System Office Staff Council Minutes

Monday, March 4, 2024
1:00 pm-3:00pm
[Zoom Recording](#)   **Passcode:** f5sA*.i1

<u>Representatives:</u>
-Genevieve Bright (2023-2025) FY24 President
-Monique Musick (2023-2024) FY24 Vice President
-Austin Somaduroff (2022-2024) FY24 Secretary
-Andrew Aquino (2023-2024)
-Rebecca Catlin (2023-2025)
-Scott Fronzuto (2023-2024)
-Lauren Hartman (2023-2025)
Chelsey Okonek (2022-2024)
-Aimee Sudbeck (2023-2025)

<u>Alternates:</u>
Vacant

<u>Governance Support:</u>
Noel Romanovsky
Mary Burnham
Sharon Dayton

<u>Guests:</u>
Chad Hutchison, Director of State Relations
Paul Layer, VP ASR
Bryan Hoppough, Human Resources senior business partner

<u>Agenda:</u>
1. Call to Order and Roll Call
    a. Review and Adopt [Agenda](#)
        i. Monique moved to approve the agenda and Andrew seconded.
    b. [Minutes 2.5.2024](#)
        i. Scott moved to approve the minutes and Monique seconded.

2. Guest Comments
    a. Chad Hutchison
        i. The compensation increases and fixed cost increases for the university, have moved onto the Senate Finance Committee.
        ii. House Bill 148 (Alaskan Performance Scholarship Bill) has already passed the House Finance Committee and is now in the Senate Finance Committee. This opens up the scholarship to make more eligibility for young people in Alaska that want to attend higher education. It also

increases the eligibility for technical education. It has received bipartisan support.

    iii. Education tax credits are very important for the university since it allows private companies and third party partners to donate directly to education for education purposes. Oftentimes this will inject money directly into some of our programs or research projects. House Bill, 89, which was originally a child tax credit bill for childcare, now includes education tax credits which has a 3 million dollar cap when right now the current cap is 1 million.

    iv. The Technical Vocational Education program has some challenges. The legislature is very concerned about the workforce right now. It's a very high need, especially for the technical and vocational workforce.

    v. We have two regents up for confirmation, Stephen Colligan and Seth Church.

b. Paul Layer

    i. President Pitney sent out a reminder to everybody to review the results of the employee engagement survey, and to think about recommendations going forward. One of the biggest issues/comments brought up was that doing these surveys doesn't bring about changes. So, how do we change? So, take a look at some of those results as they come forward to you, and we'd love to hear from this group. Take a look at what we are doing here in the system office to really improve morale, function, and general climate.

    ii. There were some good discussions with the Board of Regents (Board), on some issues but in general the Board is supportive of what President Pitney is trying to do and the direction we are going with the Roadmap to Empower Alaska. There will be an ad hoc committee to look at tuition and enrollment strategies across the system.

c. Bryan Hoppough

    i. Reminders: 1) Open enrollment will be from April 15th to May 3rd; 2) the 8 hour personal holidays and any annual leave over 240 hours will need to be used before the fiscal year concludes or employees will forfeit those hours; and 4) performance evaluations should be submitted by the end of the fiscal year.

    ii. Performance evaluations changed to a 5-rating system from a 3-rating system: 1 - Does not meet expectations; 2 - Partially meets expectations; 3 - Fully meets expectations; 4 - Exceeds expectations/exceptional; and 5 - Sets a new standard of performance.

3. Public Comment
   a. No public comment received.

4. New Business
   a. BOR recap - news release

       i. Refer to 2. Guest Comments, Section b. Ii.
      ii. The Board gave permission to move forward on two UAF initiatives: the funding for the planetarium expansion at the museum, which is almost entirely being covered by a private donor; and the Troth Yeddah Indigenous Studies program.
    iii. The Roadmap to Empower Alaska was approved by the Board, which staff was added into, which was not highly visible before, using the employee experience as part of the goals.
b. State of the University Address - March 11
       i. Should be streaming from the statewide site.
c. Staff Make Students Count
       i. Updates on deadline: March 18 - https://www.alaska.edu/governance/staff-alliance/staff-make-students-count/
      ii. Be sure to get any nominations in before then
d. Staff Development Day
       i. No updates at this time.
e. Longevity and Outstanding Service Awards: April 26, 2024
       i. Send in any nominations for Outstanding Service Awards.
f. Faculty Alliance Thought Leaders Forum – AI and the universities March 28 - 29
       i. Found this to be an interesting topic and idea.

5. Ongoing Business
a. System Office Intranet - new alaska.edu/System leadership overview video - contains meeting highlights plus announcements, deadline reminders, and fun stuff happening.
       i. BOB site
      ii. Of note - Info boards/signage: digital directory, current ones are incorrect, rather than analogue
    iii. Hannah Irigoyen is a new editor on the site, she will be working on adding a resources page as the new building coordinator (Rebecca will continue to support Hannah as a backup) which will include information like what are the conference rooms, how do you get keys, etc.?
b. Institutional Compliance Program
       i. Compliance Chats
          1. The latest series is covering cybersecurity.
      ii. UA Compliance Leadership for Supervisors Training
c. Safety - thoughts on including during staff development day; Other opportunities to train/inform:
       i. Consider possible local training opportunity/get-together: Emergency Procedures/Slide/Defib.Equipment/Fire for each building (Staff Development Day possibility?)

6. Reports

a. President's Report
   i. Monthly meeting with VP Paul Layer did not take place in February
      1. Feb. meeting canceled; Next meeting Monday, March 11, 2024
      2. Updates from Paul:
         a. Empower Alaska update presented to the Regents:
            [Priorities Document](#)
   ii. Staff Alliance (Genevieve, Monique)
      1. February 16 [Minutes](#) and [Recording](#) Passcode: Rq.4xe%+
         a. Discussed the results of the Employee Engagement
            Survey, JHCC meeting results, and Compensation
            Committee updates - which will be discussed further down
            in the agenda
         b. Next meeting Friday, March 22, 2024
      2. HR discussion during the Staff Alliance meeting covered:
         a. Employee Experience survey, performance evaluations,
            and remote work agreement updates
         b. New [UA Careers](#) website
b. SOSC Committees
   i. Morale/[Events](#) Committee (Aimee, Andrew, Genevieve, Rebecca)
      1. Date set for April 26, 2024
         a. Recent meeting discussed timelines for
            outreach/purchases
         b. Initial emails and invitations to honorees went out - be sure
            to nominate Outstanding Employees by April 1… No joke!
   ii. Awards Committee (Aimee & Genevieve)
      1. Stay tuned for a Spring touch-base between now and the L/O
         Awards!
      2. 2023 [Event recording and photos](#)
   iii. Nominations Committee (Lauren)
      1. No update at this time
   iv. Staff Development Day (Austin, Scott)
      1. [Session recordings](#)
      2. Scheduling Date w/ President's office
      3. Single day
c. Staff Alliance Committees
   i. [Compensation Committee](#) (Monique)
      1. Renamed - Ad Hoc Staff Total Compensation Advisory Committee
         a. Moving away from memos that were asking for items and
            just receiving updates, and moving forward with a
            committee that works with HR to discuss compensation
            topics.
      2. Updates since February meeting
         a. Re-creating a working committee to review compensation
            requests, and getting into the details.

3. Evaluation and discussion of past staff requests
    a. A spreadsheet has been created to track the majority of the "asks" via memos since 2018.
    b. Reviewing the items and talking about the "why," what would the changes requested entail, what we are trying ot achieve.
ii. [Staff Development Fund](#) (Lauren)
    1. Last deadline for $500 professional development funding is April 1st
    2. Class fee scholarships for summer semester dependent on leftover funding
    3. LinkedIn Learning Licenses (now managed by HR):
        a. [LinkedIn Learning info page](#)
iii. Joint Healthcare Committee (Monique)
    1. Reviewing proposed rates for the upcoming fiscal year, and since we are a self insured plan it needs to be decided how much money to take from employee contributions and university contributions to calculate what it will cost to cover healthcare expenses. To do this we use data from our own health plan and data from consultants that use the national trend.
        a. Since Covid there has been a spike in actual costs, and it is anticipated that there will be increases this coming fiscal year.
    2. There has been ongoing discussion over the wellness plan, especially the wellness rebate, which was part of the cost of the plan. Out of the people on the plan were paying extra for a rebate that only 40% of the people received due to not completing the requirements.
        a. One point was what is the point of a wellness program with no incentive.
    3. The committee was provided two tables
        a. 1st table showed the projected increases for each of the different groups (staff, staff/spouse, staff/child, etc.), and with the wellness rebate remove (no employee contributions toward the rebate, basically ending the program.
        b. 2nd table was the table that the JHCC was going to move forward to recommend, which meant some people rates might go down, some would stay equal, and other might have an increase.
    4. JHCC voted 6-4 to endorse the rates removing the wellness rebate and a second 6-4 passed that any wellness plan can't have a points system or rebate.

               5. The HR Administration has 20 days to respond to the recommendation of the committee. All of this will determine what the staff will see when it comes to open enrollment.
- iv. Staff Healthcare Committee (Monique)
  1. Overview of JHCC meeting

d. Other Committees
- i. Employee Experience (formerly known as Staff Engagement) Survey (Lauren) - renamed Employee Feedback and Assessment Committee
  1. Responses are in!
     https://www.alaska.edu/hr/training/experience.php
  2. See the list of questions and determine what we'd like more information about in advance of the March 22 SA meeting.
  3. Staff Alliance wanted to get a little bit more data than what was publicly available to staff but just about staff. SA will be asking for an additional dashboard for the key items that really impact staff. There may be items that would be actionable or areas we would be able to advocate for staff.
- ii. UA Accessibility Workgroup (Scott)
  1. Working to become an officially recognized committee
     a. Group meets every two weeks - connect with Scott for an Invite.
  2. No updates at this time.

7. General Updates and Reminders
   a. Events and New Updates:
      i. Upcoming BOR Meetings: June
      ii. Recent meetings: Feb. 20, 2024

   b. News and General Info Links:
      i. Capitol Report
      ii. UA News Center
      iii. System Office Bulletin (replaced by System Office Intranet)
      iv. Upcoming HR Trainings

8. Local Issues
   a. Anchorage
      i. Safety inspection in the brigade building, no fire alarms or testing.
   b. Fairbanks
      i. Digital directory discussion
      ii. Plowing announcements have gone out so be sure to remove cars from those parking lots in a timely manner.

9. Department Updates, Issues, and Kudos

a. Starting Thursday, Scott will be providing basic & advanced training sessions for Zoom (Tuesday and Thursday drop-ins): Zoom Trainings - Spring 2024
b. Foundation – UA Giving Day: https://givingday.alaska.edu/
c. Andrew – https://www.alaska.edu/alaska/campuses.php

10. Agenda items for next meeting (April):
a. Postponed: AI - impacts on faculty and staff positions, security, etc.; Ben (CITO) - guest speaker? Enterprise level subscription? ChatGPT vs microsoft edge options - pros and cons of both?
b. Staff Council Retreat - timing/topics

11. Closing Comments
a.

12. Adjourn

Resources:
- SOSC Meeting Recordings
- SOSC FY23 Goals
- Constitution and bylaws
- Regents' policy and university regulation
  - 03.01 - Faculty, Staff and Student Governance
- System Office org chart
- Governance basics presentation
- Chairing a meeting
- System Office staff numbers
- UA News Center
- System Office Bulletin
- SO Intranet