



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Minutes of the Staff Senate

February 13, 2019

River Valley Room, Memorial Union

Members Present: Sarah Abentroth, Daniel Boese, Jessica Cadreau, Melissa Casanova, Tyler Clauson (President), Chris Dingle, Emily Dougherty, Samantha Eastman, Garrett Grasser, Carissa Green, Brenda Haugen, Angela Holkesvig, Devona Janousek, Brian Larson, Jennifer Lunde, Melissa Mager, Whitney Maine, Jeremy Mahlheim (Vice President), Christina Mead, Lani Moen, Tina Monette, Anglea Morgan, June Novacek, Patricia Reed, Lesli Risky, Lori Shafer, Jayson Sharp, Courtney Souvannasacd, Andria Spaeth, Carla Spokely, Zauna Synnott, Laura Vatnsdal, Megan Wasylow, Kim Werner

Members Absent: Trinity Bohlman, Christopher Choate, Kristin Ellwanger, Jade Gourneau, Kari Holter, Gregory Kelly, Sherry Lawdermilt, Jennifer Lynch Hurst, Amy Malheim, Janelle McGarry, Brianne Melicher, Renee Nilsen, Jen Proulx, Teri Salwey, Conrad Smith,

Ex-Officio Present: Peggy Varberg, Interim Director, Human Resources and Payroll Services

1. **Call to Order** – Clauson called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.
2. **Announcements/Question Period** – No guests are scheduled for today's meeting. AVP Mike Pieper, Facilities, was invited, but he was called to Bismarck and forced to cancel. Clauson said a late Suggestion Box item, not published in today's agenda, questioned why Staff Senate did not become the voice against parking increases. Clauson said the University Parking Committee is set to meet on February 27 at 11:00 a.m. in the Education Building in an open-forum style setting.
3. **Approval of January 9, 2019 Staff Senate Minutes** – Discussion of distribution mode of committee reports as a separate document. Consensus to ask the Historian to archive committee reports with the agenda and minutes.
Motion: To approve the minutes as submitted (Reed/Cassanova/carried unanimously).
4. **Business Items**
 - a. **Vote Constitution and Bylaws Changes** – Second reading of changes drafted originally by Past-President Shea and lightly revised by J. Malheim, adjusting objectives and purposes of committees and duties. As this came from committee, no motion and second were required. Vote: Carried unanimously.
 - b. **Staff Senate Attendance/Participation Discussion** – President Clauson spoke about the fact Staff Senate attendance has become more challenging for many in recent times, as workloads have increased. Most people who have sent e-mails regarding their inability to attend have cited work pressures. Some discussion of possible models for future meetings, committee meetings, etc., to help people condense their time commitment.

Segue into discussion of upcoming Staff Senate elections. Nomination period opens with the March meeting (March 13) and closes with the April meeting (April 10). Regular three-year Staff Senate terms will be available, along with all officer positions except President and Past-President. President and Past-President are filled by the current Vice President/President Elect and President, respectively. Three members-at-large on the Executive Committee will be elected in the summer. Committee Chair positions, whose

incumbents also serve on the Executive Committee, also will be available for the upcoming year. Reed announced she will be stepping down as the Community Relations Chair in May, so the major projects of Tubs of Love and Denim Day will need new leadership in the coming year. Everyone is asked to consider a leadership role in the next year and encourage colleagues to run for Staff Senate. Contact any member of the Executive Committee to express your interest or submit a name for nomination. Discussion of potential electronic voting methods.

c. Staff Senate Leadership Series – Abentroth reported for Gourneau, who was unable to attend. The Staff and Professional Development committee proposes inviting speakers to give leadership presentations during regularly-schedule Staff Senate meetings. Outside staff could be invited, and this could be a potential recruitment point for Staff Senate. The committee is seeking ideas for speakers, including local leaders or those already visiting for another reason who might accommodate an extra request.

5. Staff Senate Officer/Committee Reports

- a. **Membership Officer** – Casanova reported she has booked the Facilities Lunchroom for Staff Senate meetings from May through December.
- b. **Public Relations** – Wasylow reported that the FB Page Tuesday feature is a “Did You Know,” highlighting the benefits of being a UND employee. Spaeth provided further information on the \$250 health and wellness benefit that recently was featured. Discussion of the “Caught by Staff Senate” employee features. More individuals and small staff groups are needed. Contact a committee member with recommendations or to check out a sign for photos.
- c. **Historian** – Smith has requested everyone verify their committee assignments, which need to be updated. Casanova sent the attendance sheets around again for that purpose.

6. University Committee Reports

- a. **University Parking** – Dingle reported the last meeting was largely informational. Some staff attended to ask questions and express opinions.
- b. **University Senate** – (Clauson/J. Malheim/Reed) There was no scheduled University Senate meeting in January, and the February meeting was cancelled due to weather.
- c. **State Staff Senate** – Clauson said there is still interest in getting the “Day After Thanksgiving” holiday initiative approved.

7. Suggestion Box

- a. It would be nice if we could have a representative from Parking come and talk to the Staff Senate about the changes coming this year. All I hear are rumors and it would be nice to have some facts. The most common rumor is that there is going to be tiered parking. Depending on the lot/location we'll have to pay more. If that's not bad enough students will have to option to buy these permits as well. What will end up happening is parents will pay for the more expensive permits for their kids so they can park in these lots. If this is indeed true I'm wondering why the staff is being treated this way. We SHOULD have better parking. We SHOULDN'T have to fight for parking just to get to our jobs. We're here all day every day. I don't know about anyone else but most days I have to carry a lot of stuff FOR MY JOB and the stress of having to park further is a lot to bear. Thank you.
 - i. Mike Pieper 1/31/19 - I will set up some forums before our next parking meeting so I can bring the input from the forums to the committee meeting.

Meeting Feedback: See Item 2 above.

- b. Bring back Wednesday denim days!

Meeting Feedback: With fully-approved Denim Day Fridays and special days, adding a day risks diluting participation.

- c. My mom works at a state entity and is able to donate time to people who are using leave for pregnancy. How come you can't do that at UND as we are also a state entity as well and follow a lot of same procedures. Also how come you are forced to burn up all your time when on FMLA and you can't save a week or so for when you come back? I'd rather take some time not paid to ensure I could come back and take a day off without going in the negative for your balances. Looks like you can't get time donated and you have to use all your time vs saving a week which therefore doesn't create a great employee health which we are always so happy to promote. The mom is expected to go back to work and if she isn't feeling well or the child isn't or you have doctor's appointments you have to go into the hole and end up feeling guilty.

Meeting Feedback: Varberg said a Human Resources response will be provided for this item soon.

- d. As an advocate for staff at UND can you look in to offering UND staff an opportunity for Volunteer Time Off? VTO would allow staff time to volunteer during scheduled work time up to so many hours per year at an organization of their choice and this could be featured on UND Staff Senate social media?

Meeting Feedback: This is already in place at some of the smaller NDUS institutions. Clauson volunteered to serve on a task force for such an initiative.

- e. I know we always have a positive response but I am wondering if it would be better to do the tubs of Love at a different time than the Christmas holidays. Many offices already adopt a family plus individuals donate to private charities such as their churches. A suggestion would be in the fall focusing on back to school (und food shelf backpack program etc) and/or a second one in March that could benefit organizations like sunshine house and humane society.
 - i. The spirit of the program is in the season of giving. It is during that time of year that there is the greatest need. Individuals and animals who are homeless tend to feel it more during that time. Holiday season is when there is the biggest stress in families' life. The inability to provide or celebrate is the greatest. We try to choose charities who have expressed a visible need. Or a new organization just starting out. We did do a special collection for the UND food pantry when they expressed a need and will probably do so for another charity at another time. While it would be nice to have a second round of giving in the spring, it would not be feasible and we do not want to burden employees with too many financial strain. Patricia Reed, UND Staff Senate Community Relations Chair

8. Matters Arising/Open Discussion

- a. Chief Plummer is soliciting donations for his participation in Polar Plunge for Special Olympics.
- b. Chamber Business After Hours and Grand Forks Young Professionals Lunch and Learn are next Thursday.
- c. Giving Hearts Day is tomorrow. Students can sign up for a scholarship drawing on the Alumni website and complete a survey on philanthropy.

9. Adjourn – With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.