

# LSU | Staff Senate

## MEETING MINUTES

July 15, 2020

President Jonathan Levesque presided over the July 15, 2020, Staff Senate meeting held by Zoom Video Conferencing at 10:30 a.m.

### Attendance

#### Executive/Administrative/Managerial

P – Reonas, Barbara ('21)  
P – Tammy Millican ('23)

#### Professional/Non-Faculty

P – Aslin, Jessica ('21)  
A – Baldrige, Samantha ('21)  
P – Bonner, Amber ('21)  
P – Dawan, Hope ('21)  
P- Henry, Rachel ('21)  
P – Lane, Madison ('21)  
P – Garner, Karen ('22)  
P – Herman, Catherine  
P – Holstein, Lindsey ('22)  
P – Lee, Mark ('22)  
P – Levesque, Jonathan ('22)  
P – Nickerson, Jon ('22)  
P – Roth, Nicole ('22)  
P – Clemmons, Jill ('23)  
P – Kimmell, Alyssa ('23)  
P – Harb, Ryan ('23)  
P – Lewis, John ('23)  
P – Marrero, Ali ('23)  
P- Sansoni, Gerald ('23)  
P – Shows, Haley ('23)  
P – Slocum, Jenee ('23)  
P – Stone, Megan ('23)  
A – Wilson, Derek ('23)

#### Service/Maintenance

#### Skilled Crafts

A – Corbitt, Brent ('22)

#### Technical/Paraprofessional

P – Matkovic, Igor ('23)

#### Clerical/Secretarial

P – Salesneves, Sarah ('22)  
P – Salvadras, Amber ('22)

A – Indicates Absent

P – Indicates Present

Pr – Indicates Proxy

## **GUESTS:**

Casey Coughlin, Campus Federal Credit Union  
Darcee Olson, LSU Libraries  
Aaron Cherry, Facility Services

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by President Jonathan Levesque at 10:30 a.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

There was a quorum with no proxies noted.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Senator Jessica Aslin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – June 17, 2020, Staff Senate Meeting**

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Senator Megan Stone. The motion, seconded by Senator Tammy Millican, carried.

## **GUEST SPEAKER – CLAY JONES, ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

President Jonathan Levesque introduced Clay Jones who is the Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer. Clay came to LSU from Ole Miss, where he has worked for almost 23 years. He finished his tenure there serving as the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Administration and Human Resources. In this role, he served as the Chief Human Resources Officer and also performed other roles in the area of finance and administration. He also previously worked at the University of Southern Mississippi and has over 29 years of experience in the human resources area. Clay enjoys playing and watching his daughters play tennis, running, and is a huge SEC sports fan.

Clay thanked the Staff Senate for the invitation to speak today. He mentioned that his platform is customer service and transparency. He realizes that Human Resources may not be able to meet everyone's expectations in every single thing that they do but he will be as honest and forth coming as he can be. Clay mentioned that he started working at LSU on March 9 and by March 16, LSU shut down campus due to the COVID pandemic.

Clay received some specific questions from President Jonathan Levesque before the meeting that he will do his best to answer. If he doesn't know the answer, he will get that information back to President Levesque to share with the full Senate. Clay is still learning the processes and the campus as a whole at LSU.

Q: We know that Governor Edwards is moving forward with providing pay raises to classified employees for the third year in a row, despite the pandemic this year. We also know that departments, including LSU, get to independently decide if they will provide raises to unclassified employees and some have made to decision to provide those raises. What decision has LSU made on pay raises for unclassified staff?

A: There was a debate in the Legislature that did not want to move forward with raises for classified employees. They felt it was too difficult from a budget standpoint. There was a pretty strong debate and the Legislature did not pass giving raises to classified employees but the Civil Service has over ruled that and pushed raises forward. LSU as a university will honor that and will give the raises per the Civil Service guidelines. LSU is not doing a campus-wide raises for unclassified employees at this time. He realizes that it is disappointing to a lot of people. Clay mentioned that it is a different dynamic here where this is the time he has been in this situation where the state has that type of control and influence. He has never worked in an environment where some employees get raises and some don't. We are definitely in a tight budget time due to COVID where the university has received a lot of revenue but we are very uncertain what it may do to us in the coming year. He is very grateful that no one has lost their job or lost significant pay or benefits. In order to be sure that we don't have to take drastic steps, there is no scheduled raises for unclassified staff across the board at this time.

Q: We are aware that LSU will begin to conduct exit interviews with employees when they leave the university. What will be done with this information? Do you see this changing the way HRM operates and if so how?

A: Human Resource Management has recently put in an exit interview process. This has come up in the diversity meetings that are happening. He has done this at other universities and the purpose of this is to see if there are trends or potential some problems. They are looking to see if the same pattern is occurring so they can look at those areas to see what is happening. It is a good process as people do not share what may be happening but when they are leaving they do share due to no fear of some type of retaliation from the department they worked in. Some people may hold a vendetta, so they do have to sort through the information that is received.

Q: From the Human Resource side, can LSU increase staffing and hours of service for janitorial staff?

A: Facility Services is about 40 custodians short right now. They have received permission to try to fill those positions although we are in a hiring freeze right now. Due to LSU's closure, the custodians have not been pushed out on campus that much, so being short staffed has not been an issue so far. It has helped with some salary savings but they are looking to fill those positions. They are also looking to fill 40 more temporary positions that will help with the increased level of cleaning that is going on. The custodians are working some overtime now to help with being shorthanded.

Q: If there are to be rules in place for close interaction with staff, faculty and students, will there be any enforcement mechanisms in place if people decide not to participate?

A: He is not sure of the student enforcement which may be handled through the code of conduct. For faculty and staff, we have asked for people to practice good hygiene where they wash their hands, use wipes or sanitizing solution when they may not be able to wash their hands. Also, to wear a mask when they are in close proximity of people and to try and stay 6 feet apart. Clay expects to receive some complaints which will be looked at individually. His advice is to stay away from people as much as possible. There are setting up a unit that will handle reporting and contract tracing. If an employee tests positive, we will need to know who they have been in contact with and of course they would need to be quarantined for the 14 days.

Q: Is Human Resources planning for some employees to continue working from home?

A: They have released a work from home policy. It seems that this policy has been in the works for a few years now and has now been completed. This policy does allow employees to work from home which is still happening while we are in Phase 2. When LSU gets back to a fully functioning campus, there will be announcement that if you can come back to work, they are to do so. If not, those employees will need to work with their supervisor to come to an agreement. It does require the supervisor approval to continue working from home. Human Resource Management should be more of a consulting role then a policing role. The only way Human Resources has to be involved is of the employee works out of the state due to taxing and different legal situations that LSU may encounter.

There has been some employees who have been asked to sign the agreement (policy), there may need to be some clarification from Human Resources due to some units requiring their employees to sign by July 1. There is some language in Section G of the policy which states that working from home should not substitute dependent care. Remote employees cannot care for dependents during work hours however if schools go to a hybrid teaching model, every working parent would need to submit leave for the entire semester. Will there be any flexibility there?

A: There is no harm in doing that now but it will be required when LSU comes back to full operation. With trying to care for dependents while working is a slippery slope. Clay has talked with administrators and they are not enforcing that area right now. Some universities have been. If Human Resources needs to speak with that department, they will. There is a federal law that states that employees have the right to get extended family medical leave up until December 2020. They realize that employees can file that and still get paid Clay feels that within reason, he would rather get as much as we can from employees who are working remotely rather them filing medical leave and not work at all. It is not necessarily wrong for supervisors to ask employees to sign the policy while children are at home at home.

Q: There is some confusion on taking leave, the roadmap was clear that if you test positive for COVID what leave type to put in but it wasn't clear that if you have been exposed but not tested yet. Do staff have to submit for sick leave if they were exposed to COVID at work?

A: Human Resources has just changed the policy in regards to that. Once the contract tracing unit is set up, so if someone is identified as being exposed, they would need to be quarantined for 14 days. It is tough if someone comes to work as gets exposed. Clay is currently working on a creative solution to that which is being reviewed by general council. If an employee comes to

work and contracts COVID and can work from home great but if not, he is trying to come up with a solution to where those employees do not need to use their leave. That is only if an employee is contract tracing at LSU and would not be considered worker man's compensation but he is trying to come up with a plan similar to that.

Clay Jones thanked the Staff Senate again for this time to speak with the group. President Levesque would like to invite him back to speak at a future meeting to discuss diversity at LSU. If anyone has any further questions or concerns, please send them to him so they can be compiled and sent to Clay.

## **PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

"It is a privilege and an honor to serve as LSU's 40<sup>th</sup> Staff Senate President. Our university has undergone many changes over the last decade. From flipping our financial model to modernizing our Human Resource and Accounting systems, Staff Senate has been there to advocate for your needs.

Today, we find ourselves facing challenges never before seen in LSU's history. I am proud of our staff for their flexibility and resiliency in the face of COVID-19. I am inspired by our commitment to diversity ensuring the world will hear every Tiger's roar.

I ask every senator to remind themselves why they volunteered to serve on Staff Senate. If you are like me, it is the simple fact you love this University and wish to "Do More". My promise to the senate is this, I will come calling on each of you to help lead our body in the service of LSU.

LSU deserves our best, LSU needs our best as we assist campus leadership to advance an agenda that will further modernize our institution while providing a great experience to our students. Staff Senate has cultivated strong relationships with the highest levels of campus leaders, it is time we leverage those relationships into actions that enhance the work life culture on campus. Staff Senate has done a wonderful job meeting its charge of "Advocacy, Awareness, and Appreciation". We must all work together to continue the mission. It is time we emerge and evolve into an organization that everyone knows and recognizes as integral to the staff perspective.

I would like to take a moment to recognize our previous Staff Senate President, Rachel Henry whose tireless work ethic was a sight to behold. Rachel worked many unrecognized hours, attended innumerable meetings, and sent literal thousands of emails across campus. Her passion for LSU is clear and delightful. Rachel, on behalf of a grateful staff, thank you!

You'll notice a common theme in this address, as a 4<sup>th</sup> generation military veteran "service" is in my blood. It is the very fabric of my being. I hope to inspire each of you into action, I hope to provide our staff with the advocacy they deserve, and finally I hope to have a small part in helping our wonderful students have the same incredible college experience that I had here in 2004. Each of those cannot be done without your help. So join me, as we enter the fray of yet another magically challenging fall with endless possibilities.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Jonathan Levesque Henry reviewed relevant meetings in which he attended.

- June 23 – The Chief Information Officer Hiring Committee met for the last time providing Dan Layzell with 2 qualified candidates for selection. Dan selected Craig Woolley from Wright State University as our next CIO. He will begin on August 10.
- July 1 - Staff Senate Executive Committee Members attended the LSU Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity Leadership Retreat which was an 8 hour retreat featuring town halls, lectures, and breakout sessions. The breakout groups will assist the university in advancing policy as it relates to improving minority representation on campus.
- July 7 – The Staff Senate Executive Committee met to prepare for the general meeting.
- July 13 – Attended the Staff Diversity Breakout Group met to set goals for the year and beyond which he will share once those approved to publicly share.
- July 14 – Attended a meeting with Provost Stacia Haynie who graciously invited the Staff Senate President to join the weekly COVID-19 Deans and Vice President's update meeting. The meeting introduced LSU's efforts towards creating a system for contact tracing and symptom reporting via Qualtrics. This was a very preliminary design but it did provide insight on where the university is headed for this fall.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Amendments to the Staff Senate Constitution**

The LSU Staff Senate Constitutional Amendments form to vote has been sent out electronically to all staff members. He encouraged everyone to place their vote by Friday's deadline. As long as we receive 2/3 of staff votes in favor, we can send it to Interim President Galligan for final approval along with the Bylaws amendments that the full Senate passed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Staff Senate Appointment**

President Levesque announced that the Executive Committee approved the appointment of Darcee Olson from LSU Libraries to fill the Professional/Non-Faculty category vacancy through June 2021. She has been employed at LSU for a little over a year now and reached out to the Staff Senate on how to get involved. She was welcomed to the Staff Senate.

### **Committee Assignments**

President Levesque discussed committee assignments. The description of each committee and goals were shared with the full senate. There is a new Community Engagement Committee that has been included which is a great way to network with employees on campus for Senators

who are interested to select. There will be assigned seats for a representative from our minority caucuses as well. The selection form will be shared in Microsoft Teams for each Senator to fill out their selection. The deadline to select will be July 22. The Executive Committee will meet on July 31 to finalize the list which will be shared during the August meeting.

### **Staff Senate Apparel**

Staff Senate Administrative Coordinator Melonie Milton announced that the Staff Senate has opened orders for Staff Senate apparel.

### **Staff Senate Budget**

Treasurer Catherine Herman provided a brief financial report to the full Senate. A written report will be included for the August meeting. The Staff Senate Gift Fund is in need of contributions. This fund was implemented to recognize certain events for Senators and former Senators that may happen throughout the year. The guidelines for giving were mentioned, and Senators were asked to donate \$20 each to the fund for the year.

### **Senator's Photograph**

President Levesque announced that if anyone needs a professional photograph headshot for the Staff Senate website, time blocks will be scheduled once we return to campus. Senators should contact Melonie Milton to let her know if they would like to be included.

### **Future Guest Speakers**

President Levesque announced that there will be some representatives from Parking and Transportation who will guest speak about the Mobility Implementation Plan during the August meeting. Please submit any suggestions for future guest speakers to the Staff Senate Executive Committee.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Staff Senator Birthday**

Staff Senate Administrative Coordinator announced the following birthday:

- Secretary Jessica Aslin will celebrated her birthday on July 16.
- Senator John Nickerson will celebrate his birthday on July 16.
- Senator Lindsey Holstein will celebrate her birthday on July 22.

Happy Birthday!

Congratulations to Senator Lindsey Holstein for finishing her MBA in one year.

Congratulations to Madison Lane on her recent engagement.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN** – With there being no more business, Past-President Rachel Henry made a motion to adjourn. The motion, seconded by Senator Megan Stone, carried.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Jessica Aslin, Secretary

JA/mm