to wait until the very last day of January to get our W-2's mailed to us. My husband's company sends out their W-2's the first week of January. What can BSU Payroll do to change this so we can get them earlier in the month? Last year I didn't get mine until February 3rd.

Response - Marie Kavanagh, Director of Payroll & Employee Benefits:

The timing of when W-2's are sent out by the University is directly related to the availability of information from outside sources on taxable wages and/or benefits that have to added employees records. Examples of these type of earnings is the final Disability wages paid to all our employees who received short or long term disability in the calendar year. The vendors providing this information have until January 15th to send employers this information. A significant amount of effort is required after we receive the information to combine Disability pay with regular earnings and manually add to the employee's wages and taxes. In addition to regular and disability earnings, there are several other areas in the University who gives Payroll taxable earnings paid to employees through sources other than Payroll. All these adjustments require manual processing to enter and balance the W-2 earnings. Other employers who are able to issue their W-2's earlier in January might have a less complex payroll and no reportable earnings other than what was paid through Payroll. Unfortunately that is not our situation.

There were no questions from the membership of the Staff Council concerning this RFI.

b. RFI #15- 2010/2011 - When we have open Service positions they are offered to service employees first before they go to the outside public. Why can't Staff positions that are open be offered to current staff employees first before they go to the outside public?

Response from Judy Burke, Director, University Human Resource Services:

In the university's strategic plan in Goal 4 Community, Objective D, it says: increase diversity of student, faculty, and staff populations and enhance the climate supporting diversity. The intention of our recruitment practices for all four employee groups is to broaden the pool of applicants to help meet our diversity goals.

For faculty and professional, positions are advertised to the outside immediately, most of which are on the national level. Staff positions similarly almost mirror faculty and professional as they are advertised to the outside immediately, only regionally and locally rather than nationally.

To enter the ranks of service personnel, employees are usually hired through dining as part time, then full time, then they can bid for openings based on seniority. Because part time positions are the entry point for service employees, these positions are advertised regionally and locally to increase the diversity of the applicant pool.

Discussion from Staff Council concerning this RFI: Judy Burke clarified why service positions are open to service employees first: Ninety-nine percent of the time, an employee enters a service

position as a part-time employee in dining. You have to be employed for a certain amount of time before you are able to “bid” for another position.

It was requested that Judy clarify the term “widely.” Judy explained the use of publicizing “widely,” refers to the recruiting area for service employees in Muncie and 30-40 mile radius surrounding Muncie. It was agreed that “locally/regionally” is more appropriate and this terminology will be used in Judy’s response above.

c. RFI #16- 2010/2011 – Why is it when someone submits a request and Staff Council forwards the information on to the appropriate person or department, nothing really gets changed. The person or department gets defensive by substantiating why they do it the way they do instead of being open to the suggestion of change. Take Marta Stephens response to the staff award selection. She said she “reviews the awards each year as to which ones are popular” ...popular with who -- the company selling them tells her that...surely it can’t be the employees because the selection is awful.

If Staff Council really wants to be useful they would submit these forms with the notation to the person or department to please consider updating or changing the way things are done – don’t just submit your answer in the form of explaining why you do things the way you do them. Ugh. Nothing will ever get improved around here if this is the type of responses we find acceptable.

Response: Loretta Smith, President of the Staff Council, responded that this RFI is really geared toward the executive committee. Melanie Turner, Secretary, is drafting a letter indicating what the Staff Council has accomplished recently. She requested input from other Staff Council members if they think of something.

At this point in the meeting, discussion turned to the procedure for submitting an RFI, as well as their routing through the Ball State system. The action of the RFI after a response is submitted was discussed. This is in direct correlation to the above RFI. The executive committee will add this as an agenda item and devise a routing process for members and constituents to review.

d. RFI #17- 2010/2011 – There have been part time professional employees who have gone full time and they get their part time years of service credited. Yet, part time staff members who go full time do not receive credit for all their years of part time service. Yes, they do receive vacation/sick – but when it comes to years of service that they are recognized for and for retirement purposes they do not receive credit. I do not think it is fair that professionals receive credit and staff do not.

I suggest that the university go back and credit part timers gone full time with those years of service. After all, many corked close to full time hours in a week.

Response – Marie Kavanagh, Director of Payroll & Employee Benefits:

Years of service credit is calculated differently depending on multiple factors and for what purpose the years of service are being calculated.

Years of Service for Pension Benefits – Credit for Years of Service differs between Faculty/Professionals and Staff and Service employees because these groups of employees are covered under different Pension Plans. Faculty/Professional employee’s years of service is calculated according to the rules set by the Teacher’s Retirement Fund or TRF. In contrast, Staff and Service employees are covered under the Public Employees Retirement Fund or PERF. The calculations for service for each plan are very different and reflect the differences in how these two employees are paid. The University has no control over these the service calculations nor can we change them in any way.

Years of Service for Service Awards –Credit for Years of Service is determined the same way for Faculty, Professional, Staff and Service employees. Employee in any of these groups whose assignment is for a full fiscal or academic year get credit for a full year of service if full time or part time. If their assignment is less than a full academic or fiscal year, they are given a pro-rated year of service based on their assignment date.

In summary, the years of service credit for TRF and PERF are different and determined by the individual plans, not by BSU.

David Kaufman, Chairperson of the Salary and Benefits Committee, believes the response answers the questions posed in the RFI. There was neither discussion nor questions from the membership of the Staff Council.

e. RFI #18 – 2010/2011 - I have a question that requires immediate attention! Why is it that if you are "Professional" status your retirement contributions are deposited into the accounts every month and on the day of payroll, versus if you are "Staff" status your retirement contributions, including personal contributions are deposited only quarterly, and as of today January 18th, they still have not reached the accounts? Why the difference? Every day that retirement contributions are not deposited in a staff's account means a loss of earned interest to the staff member, but then the university earns interest on this money during that time. I find this apprehensible that the university considers this to be fair practice. I understand that the retirement contributions of the professional are deposited in TIAA/CREF and the staff retirement contributions are deposited in PERF, but this does not constitute a reason to delay timely deposits. If it is mandatory that PERF payments are to be deposited only quarterly, then I recommend that they are at least deposited on the last banking day of the quarter rather than at the university's convenience.

Response – Marie Kavanagh, Director of Payroll & Employee Benefits:

Just like the credit for years of service the frequency in which the University makes contributions to the pension plans varies between PERF, TRF and the Alternate Pension Plan (APP). TRF and PERF dictates when employers deposit the pension contributions and the APP deposits are determined by the Plan design Staff and Service employees are covered under PERF and PERF requires that employers only submit contributions on a quarterly basis. Again the University has no control over this contribution schedule. This pension plan pays a pension benefit to an employee on a monthly basis in retirement for as long as the employee lives. The amount paid in these monthly pension payments is not capped in relation to the amount the University contributed and will continue until the employee dies.

Faculty and Professional employees who are covered under TRF only get contributions made to their accounts on a quarterly basis, a schedule which is dictated by TRF and not modifiable by BSU. Just like PERF, these employee's monthly pension payments is not limited to the amount the University contributed.

Those Faculty and Professional employees who elected to be covered under the APP do get the Universities Pension contributions credited to their account(s) on a monthly basis. This Plan allows employee to have their contributions deposited with four investment vendors. Although the contributions are made more frequently, these employee's pension benefit is limited to the contributions made and the associated interest income or loss.

The rule of TRF and PERF only allowing contributions to be made quarterly is going to be changed to monthly deposits in the near future but we don't have a firm date at this point.

David Kaufman contacted PERF directly and spoke with a customer service specialist who indicated that PERF only dictates that the University deposit their contributions quarterly, not the day that it

is to be deposited. In looking on the PERF website, it indicates that the quarter ending June 30, and the deposit was made on July 29, 2010, the end of September quarter contribution was not deposited until December 6, 2010. The quarter ending December 31, 2010, the contribution was deposited on February 11, 2011. Marie Kavanagh has asked Elizabeth Volland, a member of the benefits staff and responsible for submitting the PERF contributions, to respond as to why there is a delay.

This RFI is not resolved and will remain open until a reasonable response has been obtained from the Payroll and Employee Benefits Office.

f. RFI #19 – 2010/2011 – When notices go out from Payroll pertaining to Kronos – they feel it is important to only send the notice out to Kronos Coordinators and ASSUME we will all get that necessary information. This has gone on for years. This information should go out to everyone who utilizes KRONOS – not just the coordinators and the I don't know why they feel like it is privileged information. I am referring to notices on special dates or times that our time needs to be entered on our timesheets. I request a change to the effect that these notices go out to all employees in the Payroll system. A lot of other information goes out campus wide.

No response has been received from Payroll and Employee Benefits in time for this meeting.

g. RFI #20 – 2010/2011 – There were several changes to our Paychecks this January with the social security tax and federal income tax. Why didn't Payroll advise us ahead of time of these upcoming changes. They spend time preparing a quarterly newsletter and sending it out, but failed to include pertinent information regarding our paychecks.

No response was received from Payroll and Employee Benefits in time for this meeting.

VIII. **Announcements**

a. The next meeting will be held on March 17, 2011, at 1:15 p.m. in Room 301-2 of the Student Center.

IX. **Adjournment**

A motion was made and seconded (Bumbalough/Kaufman) to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Turner
Secretary, Staff Council