

**CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES COUNCIL
MINUTES
AUGUST 17, 2015, 9 A.M.**

Potomac Room - Student Center

Present: Sharon Carpenter, Nancy Cowherd, Marie DeWalt, Melody Gillespie, Brian Hammond, Ken Harbaugh, Karen James, Mona Kissel, Paul Schwan, Diane Shewbridge, Peg Swisher, Paula Wamsley, Marian Willauer

Guests: Dr. Sylvia Manning, Alan Perdue

Chair, Brian Hammond called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

It was MSP to approve that the June and July 2015 Classified Employee Council meeting minutes.

Correction to the meeting agenda: Diane Shewbridge was mistakenly listed as the Board of Governors representative. The current BOG representative is Mona Kissel.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACCE: Ken Harbaugh

ACCE will be meeting next week at Williamson, WV. Ken emphasized the importance to lobby our legislators for funding for Shepherd University. He summarized the highlights of Senate Bill 439 and the ongoing Mercer state-wide study of higher education salary structures, merit pay, classification and compensation. Mercer representatives met with members of ACCE in early August to get input and listen to concerns. As classified employees, we want the best system and structure for the state and compensation should be competitive with surrounding area markets. Mercer reps also met with higher education representatives around the state for their input on these issues. Ken will send information about the HEPC Request for Proposal (RFP) to council members. (This information is also on the HEPC website). Mercer's official report of recommendations is due to the legislature in December 2015. The report should include a system for a transparent reporting to all stakeholders. Even if the state adopts a new classification structure, it doesn't mean that employees will be seeing pay raises immediately because of a probable lack of funding and also some job descriptions may change since they have not been updated for 14 years (the last time a job classification was done was 2001). Another factor affecting job classification is that this study will more strongly emphasize skill levels vs. the 2001 study.

Marie added that Alan Perdue, Tammy Gill and she met with Mercer representatives at Blue Ridge Community College last week. She reported that the representatives were professional and she had confidence in them to conduct the job study.

Ken explained that the Vice Chancellor for Finance at HEPC, Ed Magee, sent out a request to Higher Education institutions for feedback about any concerns and future financial issues that might create a negative financial impact on the institution. Judging from some of the institutional responses, Ken felt that some institutions may not be comfortable with the impacts of a new classification and compensation system, leading him to wonder about the nature of the HEPC request for feedback. The overall concern seems to be regarding the possible implications of the Mercer Classified Market study currently being performed.

Board of Governors: Mona Kissel

Mona attended the annual Board of Governors Summit on August 7-8, 2015, hosted by the Higher Education Policy Commission. Sessions were provided concerning the powers, duties and responsibilities of the Governing Boards. A meeting for specific Shepherd policies will be held in September.

Staff Development: Marian Willauer

The FY16 budget for Staff Development is \$12,249. This is a decrease from the prior two years: FY15 was \$13,813.00 and FY14 was \$14,252.00. Marian recommended lowering the per employee reward level this year. It was MSP that the maximum reward per employee per fiscal year be capped at \$500.00 so that Staff Development fund can assist all the people who apply. It was also MSP that job training and seminar/conference fees costing \$150.00, or less, be reimbursed at 100%. This is an increase from the previous maximum of \$100.00.

Marian: Will we support paying for this year flu shots for classified employees from Staff Development? Last year Staff Development paid out about \$750.00 for the vaccine. Marie noted that PEIA does cover the flu shot. Marian noted that there was a surplus left in Staff Development last year. Following discussion, it was MSP that Staff Development not cover the cost of the flu shot, since PEIA pays for it. The Council strongly encourages staff to go through PEIA or their other insurance to get the shot. Employees should verify the details of ***no cost coverage*** of flu shot with their insurance carriers.

Scholarship: Theresa Smith

No Report - committee will need to review and revise if necessary the guidelines.

Legislative: Theresa Smith

No report - Brian is looking for a new Chair for this committee.

Special Events: Virginia Haddock and Peg Swisher, Co-chairs

No report

Safety/Buildings and & Grounds Committee: Brian Hammond

Has not met. No report. Brian asked for concerns that need to be taken to the committee.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

New student levels are up, but overall enrollment is down due to a high number of 2014 graduates and a decline in returning students. The Budget Advisory Council (Chair, Anna Barker) will be meeting monthly this year trying to keep on top of budget concerns.*

*Brian suspended the meeting to introduce guests, Dr. Sylvia Manning and Alan Perdue. Council members introduced themselves. It was noted that there are 213 years of experience among the CEC representatives.

Council members explained some of the concerns about staffing and state funding issues.

Ken talked about his concern about the request for information by HEPC for any negative impact of Mercer job study. Dr. Manning shared her belief that a new classification/salary schedule is good, but she doesn't believe we can count on more money from the state. She believes we should focus instead on revenue through enrollment and perhaps revenue by other means (e.g., the non-traditional student sector).

Ken asked Dr. Manning if she thought that the tightening up of the "for profit" higher education institutions, (e.g., Univ. of Phoenix) will help the traditional not-for profit market. Dr. Manning said that Community colleges will probably benefit because the market sector for them is the same as the for-profits. As for Shepherd, she recommends that we cultivate our relationships with community colleges.

Dr. Manning posed the following to the council: given either the scenario that the Presidential search is successful and she is here only until end of December, or, if the search fails and she is here longer, what needs her attention most on campus? Council members agreed that staff morale is a top priority. Employees have not been compensated for taking on more responsibilities and we are losing ground salary wise with other state institutions. It was pointed out to her that even the minimum 2001 salary schedule is not funded at Shepherd. The higher cost of living in the Eastern Panhandle creates additional financial hardships for employees.

Before leaving, Dr. Manning told the council that she is here to listen to employees, answers email, and welcomes employees to drop by her office to talk about concerns. Brian Hammond thanked Dr. Manning and Mr. Perdue for taking time to talk with the council. It was agreed that council will issue an invitation for a future meeting

Continuation of New Business: Ken recommended going around the table to ask for concerns/questions from each member. The following concerns were raised:

- Regarding the policy of giving overtime opportunities based on seniority. Where can that policy be found? Answer: It is located in the [Staff Handbook/Supervisor's Edition](#) online.

- Since a 3rd shift in housekeeping was created, there is a question about whether a supervisor is required to be present on all shifts? Marie answered no, it is not required. However, lead employees are used in some cases, but if not, on duty employees should be advised as to how to get in touch with someone in authority.
- Rotation of personnel in and out in key offices, e.g., admissions, personnel, etc. There is a concern that operations get bogged down because people are not in jobs long enough to be able to be well informed enough to answer student questions.
- Bi-Weekly pay: If the bi-weekly pay structure goes into effect in mid-November, what will the pay dates be in December and how can we find out now the amount of our bi-weekly paychecks? Go [to MyApps/Employee](#), and there is an application that will tell you what your exact paycheck will be. MyApps also lists pay dates.
- Transparency is important for everyone's accountability, e.g., in CEC Minutes. The minutes will be posted on the new CEC website as soon as it is up and employees will be notified when they are posted. Marie DeWalt added that she tries to represent the voice of classified employees with the administration if the classified staff leaders are not present when campus issues are being discussed.

Next meeting is September 21 at 9 a.m. in the Cumberland Room.

It was MSP to adjourn.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Cowherd, Secretary