



UNIVERSITY  
of ALASKA  
*Many Traditions One Alaska*

**Zoom Meeting**

Minutes

**Staff Alliance**

Friday, January 21, 2022

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 - This is Linda Hall and Ke Mell's last meeting.

1. Adopt Agenda

Tania moves to approve. Eric seconds.

2. Approve December [Meeting Minutes](#)

Dawn moves to approve. Ke seconds.

Link to December recording:

<https://alaska.zoom.us/rec/share/TM2n69hIVFpTUco4Nnh3SqP5J4IR05SccllNyCd49TWnHJxVuEnGu5fk4GDxubvy.A5XXI8t4yRsOMLiQ>

Passcode: Jz1sbP#w

3. Guest and Public Comments

3.1. [Public Comment Form](#)

No public comments.

4. [Chair's Report](#)

## 5. New Business

### 5.1. System Office Mission Task Force - Ronnie Houchin

The group was formed because the system office administrative management review committee recommended that the system office have a clearly defined mission that clarifies the system office role as one of collaboration and support not command and control. The statewide transformation team report from 2015 provided a good framework through which to define the system offices' role in the mission task force. We discussed the process of putting together the mission statement and the need for a transparent process. We discussed how to make this different from attempts in the past and how to engage people to build an acceptance of it.

### 5.2. Regents Subcommittee on Tuition - Ronnie Houchin

In discussions around tuition, it is often thought of as pertaining to faculty or students and the staff voices are left out. Many staff are interested in tuition, especially those who work on the front lines with students. The purpose of this committee is to refine and clarify the Board of Regents tuition policy. The timeline for the group to meet 3 or 4 times over the course of the spring and provide some recommendations to the Board of Regents at the June meeting. The tuition policy was last updated in 2001. In the past 20 years there has been a change in the rise of online education and the increasing number of non-traditional students. We are losing our competitiveness with other institutions that offer quality online programs. There is a need to differentiate community campus tuition for an occupational endorsement certificate and associate degree programs from bachelor's degree programs. We are greatly overpriced in those programs compared to community colleges in the lower 48. Future topics will look at where there is potential to grow enrollment, educating students about FAFSA and financial aid scholarships, dual enrollment programs, and how tuition fits into the total cost for students. We will also be looking at the tuition revenue in reference to the overall university budget and examine whether there is any flexibility within the overall budget to adjust tuition.

### 5.3. Staff Make Students Count awards

Typically the nominations open during February. The campuses make their committees and selections. The awards are given in the June or July meetings. Discussion on changing the timeline. Decided there are three options for change: 1. For nominations to open in November and the ceremonies at the February meeting. 2. Nominations in the spring and the ceremony at the September meeting. or 3. No Change. Juella: With those three scenarios, ask your individual councils what their thoughts and preferences are.

### 5.4. President's Systemwide Town Hall - January 27

This is a good opportunity to submit questions to President Pitney. Please inform your councils.

### 5.5. [HR's Guided Conversations](#)

This started as a conversation with the HR and UAF Staff Affairs Committee. They have reached out to Staff Alliance looking for topics or facilitators. They have a shared document for tracking and suggestions open for any UA user. [HR Spreadsheet for guided conversations](#). Juella encouraged Staff Alliance to participate and contribute and spread the word. There is also a brown bag lunch every last Wednesday of every month for supervisors hosted by Talent Acquisition.

5.6. [Education Attainment Incentive Program proposal](#)

It is a pilot program in limited use that UAS has been doing for the past four years. The idea is to encourage further education and specifically for staff to be incentivized to earn a higher degree, so employees get a step increase depending on the degree level. There is an additional requirement in order to get the incentive. The employee needs to have a performance appraisal on file within the last 12 months. Their mandatory training also needs to be completed. The employee does not need to get their supervisors approval to complete their degree and be eligible for this increase. It is very positively received at UAS, although not many people take advantage of it. In the past, one of the common issues with bonuses have been departmental budgets. David Bishko: That will be something to discuss with each university's Chancellor. There are no parameters, any and all education attainment is valid.

There is a motion to approve the Education Attainment Incentive Program proposal in concept, knowing that the specific policies and regulations will come back through the review system.

Ronnie: I move to support this. Linda seconds. Unanimous approval.

6. Ongoing Business

6.1. Monthly with President Pitney: last - 12Jan22, next - 1Feb22

Ronnie suggests bringing up the 2% compensation increase. Dawn: We would like to have some information about the next steps for the budget.

6.2. Staff Emeritus

Tabled until the February meeting. Juella: Staff Alliance, please research and write up the process that staff emeritus would have to go through to receive the staff emeritus title and send to Juella and Dawn.

6.2.1. [President's Action](#)

6.2.2. [Modifications email Nov 23](#)

6.3. [Staff Ombuds](#) - on hold

Linda: There was discussion that the ombudsman would be a person who could help employees with questions on the health care plan. Monique: We have to make sure that we aren't being unrealistic of what this position could achieve. Dawn: It will be a lot of work for one person. Agreed to establish an ad hoc committee to work on this. Ke: I suggest not to have mandatory participation for all UA universities. UAS is very small and doesn't have the resources in terms of interested parties for additional duties. Juella:

Let UAS first try to get representation and if not, give your seats back to the group. Ke:  
In agreement.

Dawn motions for Staff Alliance to create an Ad Hoc committee to work to develop a position description for an ombudsman to submit to the President or HR for consideration. Linda seconds. Majority supported.

#### 6.4. Meeting with the UA regents

We intend to get a group together to develop an outline of the event and talking points. Juella will work with Brandi to schedule dates. We originally thought of three meetings with the Regents, although two might be enough to be effective. Staff Alliance reps will send an email to Juella if they are interested in participating in the planning of the meeting with the Regents to take place twice by May.

#### 6.5. [Draft Compensation Philosophy statement](#) - Next?

David Bishko: It states there will be a 2% increase for all non represented employees at the start of the next fiscal year. How it will be done is currently being analyzed. Options: 2% to all active employees which would be a two step increase for all active employees. Or a 2% on the salary grid which would not just be affecting active employees, but people to come, or there could be a split among the two options. Eric: The thought from UAS is that 2% across the board is preferable. Ke Mell: Keep it as simple and equitable as possible. Monique suggests putting the full 2% out across the board but if they are also looking at market adjustments for staff, can that be tacked on to that supplemental budget request? Juella: When the university signs a collective bargaining agreement that includes an increase, the university can take that increase back to the governor and the legislature and ask for a supplemental budget appropriation to cover it.

David Bishko: The Compensation Philosophy Statement is finished which is the foundation moving forward for adequate compensation. The 2% is a placeholder for the real work in compensation which will take more than a year of effort. The biggest concern is that nobody knows what their future compensation is going to be. It could be a combination of merit and cost of living. We are looking at a vendor to help us do this big project. We will be looking at position descriptions. As soon as we form a committee, David Bishko will ask for the Staff Alliance's involvement. There will be a website for a visible form of the process as it goes so all staff can see what is happening in the stages of it.

#### 6.6. Shared Staff Recognition & Development Day - May 5, 2022

The Staff Development Fund from President Pitney has been distributed to the local councils and can be used for this online event. The Staff Council committees puts together the different workshops. There is hope that HR will provide an onboarding workshop. We need to make a decision on a speaker. President Pitney suggested a theme of Empowerment and Innovation. Juella will set up a meeting with David, Tara, and Dawn to get into the details more.