



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Staff Alliance

Minutes

Friday, February 14, 2024

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

[Zoom Recording](#) Passcode: Rq.4xe%+

Voting Members:

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

Monique Musick, Vice President, System Office Staff Council - Vice Chair, Staff Alliance

Derek Bastille, President, UAF Staff Council

Tara Borland, Vice President, UAF Staff Council

Genevieve Bright, President, System Office Staff Council

Dawn Humenik, Co-President, UAA Staff Council

Brandon Mckinney, Co-President, UAA Staff Council

Peter Sommers, Acting President & Vice President, UAS Staff Council

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Adopt Agenda
 - 2.1. Monique moved to approve the agenda, and Genevieve seconded the motion.
3. Approve Minutes of the [January 19, 2023 Meeting](#)
 - 3.1. Derek moved to approve the minutes, and Monique seconded the motion.
4. Guests and Public Comment
 - 4.1. Guests
 - 4.1.1. Tara Ferguson, Director of Labor and Employee Relations
 - 4.1.1.1. [Open enrollment](#) will be April 15th to May 3rd.
 - 4.1.1.2. [W4s](#) are available online if anyone needs to change theirs.
 - 4.1.1.3. Negotiations for the Grad Student Union is ongoing
 - 4.1.2. Uriah Nalikak, Director of HR Services
 - 4.1.2.1. Utilizing Law Logics to update the I-9 process, a few different departments are already using it and we are reaching out to more

departments in the next few weeks. Hopefully within the next 6 months or so it will be all wrapped up.

4.1.2.1.1. This allows new hires to complete the process with Law Logics by uploading appropriate documents and then have another person, which can be from the household, family member, friend, etc., with an active email address to physically look at the documents and approve the I-9.

4.1.3. Stefani Gorder, Executive Assistant to the CHRO / UA HR Communications Specialist

4.1.3.1. New career site ([sample not final](#)), which should be launching in the next couple of weeks, is being previewed and tested by individuals.

4.2. [Public Comment Form](#)

4.2.1. No comments submitted.

4.2.2. Not alliance public comment, but UAA did receive a public comment regarding the Wellness Rebate. (Refer to Addendum 1: UAA Public Comment - Wellness Rebate)

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

5.1. Monthly with President Pitney & CHRO Dahl: Jan. 10

5.1.1. JHCC Vote - will recap that part of the conversation for that part of the agenda

5.1.2. Compensation Committee - The desire to be able to have dialogue and discussions from alliances and administration around benefits, compensation, etc. is well received so that ideas can be shared and can work through barriers before transmitting the memo.

5.1.3. Juneau - President Pitney is still optimistic that the legislature will fully fund the compensation.

5.1.4. Employee Experience Survey - Town Halls and various other mechanisms are being worked on to address the results. Leaders are being encouraged to share feedback with and talk within their teams about the results.

5.1.4.1. Respondents from staff were low, still concerned about anonymity, especially at the smaller/rural campuses, especially where descriptive identifiers can be linked to a very limited number of people.

5.2. System Governance Council: Not established for FY24

6. New Business

6.1. FY25 Budget - [Advocacy](#) – [Capitol Report](#) (first of 2024 released Jan 19)

6.1.1. President Pitney did a presentation to the House Finance Committee but the Senate presentation was postponed due to a conflict.

6.2. Employee Experience Survey

6.2.1. [Results](#) - Opened floor for discussion of the results and what is going on at the different campuses.

6.2.1.1. UAS - Using the survey in conjunction with great colleges to work for. The Chancellor tasked them with finding 5 themes to focus on this year.

6.2.1.2. UAA - Met with Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor and inquired: 1) How are you going to involve governance in the way forward; 2) Are you going to create a task force; 3) Are you going to utilize the employee experience department; and 4) What is the plan?

6.2.1.3. UAF - Would like to request specific reports of some additional metrics, and copy of the questions to be able to address specific responses, such as: 1) Response to questions on compensation; 2) Response on trust; etc. From a staff governance perspective, it would be great to have access to more information.

6.2.1.3.1. Tip on exporting data: go into where the filters are, and there's the 3 little dots you can click on the ellipsis dots, and it allows you download data from the survey into a CSV file.

6.2.1.3.2. The Chancellor has been sifting through a list of people for the task force that UAF is going to be putting together, including representatives from governance and staff.

6.2.1.4. SO - Last meeting was just before the results were published and the next meeting will be 3 weeks from now, so will have more to report after that.

6.2.2. Next Steps

6.2.2.1. President Pitney has empowered us to dig deeper into the results. How do we want to move forward, do we want to talk about it now, or wait for additional reports and information?

6.3. Upcoming Board of Regents (BOR) Meeting – February 22-23, 2024

6.3.1. [Committee Meetings](#) - Take place on Thursday, February 22

6.3.2. [Full Board Agenda](#) - Meets on Friday, February 23

6.3.3. Native Arts Festival is going on at the same time, so hopefully the BOR members will get involved with that.

6.3.4. Formalizing the Roadmap; looking into how to make this a good place to work; following up on the special meeting with Regent Purdue, President Pitney; etc.

6.3.5. Ronnie will provide a verbal report for Staff Alliance to the BOR.

6.3.6. Look into the possibility of one on one meeting between Staff Alliance and the Board of Regents.

7. Ongoing Business

7.1. Joint Health Care Committee (JHCC)

7.1.1. Recap of Vote 2/14/2023

7.1.1.1. Although we were voting on rates for open enrollment, it turned into a vote on the Wellness Program. The vote, which is a recommendation to administration, of 6 to 4 for rates that did not include the rebate, and then another vote of 6 to 4 passed that there would be no rebates and no points.

7.1.1.2. The 3 main complaints about the Wellness Program were: 1) A fundamental unfairness with people paying towards the rebate and only 40% were receiving the rebate; 2) The general effectiveness of the program; and 3) All the hoops that people had to go through to qualify for the rebate.

7.1.1.3. Is there a way to create a more proportionate system for voting seats? Currently every group has 2 voting seats even though proportionately staff is the largest group, which means they are the most impacted.

7.1.2. Next Action Steps

7.1.2.1. The JHCC is an advisory committee and makes recommendations. However, the university is trying to be a competitive employer and they need to consider the fiscal, employment, and legal impacts.

7.2. Staff Make Students Count Award

7.2.1. [SMSC 2024 Timeline](#)

7.2.2. 2024 Staff Make Student Count Form to Nominate.pdf

7.2.3. How to Prepare an Effective Staff Make Students Count Award Nomi...

7.2.3.1. The President's Office would like awards to be given to new recipients; previous recipients can become eligible again after X number of years (confirming via Kerynn).

7.2.3.2. Marketing is/has been taking place system wide and at individual campuses, and inquiries have been received regarding nominating staff.

7.2.3.3. No specifics on how many nominations have been received.

7.3. [Compensation Philosophy Committee](#)

7.3.1. Really productive conversations about: 1) If we aren't doing a formal memo, what are we doing; 2) What is the purpose of this committee; 3) How are we going to get there; 4) What are some of the actionable steps that we can be taking; and 5) What ultimately are we going to walk out of there with?

7.3.2. We are going to run through the historical information that was presented in a spreadsheet that was shared, which included everything we have asked for since 2018 and the responses we have received back. We look forward to having that dialogue before we come up with a list of recommendations.

7.4. Longevity

7.4.1. Currently it is the Chancellors' decision on what the defining periods that are considered in determining years of service (all time or just since last hire).

7.4.2. Should a standard be set for all campuses and system wide offices to follow.

7.4.3. The task to search through paper files for those that are pre-Banner is time consuming for HR, but as time goes by this will fade out. In order to allocate resources from HR to do that they have to know what the official policy is.

8. Committee Reports

8.1. Joint Healthcare Committee/Staff Healthcare Committee

8.1.1. No further updates besides the ones noted in section 7.1 Ongoing Business/Joint Healthcare Committee.

8.2. [Staff Development Fund Committee](#)

8.2.1. Funds have gone out.

8.3. Employee Feedback & Assessment Committee

8.3.1. Next week on Tuesday will be the next meeting, where we will get the opportunity to ask Margo some additional questions and possibly get more information about the survey.

9. Old Business and/or Items of Reference

9.1. Board of Regents Special Meeting – January 17, 2024

9.1.1. [Transcript](#)

9.1.2. Article: "[How Mitch Daniels Made Purdue a University Conservatives Could Love](#)"

9.2. Retreat Recap

9.2.1. [Notes and Results from Jonathan King](#)

10. Staff Council Reports

10.1. UAA - Council remains active, we were able to fill 2 out of the 3 seats. We have one hourly person now on our executive board. We had 15 to 20 people attend the Coffee with Council on February 2nd. We are organizing a BOR

testimony listening party with some refreshments. Basically, trying different experiences to get people involved in governance.

- 10.2. [UAF](#) - 1) We have a lot of questions and issues surrounding the R One Initiative, which is consuming a lot of bandwidth for folks about what it means, what it doesn't mean, and how to move forward. 2) We are still trying to get our full membership slate, the Geophysical Institute, which is supposed to have 2 representatives and we are still having problems getting anybody to volunteer for the Staff Council from the Research Institute. We also still are looking for chairs for a couple of our internal committees. 3) Tuition waivers sometimes do not cover the higher tuition classes, because the BOR policy is that the higher tuition portion is considered a fee which the tuition waiver doesn't cover. What are the chances that people are actually granted compensation later if they get a degree or certification, because if we are depending on this program to say, "the fees are higher, but you will get compensated for it later."

10.2.1. Memry did mention in the Compensation Committee meeting a couple of weeks ago that staff have been compensated through either a reclassification, bonus increase in pay because of educational attainment. A little over 600 employees have had independent upward movement, however that is not all related to educational attainment.

- 10.3. UAS - Currently we are talking about staff development day ideas and topics. We will be losing our Sitka representative, and not sure if we are going to have someone fill that, so we may have to go the rest of the semester without a quorum.

- 10.4. SO - We talked about longevity and outstanding service awards, which will take place on April 26th at our last meeting. We are coordinating with Scott and Austin regarding a Staff Development Day. We continued our conversation with the JHCC and Compensation Committee. Paul provided updates from the BOR following the Regent Purdue/President Pitney presentation. We have a couple of vacancies, but we are just going to hold them vacant until the actual nomination process.

11. Agenda Items or Guests for the March 15, 2024 meeting

12. Announcements

13. Adjourn

- 13.1. Dawn made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Addendum 1: UAA Public Comment - Wellness Rebate

2/2/24, [REDACTED]

UA Mail Wellness Rebate Feedback



Dawn Humenik <dahumenik@alaska.edu>

Wellness Rebate - Feedback

[REDACTED], 2024 at [REDACTED]
to: Dawn Humenik <dahumenik@alaska.edu>

Hello Dawn,

I was reading through the Staff Council Newsletter today (which was fantastic by the way!), and the paragraph about the Wellness Rebate reminded me of an issue I experienced with this program that I thought might be worth sharing. I figure I am not the only one who was negatively affected, and things don't change without communication. I am not sure you are the right person to receive this story, but I decided to send it to you anyhow.

I was pregnant in 2019, and I didn't meet the established biometric ranges required to receive a point in the HealthyRoads system, because the biometric ranges for pregnant women are different than they are for non-pregnant women. I attached an email exchange I had with American Specialty Health about this.

In summary, even though my biometric screening results placed me in a healthy range for a pregnant woman in the third trimester, the results were outside of the healthy range that American Specialty Health said I had to be within to receive a point toward the rebate. They asked me to go above and beyond and complete other tasks to receive different points because of this or to go above and beyond to seek a Reasonable Alternative Waiver from my doctor (which would take time and money, because doctor's visits aren't free). I was disappointed to be asked to put forth more effort and money than my peers, because I was pregnant.

I think it's awesome to provide a monetary incentive (rebate) to employees for having biometric screening completed so employees are informed about their health statistics. I recommend employees receive a point for getting this testing done, even if their results do not fall within a recommended range. I believe this tweak to the plan would address the issue. (Maybe this has already been made? I'm not sure.) We should reward participation and the effort employees put forth to become more educated about their health status and how to achieve their goals. However, I recommend refraining from rewarding employees for falling within certain biometric ranges that may not be healthy for them.

Thanks for reading.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

UA Mail - RE_ [EXTERNAL] Contact from ASHCompanies.com.pdf
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