



Pittsburg State University

University Support Staff

Minutes, May 12th, 2021

Senators present: Carrol Bell, Terri Blessent, Ann Courtney, Kevin Elrod, Betty Geier, Jordan Harding, Jerrica Lair, Woody Lopez, Diane Letner, Jeannice Parker, Terry Pierce, Cindy VanBecelaere, Stephanie Willis, Mary Wolfe, and Dan Workman. Guests were Drs. Steve Erwin and Steve Scott.

Call to order – Terri Blessent called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

Review of April minutes: Woody Lopez moved to accept the minutes as written, Diane Letner seconded, and the minutes were accepted.

Treasurer's Report, Cindy Van Becelaere: Budget fund balance of \$2317.86. Foundation account balance was unchanged at \$57.04. Mary Wolfe moved to accept the report, Jeannice Parker seconded, and the report was accepted.

USSS President meeting with University President

Dr. Scott attended the meeting today. The administration is trying to figure out how to rewrite mask policy. The goal is to encourage vaccination and reward it with more freedoms, and get back to students' expectations of normalcy. At the same time, people should be free to wear masks if they feel more comfortable. Many institutions are requiring vaccinations, but have so many exceptions that the requirements are nullified. PSU will not follow suit at this time. We are a state institution. The Governor has attempted to institute some regulations, but the legislature keeps reversing them. It is likely that we will be able to continue the county's course. We are going to err on the side of laxness at this time. Dr. Scott is hopeful that by next week there will be lowered mask wearing, following this Friday's county commission meeting. Changes will continue in response to what is happening around us. Some colleges have offered incentives for students, as well. We hope that parents will encourage students. Vaccination directly impacts class sizes. We want policies to reflect the behaviors we want people to adopt.

Topeka's activities make a difference to us. 18-year-olds can now carry weapons, which has implications for campus safety, especially in the dorms, because we are very limited in the restrictions we can place on students. The medical marijuana bill did not pass. The Federal government will be giving Kansas over a billion dollars for higher education. 800 million goes to K-12 schools. KS can't reduce its spending and replace the monies with Federal dollars. That seems to indicate we will not experience a cut next year, because the state has to maintain that spending level next year as well. The University is trying to figure out what the rules are for the monies. There are additional monies for pandemic relief, but much of the spending will go to students; in PSU's case, \$7 million will go to students. One of the things we can spend on is making up revenue shortfalls from lost tuition, football games, housing, and conferences. We will continue to upgrade equipment for remote learning.

In spite of the pandemic, PSU had a successful year. Over a thousand students graduated. We were so careful with spending. Consequently, we will disburse a year-end one-time payment of \$1,000 per full-time, benefits-receiving employee who has been here for the

full year; employees who are part-time or who have been here less than a year will get a proportional amount. It will be on the May 28th check. These are from PSU's own monies. The fact that it's the same amount was purposeful. And Dr. Scott can't benefit from it. USS Leadership meetings are important. Many campuses don't get the benefit of those meetings. Meanwhile, Emporia State is going to lay off ten people and cut the hours of two more, after announcing just last month that no layoffs would be necessary.

Other University Reports:

- UPS – Jason Kegler – Not present
- Faculty – Cole Shewmake – Not present

Committees:

- Elections, Ann Courtney: two candidates have expressed interest in one seat, so ballots will be sent today to select the Senator.
- Public Relations, Ann Courtney: no activity.
- Welcoming, Diane Letner: no new employees.
- Parking, Jordan Harding: 4 of 11 appeals were approved. They were due to bad weather.
- Board of Governors, Michelle Hensley: no report.
- Strategic Planning, Terri Blessent: Groups categorized what could be put in place for the next few years.
- Information Technology, Michelle Hensley: no report.
- Campus Safety and Security, Terri Blessent: no meeting.
- Docking Institute Survey: Some of the other regent universities wanted to change some questions. Terri said that our position was to leave the questions the same so we could compare input accurately. Some also wanted to add comment boxes to every question. The Docking Institute said they would charge much more for every question, but we could add them to five questions with no additional fee. The next meeting is next week. University Professional Staff seems to be taking over the process. We need to be sure that our coworkers know that the responses are not traceable.
- University Revenue Planning, Terri Blessent: done for the year.
- University Legislative Coordinating, Terri Blessent: will meet May 21st.

Old Business:

Jeannice will send out an email with the four choices from the Napoli's menu. It will now be May 27th.

New Business:

The law permitting concealed carry for 18-year-olds has to be permitted. The University can't prohibit it unless there are state security officers and metal detectors at every door.

Good of the order:

The last meeting for the 20-21 Senate will be the Napoli's banquet on May 27th.
The (virtual) Town Hall will be on June 10th.