

Staff Employee Advocacy Council

Regular Council Meeting: September 8, 2021

Agenda

Attendance: See "2021–2022 Attendance" spreadsheet

Excused: Jennifer Easthope, Rachel Volk, Kevin Ledbetter, David Hansen

- A. Welcome/Call to Order - Done!
- B. Approval of Minutes from August, 2021 - Approved!
- C. Guest Speaker 1 (see New Business for notes) - pushed to future meeting**
- D. Executive Committee Report - Met 8/30
 - a. Budget: Starting Budget: \$7,433.73
 - i. August - University Cookout Supplies: \$149.51
 - a. Remaining Budget: \$7,284.22
 - b. Discussed mini-grant applications - one was a membership so we had to deny, the other two were from earlier this year and we are working to support those staff members as is possible.
 - c. Agendas for Admin & General Meeting
- E. Administrative Meeting Report - Meeting 9/7
 - a. Shared updates including Mini-grants, Pro Dev ideas, First Coffee Break, Guest Speakers, Strategic Planning and Trunk or Treat, Shared Leave ad hoc work
 - b. Jeff Bethke - Financial Advisor - mapping financial situation, looking at opportunities for revenue, working with Susan to put together a packet of info with outside perspective and her feedback/information, as well as looking at capital and other investment opportunities. He will not be making any decisions or recommendations. - mainly working to help with transition from Susan Scroggins to eventual new VPF.
 - c. Strategic Planning Workshop - Community Day/Workshop, Paid event, working to ensure supervisors cooperate so staff can attend, but still need to remain operational - if you hear of anyone having trouble, alert Jess or Rebekah.
 - d. Discounts/other benefits for employees - page no longer exists - there is a committee looking at opportunities with external businesses/community and this will be brought to them to put on their radar. - we are continuing to encourage the creation of that. Would be a great thing to share with New Employees.

- e. AVP MCM - finalist interviews are coming up (- 3 candidates coming to campus!), and VPF is in its infancy phase with the goal of having someone in-seat by Jan.
- f. With expiration of current mask policy, information/guidance for staff supervising students and expectations for those unvaccinated will be coming soon. - Rebekah will be taking that question back to COVID taskforce.
- g. SEAC Topics Form - question about work from home policy and whether a new one will be forthcoming - it is being worked on. HR and Darron are going through PDQs to identify positions that this could work for, and once identified, that would be at the discretion of supervisors. This new policy/info will be coming soon. - Darron is working to do this on occasion, not permanently; Thinking about short-term circumstance vs. long-term policy. Question about employees with children that may have to be quarantined and how to handle it. Advice will likely be to work with supervisors. Darron is probably trying to find a policy that can apply to most folks. Can ask more about criteria for evaluation in PDQs and what they are looking for. Also where are regional/non-campus-based positions fitting in? If this is going to supervisor discretion, will there also be guidelines for supervisors.
- h. Don't forget Town Hall 9/13!
 - i. If you don't feel comfortable asking something, let Jess know and she'll ask

F. External Committee Reports

- a. Campus Community Policy Committee (CCPC) — Brandi - Took place last Wed
 - i. Short meeting to vote on:
 1. Chair - Student Senate V.P. Ben Jacobs
 2. Vice Chair - Brandi Kneifel
 3. Secretary - pending
- b. University Council — Chloe
 - i. Very short meeting (without students as they hadn't been elected yet) to nominate/elect the UC Chair (Jennifer Winquist)
- c. Investment Oversight — Ryan S.
 - i. Hasn't met yet - meeting tomorrow
 - ii. Ryan also is resigning his position on SEAC, and there is now an opening on this committee - let us know if you want to do it!
- d. Fringe Benefits —
 - i. Cancelled last minute
 - ii. If you want to participate in that, let us know!

G. Chief of Staff — Rebekah Arevalo

- a. If you have comments or concerns, she hopes you will reach out

H. Internal Subcommittee Reports

a. Staff Appreciation — Carrie

- i. Coffee Break Sept 14 9-11am; Hearth Room. Will be doing vouchers so staff will have the full breakfast offerings from founders. - Erin has a flyer to share. :)
- ii. Truck or Treat ideas discussed - Jessica working on details. Date: Thursday October 28th.
- iii. Other tentative events: chair massages, movie night, Santa at Tree Lighting, Staff Night at 49er, pizza party at basketball game

b. Staff Development — Chloe

- i. Met twice already. We will meet in-person 1x/mo (last Monday of the month) throughout the academic year.
- ii. Discussed three mini-grant applications
- iii. Brainstormed events/resources we would like to provide to our fellow staff members - We've come up with about 15 creative professional development resource/event ideas & we are nailing down dates to implement them.

c. Staff Representation — David

d. Staff Recognition — Jennifer

- i. We had our first meeting on Thur., Sept. 2, and will meet the first Thursday of each month
- ii. We selected our summer employees of the month:
 - 1. June 2021: (Reveal at meeting) - Ryan Bye!
 - a. Presentation: Thursday, September 16th, at 9AM
 - i. Meet by 8:55AM by the Student Mail Center in the Union
 - 2. July 2021: (Reveal at meeting) - Angie Taylor!
 - a. Presentation: Tuesday, September 14th, at 1:30PM
 - i. Meet by 1:25PM in the VUCA by the stairs in the main lobby (across from Theatre entrance)
 - 3. August 2021: (Reveal at meeting) - Daniela Trajceski!!
 - a. Presentation: Tuesday, September 14th at 2:00PM
 - i. Walk over from VUCA or meet in the Union by the Hearth Room by 1:55PM
- iii. Please spread the word about submitting nominations! - working to get flyers out and spread the word

e. New Employee — Ryan C.

- i. We met on August 31st and plan to meet monthly, with times TBD

- ii. Discussed our experiences and brainstormed ideas to explore
 1. Welcome emails (Chapel Tour, Staff Appreciation Events)
 2. Welcome Bags with new employee checklist & campus info
 - a. We have SEAC swag - masks, pens, etc.
 3. New Employee Social or Cohort Experience
 4. Mentoring
 - iii. We would also like to streamline how we obtain new employee list
 - f. Communication — Michael
 - i. First meeting Sept. 17
 - ii. Blood drive added to calendar (Thanks Karen!)
 - iii. Working on updating website to new template
- I. Ad Hoc Reports
 - a. Shared Leave - Jess
 - i. Meeting Friday - Jess has some research she has done, homework is to review those things/notes from meeting with HR. Will talk about what do we want to make sure we include, brainstorming items, notes of concern, questions, thinking about process and being kind to payroll staff.
 - b. Staff, Faculty & Student Relations - Erin
 - i. We met Friday, August 20 and will meet the third Friday of each month at 10 am in-person in the Union Campanile Room
 - ii. Discussed Goals and brainstormed ideas
 1. Increase information sharing and transparency between faculty, staff and student groups
 2. Create opportunities to encourage community through
 3. Will have a lunch soon with Fac Senate. Jolie Foor is President of Student Senate, but they don't have their first meeting until later in Sept, but they are interested in working together
- J. Subcommittee Budget Requests: Think about what you want and submit your request to Justin so we can review. We may not be able to give you everything, but we'll do our best to be equitable. Want to plan ahead as much as is possible.
- K. Thank you to those that helped with cook-out/tye dye/s'mores. We have tons of s'mores stuff left too! We had a bonfire on campus!! Woot!
- L. Old Business
- M. New Business
 - a. Guest Speaker: Brian O'Rourke, VP for Enrollment, Marketing and Communications - 2:30 pm ** Pushed to future meeting
 - b. Strategic Planning with Kevin Goebbert and Joe Bognar - 3:45 pm
 - i. Don't forget community day!

- ii. We did an activity!
- c. Fringe Benefits is back! Any volunteers to sit on this external committee?
- d. President Padilla encouraged VAST (Valparaiso Assistants Support Team) to come up with 4 things that we would like to focus on accomplishing or working on. One of the items that was most important on the list was to create **clear job descriptions with corresponding skill requirements and pay grades** so administrative assistants can see what is required at each level, seek training if needed, and know what is needed if interested in a path for advancement. This would also serve as a means of measuring abilities to do the job and a way to reward outcomes when pay raises are back in place.
 - i. The goal is to request that SEAC join in on a adhoc committee with VAST to tackle this issue. VAST is not a university recognized committee, so this may need to be driven by SEAC. I'm not sure what the bylaws say or if they do say anything about that. Please email me at brandi.kneifel@valpo.edu if you are interested in helping or if you have any thoughts on the process.
 1. Think about this from an overall campus staff lens. Also need to know how to identify and understand pay grades.
 2. Voted to add ad hoc committee to work on this. Approved. Brandi will take lead as chair! - Joining Brandi in her endeavors, so Chloe, Mike Jacob, Jonathan Plant

N. Announcements

- a. Town Hall 9/13, 3-4:30 pm, Union Ballrooms
- b. Byron Martin Farewell 9/9 12-1 pm in the Gandhi-King Center in the Union
- c. Our next meeting will take place October 13, 2021 -
 - i. 2:30 to 4:30 in the Harre Union Brown & Gold Room

O. Adjournment **Done!**