



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Minutes

Staff Alliance

Friday, September 15, 2023

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

[Zoom Meeting](#)

ID: 832 0748 1693

Password: 258504

(Please mute unless speaking.)

Voting Members:

Ronnie Houchin, Past President, UAF Staff Council, Chair, Staff Alliance

DeAnne Ruiz, Co-President, UAA Staff Council, Vice Chair, Staff Alliance

Tara Borland, Vice President, UAF Staff Council

Genevieve Bright, President, System Office Staff Council

Dawn Humenik, Co-President, UAA Staff Council – absent

Jonathan Lasinski, President, UAS Staff Council

Monique Musick, Vice President, System Office Staff Council

Peter Sommers, Vice President, UAS Staff Council

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Adopt Agenda

Peter moves to adopt the agenda. DeAnne seconds.

3. Approve [Minutes of the August 18, 2023 meeting](#)

Tara moves to approve. Monique seconds.

4. Guests and Public Comment

4.1. Guests

4.1.1. Mathew Mund - Chair of JHCC

JHCC is made up of various groups; the Unions and Staff Alliance.

The group makes recommendations for the UA healthcare plan. They get briefed and review the information that comes from Premera and the consultants and then make recommendations on rates and of the health care plan. The Faculty Union has targeted the wellness rebate over the years. They have made a formal action recently that they don't approve of the wellness rebate. The rebate is paid out of our employee contributions.

Only about 40% of the people who have health insurance participate get

the wellness rebate. The rest of the funds roll over into the accounts that pay claims. Matthew asks Staff Alliance to voice their opinion on their thoughts on the wellness rebate. So far the Faculty Union has not provided any alternatives. The rebate is low in the industry. The wellness plan is important in the culture of an organization's wellness culture within the university. Employees pay 15% of the premiums and the University pays the other 85%. Health costs continue to rise but our premium remains flat. Some employees might feel a reduction in benefits by not being able to pursue the rebate. The money that is not refunded goes into a pool which the claims are paid from. It is difficult to prove that the wellness program works to prevent disease and promote early diagnosis of health problems, saving money in the long run.

The Alliance will take the information back to their Councils to gather their responses and ideas.

4.2. [Public Comment Form](#)

No new comments at this time

5. Executive Update(s)/Meeting(s)

5.1. Monthly with President Pitney & CHRO Dahl: last - Sept. 5, next: TBD

DeAnne and Ronnie met with President Pitney. CHRO Dahl was not able to attend. President Pitney prefers to keep the staff Development Funding the same for the next two years to gauge interest and usage. Fee Scholarships were discussed and if there should be a stringent criteria for using it. Also, Linked in learning is another resource which is paid for. There was a discussion about training and who is responsible for supervisor training. The response is generally to take the request to your chancellor. There is a possibility that perhaps Alliance in partnership with HR can look into the Linked In Learning courses. There might be a series of courses Staff could endorse for training needs.

5.2. Monthly with Vice President Layer: last: 28 Aug 23

There are two board meetings coming up about facilities and land issues. Thursday is a special meeting of the full Board on their discussion about strategic planning exercises goals, measures, pillars discussion.

5.3. [Monthly with CHRO](#): last - 12 Sep 23

Remote work threshold is changing from 20% to 40%. There is a new performance review.

5.4. System Governance Council: last - 9 May 23, next - TBD

Has not met yet this year.

6. New Business

6.1. Staff Development Fund—\$500 pro. devo. grants

President Pitney is not inclined to increase the Staff Development Fund. It is currently at 120,000.

6.1.1. [Draft Announcement Language](#)

There will be quarterly deadlines for folks to apply.

There is no official feedback from Alliance. Alliance is asked to contact Lauren directly for suggestions.

6.2. Upcoming Special Board Meetings

6.2.1. September 18: Special Meeting of the Board of Regents' Facilities and Land Management Committee

6.2.1.1. [Agenda](#)

6.2.2. September 21: Special Meeting of the Full Board

6.2.2.1. [Agenda](#)

6.2.3. October 12: Special Meeting of the Full Board

6.3. Retreat

6.3.1. 21-22 September @ [Kenai Peninsula College](#)

DeAnne and Ronnie met on Wednesday for retreat planning with Jonathan King. He will facilitate the conversation about goals and how to achieve them.

There will be a welcome with the KPC campus director, an Alliance overview. From 4 - 5 will be a panel discussion about the experiences of staff at those remote sites. President Pitney will join from 1:30-2:00 on Friday. We hope it will be productive and will set some priorities for the year ahead.

[The Flats Bistro](#) reservations 6 pm

7. Ongoing Business

7.1. [FY25 Compensation Memo](#) (related to 7.3)

7.1.1. [President Pitney's Response](#)

7.2. [Compensation Philosophy Committee](#)

Committee will continue. Conversation around the purpose of that committee.

We need to make sure there is an active Staff Alliance member on this committee.

8. Committee Reports

8.1. Joint Healthcare Committee/Staff Healthcare Committee - Monique Musick and Mathew Mund

Pharmacy costs continue to drive up our increases. There needs to be more efficient communication on health care changes.

8.2. [Staff Development Fund Committee](#)

8.2.1. [Staff Alliance offers Fall 2023 semester fee support | News | University of Alaska Anchorage](#)

8.2.2. [FY23 Draft Report](#)

8.2.3. [FY24 Natural Resources Fund - BOR Agenda Item](#)

8.3. Employee Feedback & Assessment Committee

8.3.1. [Charter approved](#)

8.3.2. Survey planned for rollout Fall 2023

9. Old Business and/or Items of Reference

10. Staff Council Reports

10.1. UAA – a recent retreat with mission, vision and goals with Jonathon King.

10.2. UAF – Derek Bastille was elected Staff council President. Salary grid topic has come up in discussions. How to improve the situation on the salary grid. Brian Hoppough is the person to discuss HR issues. Discussion of the wellness program and how to encourage staff participation.

10.3. UAS –HR postponed their presentation until October. The Diversity & Equity Committee is looking for staff positions.

10.4. SO – Draft goals and ideas for accomplishing this year. Event committee met for a meet and greet in September. October will be a fall potluck which will be Halloween themed. There will be a meeting with the President on Sept 19th There will be a System wide Town Hall in October. Evacuation Drill in the Butrovich building later this month.

11. Agenda Items or Guests for October 2023 meeting

12. Announcements

13. Congratulations to Jessica Black for being the recipient of the Edith Bullock award.

14. Adjourn

Peter motions to adjourn.