

SHSU STAFF COUNCIL MINUTES

September 10, 2003

The Sam Houston State University Staff Council met on Wednesday, September 10, 2003 at 2:30 p.m. in the Lowman Student Center, Room 315 with twenty-one (21) members present. This meeting was scheduled with no set agenda. Meetings of the Staff Council are open to all SHSU staff employees but certain issues may be discussed by the Staff Council in closed session at the discretion of the Council Chair.

Keith Jenkins, Chair, opened the meeting with a greeting to Council members in attendance and to all visitors then gave an overall summary of the purpose of the Staff Council.

The first order of business was to determine the time of the next Staff Council meeting. With some of the members working on different work schedules we needed to change the time to accommodate those members who needed to leave early. The members present decided on a new meeting time of 1:30 p.m. with the 2nd Wednesday of each month still scheduled as the regular meeting day.

Since our last meeting Keith had met with Dr. Gaertner about the Staff Council but brought no agenda items or guidelines from the President at this time. Dr. Gaertner did indicate that the Staff Council should focus more on global issues affecting the staff when discussing concerns brought to the Council and wished us luck.

Under the umbrella of the Staff Council are five standing committees (Communications Committee, Public Relations Committee, Staff Development Committee, Administrative Issues Committee, and Campus Enhancement Committee). A description of each committee may be found at the Staff Council web site (www.shsu.edu/~staffcouncil) under the by-laws of the committee. Those members in attendance had first choice on which committee they wished to serve. The current committee assignments and terms of service (1 or 2 year terms) are as follows:

Communications Committee – Jacob Spradlin (1), Lucrecia Neff (2), Kayla Stephenson (2)

Public Relations Committee – Janice Lawrence (2), Debbie Birdwell (1), Cathi Gillette (1), Robert Smith (1)

Staff Development Committee – Bernice Strauss (2), Karen Whitney (1), Sue Knight (2)

Administrative Issues Committee – Suzette Kohers (2), Dorothy Roberson (2), Mike Yarborough (2), Bernice Strauss (2), Jacob Spradlin (1)

Campus Enhancement Committee – Kevin Hayes (2), Neal Whitney (2), Larry Brown (1), Johnny Boston (2)

It was decided that the members who were not present at this meeting would be contacted about committee service on one of the five committees.

Next Keith asked for any issues that staff needed to bring to the Council's attention. The items mentioned at this time were:

1. Merit Raises – Can we get a clarification concerning President Gaertner's

comment during the Faculty/Staff General Meeting about mid-year raises. Did he mean across-the-board raises for everyone or merit raises for a selected few? Also, if the raises are across-the-board how does that effect those employees paid from local accounts? Are those raises to be taken from the budgets of the department? Are merit raises allowed during the year instead of just at the beginning of an academic year?

2. Holidays – How can we have input on staff holidays? Can we have more days off during Spring Break? Can we exchange one holiday for another? Can we have a representative on the Calendar Committee?
3. Start of School – Is there a possibility of starting the school year after Labor Day? Is there a policy stating when we must start the academic year?
4. Sick /Vacation/Bereavement Leave – Is there a way we can change the sick leave pool? How can we keep from losing vacation time if we are unable to take the time off? Why can't staff taking maternity leave pull from the sick pool? Why aren't the deaths of step-parents allowed for bereavement leave?
5. Parking – Can parking sticker fees for staff be paid for by the university? If not, can the staff opt to have a few dollars deducted from each paycheck to pay for the parking sticker, allowing the staff member to have their sticker paid for by the end of one academic year for the next academic year?
6. Day Care – Some companies provide day care for their employees children (or reduced rates for child care). Can SHSU provide child care for its employees (faculty and/or staff)?

Because we had so many items brought up at this meeting we decided it would be feasible to meet again in two weeks. **Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 24, 2003 at 1:30 p.m. in the Lowman Student Center, Room 304.** It was discussed that we may be meeting twice a month until our committees are up and running. If so we would be meeting on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month. Meeting dates, times and locations will be posted before a scheduled meeting. Please check our website for meeting information.

Please feel free to contact any member of the Staff Council with concerns you feel need to be addressed at our meetings. We need to have agenda items at least one week prior to a scheduled meeting. If we do not have any agenda items, the Executive Committee of the Staff Council has the right to cancel a meeting. Without your input we cannot address issues you may feel are important to the staff employees of SHSU.

Jacob Spradlin moved to adjourn the meeting and Wade Williams seconded. All members present agreed and the meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Terri Harvey, Secretary
SHSU Staff Council