



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Staff Alliance

Friday, November 19, 2021

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

ID: 837 7990 2110

Password: M2EwL0Gx

(Please mute unless speaking.)

Voting Members:

Juella Sparks, Vice President, UAF Staff Council; Chair, Staff Alliance
Dawn Humenik, Co-President, UAA Staff Council; Vice Chair, Staff Alliance
Linda Hall, Vice President, System Office Staff Council
Lauren Hartman, President, System Office Staff Council
Ronnie Houchin, President, UAF Staff Council
Eric Lingle, President, UAS Staff Council
Tania Rowe, Co-President, UAA Staff Council
Ke Mell, Vice President, UAS Staff Council

Call to Order and Roll Call (all members present)

1. Adopt Agenda

Dawn moves to approve the Agenda. Ronnie Seconds.

2. Approve [October Meeting Minutes](#)

Tania approves the October minutes. Lauren Seconds.

Link to October recording:

https://alaska.zoom.us/rec/share/fnUfMWiZj4UHIOV80OJQaAELQtIcM4c8LZF_sAbUIEJBiwVAv1YRoRHRNqO_8W-g.7w7xV_PqECPkI4SA

Passcode: Mu!8qUFx

3. Guest and Public Comments

3.1. [Public Comment Form](#)

There weren't any guests scheduled to speak at this meeting.

There were no public comments. Discussion by the group regarding the new Public Comment Form was positive. It will be incorporated into the website and the members will

review responses as part of reviewing the agenda before the meeting. Relevant comments will also be read into the minutes during the meeting.

4. [Chair's Report](#)

Lauren noted the statement that no staff testified to the regents on the compensation increase and questioned how much staff were aware of the compensation increase. Eric comments that everyone was in favor but busy with their own workload to pay close attention. Tania believes that staff would be too nervous to testify. Dawn: At UAA we are constantly encouraging people to testify. It is a chance for their voices to be heard, but there is a lack of confidence that people feel. There is also the belief that someone else has the duty of representing their concerns to the board, with detachment in their personal involvement. Juella: What kind of email traffic do the Regents get? Kelly James will update by the end of the meeting.

5. New Business

5.1. Staff Emeritus

5.1.1. [President's Action](#)

Dawn: At UAA there are different processes for executive staff, faculty, and staff that used to be faculty. It is somewhat inconsistent as the process is not well communicated nor well followed. When is it appropriate for the Staff Council to be involved? Juella: There is a folder in the Staff Alliance shared drive labeled Staff Emeritus. In the timeline, Staff Alliance passed a resolution and supported staff emeritus status in 2016, of which President Johnsen approved these changes in 2019. In this document it only mentions Senior administrators and officers of the university. Does this apply to all employees who have devoted years of service to the university? Paul: Yes. Emeritus status may be conferred upon non academic employees, as provided in Regents policy for 4070 which covers all non academic employees. It's implemented in each university by its own internal policies. It is an attempt to recognize the accomplishments of staff. Dawn has volunteered to take responsibility for leading the effort to modify the regulation for continuity, fairness and clarity. Juella: It is necessary to start the process of determining what is the process across the four Councils and what is the minimum standard or threshold. Once this is sorted out it should be on the website and out to the councils.

5.2. [Staff Ombuds](#)

Lauren: There is a lot of support for this and Staff Alliance should take action on it. Ronnie: There are a number of scenarios where an ombudsman office would be useful, not just for staff, but also for students and potentially faculty when working through conflicts with others. It would help navigate through university processes such as HR processes or Title IX. It will be challenging, but there is most definitely a need for it.

Dawn: UAA student ombudsman has had a 2 year vacancy because it's such a hard position to get students to fill. There's a lot of responsibility for the student that holds that position. We need to be very cognizant of the perception that we are fighting with administrative reviews and position reviews. We can make a good argument that this is necessary and will not be an administrative burden. Juella: I see this as an advocate for staff comparable to the CBA. It would not advocate for compensation or benefits, it would be there as an advocate if there are problems like the CBA has a grievance process for faculty. This is a chance to counterbalance the university grievance process which is automatically stacked against staff. It is a good time for a blended mission with ANSI and staff in general providing a mechanism for disputes. There needs to be a clear idea of the benefits and the purpose of the position. Lauren: The group should start collecting information of why we want one and information about how it works at other universities. Juella: It may ultimately come out either as a stand alone initiative or as part of the shared governance initiative. Lauren will start collecting information.

5.3. Staff Governance fiscal support

5.3.1. [Budget](#)

This is the financial support that we have received. It should be part of the onboarding process for the new officers for Alliance to be made aware that this budget exists. It is possible to use the fund for a Retreat in the Spring.

5.4. Meeting with regents

Juella: Faculty Alliance is meeting with the regents this afternoon, we could also consider a Staff Alliance meeting that includes the regents. Dawn: I support this. The staff voice is not one that the regents hear. It is beneficial in a number of different aspects for the regents to participate in one of our meetings and for them to be able to engage with us, on our level, in our space. Ronnie: We should have predefined topics and action items that we would like to bring up to make the most efficient use of our time. Dawn: A well planned constructive conversation would be beneficial. Juella: We need to consider what would be our goals in meeting directly with them, what would be our list of points to make and how would the meeting be structured. During the Board meeting none of the regents talked about how the compensation philosophy would affect staff and what is the staff perspective on this. The key to meeting with the regents is to raise their awareness of the challenges we are facing. It is important for a multitude of reasons but most importantly because nothing is changing with the staff situation at the university. The current budget situation and the FY 23 budget. There is no change in the current budget and the FY 23 budget as long as the governor and the legislature are mired in disagreement. Tania has volunteered to help with the meeting agenda with the regents. Juella noted that President Pitney has committed to coming to the December Staff Alliance meeting so we may want to have a conversation on topics including the meeting with the regents.

6. Ongoing Business

6.1. Monthly with President Pitney: last - 2Nov21, next - 7Dec21

Linda: Please ask President Pitney what she would like to discuss at our December Staff Alliance meeting so we can prepare for it. Lauren: Does President Pitney have any more details on what is happening after the compensation philosophy and other items mentioned in the response to the compensation memo.

6.2. [Draft Compensation Philosophy statement](#) - Update

David Bishko: It is on HR to do a lot of analysis and we may need to seek outside counsel. We do plan to put in some kind of performance based compensation but there are questions as to how that would work as they are complicated to do. We would update the board in February and in June with something more solid. There is a question of the existing compensation philosophy and regulations that might need to be changed based on this new philosophy. Juella: Everyone is in agreement that we will see how the December conversation with President Pitney goes and decide what the next steps should be.

6.3. Shared Staff Recognition & Development Day.

David Bishko: President Pitney is fully supportive of staff development but she is concerned about the optics of such a day with the example of previous presidents who participated in ice cream events or barbecues. Staff Recognition and Development Day should be an effort that is led by staff councils. She doesn't want to limit one university based on what another UA university does so she was not in support of consistency among universities rather than giving each university the flexibility to express the recognition they want. Juella: I understand her perspective and concerns. I do think we can come together around a common theme and understanding. We can advocate as a group for that. President Pitney has her challenges in dealing with three chancellors and we don't need to be a part of applying any pressure to an already challenging relationship. Although, we should be prepared to apply some pressure to our chancellors ourselves. We should remind everyone that we are all part of a bigger picture that has to deal with the funding challenges that come from the legislature. Lauren: It is really important that each campus Council should advocate with their Chancellor with the recognition aspect. We should have a minimum recognition level that is the same for all staff because some staff are getting recognized and others not at all. Ronnie: Staff Council gave feedback on some shared activities and a shared keynote speaker. We don't necessarily have the staff time amongst our Council to really do as good a job as we would like to do with this and HR may not have staff time available either. Juella: Let's try to find 30 minutes to an hour for all of us to focus on that topic, share our thoughts and focus on a common ground. We want to approach our various administrations, including the president's office and insist on the administration demonstrating their appreciation.

6.3.1. [President's response to Compensation Committee req](#)

- 6.4. CHRO Hiring Committee - Mathew Mund to give update
- 6.5. [Affinity Group proposal](#) - response due from President - 12/2/21
- 6.6. [Staff Development Fund](#) - Update

Discussion about why they haven't been submitting written reports. Are we prepared to give a report today? Juella reminded the group that a written report is due in December to their chancellors, VCAS, HR business partners and Staff Alliance. Group approved a due date of December 15th. Keep in mind the report will be used in part to justify including another round in the FY23 budget.

- 6.6.1. System Office - looking for speaker
- 6.6.2. UAA -
- 6.6.3. [UAF](#) -
- 6.6.4. UAS -

6.7. Committees

- 6.7.1. Systemwide Committees - [motion and draft memo](#)

Ronnie motions to move. Linda seconds.

Dawn: I suggest changing the draft to separate the list so there is a list of councils that were known in 2019 and another list of the councils that remain.

A motion was made to approve the memo with Dawn's one change and transmit it to the president.

None opposed. All in favor.

VP Paul Layer: This is a perfect topic for the Staff Alliance meeting with the president because if these committees no longer exist, how does the President feel she is getting input from staff.

- 6.7.2. Compensation - Update

Group decided with VP Layer's input that our reply to the president's response was not a formal action requiring a response from her. Discussion led to decision to bring this topic up during Juella's December one on one meeting and decide then if formal action is necessary.

- 6.7.2.1. [Reply to President's Response](#)
- 6.7.2.2. [President's Response to FY23 Comp Memo](#)

- 6.7.3. Morale - Update - Ronnie Houchin

This item was tabled until the next meeting in December. Ronnie moves. Linda seconds.

- 6.7.3.1. [Summary in BOR written report](#)
- 6.7.3.2. [Morale Survey Charts and Comparison](#)

- 6.7.4. Joint Healthcare Committee - [Mathew Mund to give update](#)

- 6.7.4.1. Staff Healthcare Committee - Linda Hall

Juella: The SHCC reviewed and updated the UA Staff Alliance Health Care Committee purpose and membership criteria. The Alliance needs to review and

approve it. Linda: They changed the name from Statewide to System Office and clarified the wording. The committee decided that each year the new officers will decide the meeting time that is best suited for current members. Linda motions to approve the changes. Ronnie seconds.

Dawn: On Page 2, we are no longer the UAA APT or the classified council because those two bodies were combined back in 2017 as the UAA Staff Council. Linda Corrected the terminology.

Moved to Approve with changes. No one opposed

6.7.5. [Shared Governance Ad-Hoc Committee Update](#)

We are still meeting bi-weekly on Mondays. We finished going through the Board of Regents Policy and Regulation. We will be summarizing what possible recommendations we might have at our next Ad-Hoc Committee meeting and we plan to discuss how we will share this information to the other governance groups for their feedback. We discussed the Ombudsman position. We had a discussion about the governance website that hasn't been updated in a while that contains items under review. We may follow up to get the website updated so all staff can see the items under review.

Juella: Do you think this is a time to share at the next Governance Council Meeting our concerns as it relates to shared governance and the concept of a common table? Juella and Lauren will discuss this further and put something together for the next Staff Alliance meeting to consider.

6.7.5.1. [Nov 15th agenda](#)

6.7.6. [Staff Alliance Constitution and Bylaws review](#) - Lauren Hartman

Quick walk thru of suggested changes. Lauren noted, staff governance groups are not actually bound by the Alaska open meeting law, which doesn't mean that we don't want to follow it. We thought for accuracy to remove it from the constitution. Discussion of pros and cons of a timed agenda. A timed agenda can give guidance but they can also be an administrative burden. Most of the time a group is able to self direct to stay on track. It's important to be cognizant of the topic, who would want to speak and for how long. Juella: I would prefer to not have a timed agenda. Tania: I recommend removing it. All agreed. Discussion on who is allowed to speak during meetings. Our practice is that the invited guests on the approved agenda should be able to speak. No concerns or comments from Alliance. All in agreement on proposed changes. There will be a first reading during December meeting.

7. Old Business

7.1. [UA Shared Goals and Measurements](#)

They were reviewed but not yet approved at the Board of Regents meeting. It will be presented for approval again in February.

7.2. [Alaska Native Success Initiative](#)

The 5 year plan was accepted by the regents at the meeting.

- 7.3. Exit Survey - Tabled until December/January meeting and waiting to hear from CHRO Bishko re: research
- 7.4. Administrative Reviews

UAF is doing a formal review follow up. We've outlined the actions taken by the Chancellor which are close to none. He hasn't taken any action on the recommendations that came out of the administrative review of UAF upper level management. We are in the process of collecting input and other actions from the representatives of Staff Council and the Faculty Senators.
- 7.5. COVID Operational Status/Activities (formerly Phase C effort and Post-COVID workplace) - Juella requested link to listen to yesterday's forum from David Bishko and see if there is anything we should be made aware of as staff governance. David will pass it on to Juella.

8. Staff Council Reports - Did not have time to discuss reports at this meeting. Juella encouraged members to get their reports attached here so they are available for others to review.
 - 8.1. UAA
 - 8.2. UAF - [November meeting agenda](#)
 - 8.3. UAS
 - 8.4. SO - [November meeting minutes](#)

9. Executive Session

10. Agenda Items or Guests for December 17 meeting
 - 10.1. President Pitney @ 2:30

11. Adjourn

12. Announcements
 - 12.1. Next Board of Regents - January 14
 - 12.2. Written report to Regents due Jan 19 for February meeting