



UNIVERSITY
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Minutes

Staff Alliance

Wednesday, November 11, 2020

2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

[Zoom Recording and Audio Transcript](#)

Voting Members:

Mathew Mund, President, UAF Staff Council; Chair, Staff Alliance
Dawn Humenik, Co-President, UAA Staff Council; Vice Chair, Staff Alliance
Mae Delcastillo, Vice President, UAS Staff Council
Linda Hall, Vice President, SW Administration Assembly
Lauren Hartman, President, SW Administration Assembly
Ronnie Houchin, Vice President, UAF Staff Council
Eric Lingle, President, UAS Staff Council
Tania Rowe, Co-President, UAA Staff Council

Staff:

Morgan Dufseth, Executive Officer, System Governance

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting came to order at 2:30 p.m. and quorum was met.

2. Adopt Agenda

Members reviewed the agenda and approved it without addition.

3. Approve [October 30 Minutes](#)

Ronnie moved to approve and Eric seconded. Morgan noted she needed to add the link to the recording. There were no objections to approving the minutes with that update.

4. Guest and Public Comments

None given.

5. Chair's Report

Mathew Mund

Mathew noted the Board met last week and there weren't really any surprises; the motion on tuition was passed which included differentiated tuition for UAF; the Board will be hosting ongoing Did You Know? presentations at future meetings to help share information about positive activities taking place at UA. In FY20, overall reduction to salaries and benefits was \$1M while FY21 is projected to be \$13M. Mathew reached out to Myron for more information about this projection--is it positions vacated through attrition or new cuts to staff. He noted the response was not that clear so he is worried there could be a big wave of layoffs in the second half of the fiscal year to meet that projection. The Board also passed a motion regarding Alaska Native diversity and inclusion and are working on the

6. New Business

6.1. UAA Chancellor search - [Nov. 11 BOR meeting](#)

Mathew noted the Board has 12 names they are considering for the interim chancellor. They have a small committee to consider the applicants and help narrow them down to a manageable pool of candidates. Dawn noted President Pitney had initially been interested in having an interim for a longer period (like two years) but that UAA faculty were strongly opposed to that idea. As such, it appears President Pitney has opted to propose an interim chancellor position that will last about six months with a concurrent permanent search.

6.2. UA Foundation separation from SW - [Presentation to BOR \(see slides 10-11\)](#)

6.2.1. [SAA Resolution on Shared Governance in Decision-Making](#)

Lauren noted SAA passed this resolution because they were surprised the president didn't reach out with this proposal earlier in the process. They subsequently met with the president and she apologized for not bringing this to them sooner. Lauren noted SW staff are not necessarily for or against the transition but had a lot of questions about the process and how staff will be affected by the change. The most recent word is that Foundation staff, Foundation Board of Directors, and President Pitney will meet to go over the details. The Foundation BOD will form an ad hoc committee to develop changes to its bylaws. The biggest concern for staff is that Foundation employees continue to receive the same benefits as UA employees. Ronnie noted it would affect other staff besides just those directly working for the Foundation (i.e., development staff at the universities). Linda noted the president cannot guarantee the state will allow Foundation employees to remain in PERS. She also noted UA employees do not pay Social Security so the university would need to get federal approval as well to make this change.

6.3. Prep for David Bishko - SW administrative size, structure and processes discussion

Linda noted President Pitney had announced her intent to transition HR and Procurement to a recharge/service center (with IT possibly following). Lauren noted the SW admin

review is taking place and the consultant, David Bishko, will work parallel to that process. At a SW town hall meeting yesterday, the president noted Bishko has been tasked with helping change the perspective of the university and to find out to make SW more efficient.

6.4. Title IX Position Recruitment

Mathew noted the position was posted. UAF Staff Council had discussed the position and the concern staff had surrounding the position. He noted he reached out to Steve Patin for more information, especially after a discussion he had within his department about who can apply and how it would work. Mathew noted he doesn't feel like there has been a response from HR about the concerns that have already been communicated and asked SA members if they would like to draft a memo/letter/resolution regarding this issue. Ronnie noted there are concerns about the training staff will receive, the responsibilities they will have to bear, if it will create uncomfortable situations for those involved. All agreed the Alliance should continue to ask for answers to staff questions. Mathew agreed to start a draft letter and will share it with the rest of the Alliance for comments and suggestions.

7. Ongoing Business

7.1. UA Administrative Review

7.1.1. [Draft Rubric/Guidelines proposed by Faculty Alliance](#)

Members discussed the draft guidelines proposed by faculty. Overall, there were concerns about the breadth and depth of the proposed processes. Morgan noted there was likely to be resistance from administration across the university. Mathew noted that whatever is adopted, it be similar across the system. Mathew also noted that there was dissatisfaction with previous administrative reviews because the committees felt they didn't receive useful information for making any kind of assessment or suggestion for improvement. There is also concern about the amount of staff time it will take to share this information with the committees. In that way, the conditions listed within the faculty's draft guidelines may not be feasible realistically. Mathew noted he felt the committees should be allowed to decide and noted that he didn't think it was necessary for Staff Alliance to make any formal comment on the proposed guidelines or process.

7.1.2. Staff representative nominees: Monique Musick (SW), Tania Rowe (UAA), Gwenna Richardson (UAS), Michael Szidloski (UAF)

7.1.3. [University and SW senior leadership positions](#)

7.1.4. Process and timeline - still under development

7.2. President Pitney is invited to December 9 SA meeting

Mathew asked members to send him any questions they had for that discussion.

7.3. SA Committees - Morgan asked members to have their staff councils send her the names of members for the committees.

8. Staff Council Reports

8.1. [UAA](#)

Dawn reported a shared services survey had been sent out, which will close shortly; there is concern about changing position descriptions, re-applying for positions, being and shifted to service centers among other issues. Dawn noted that there is a fear these changes are being implemented to encourage employees to seek employment outside of the university, thereby increasing budget savings through vacant positions. While UAA opted not to raise tuition this year, they are going to look at whether they should have differentiated tuition between UAA and its community campuses in future years. Overall, differentiated tuition is viewed positively by UAA staff and students. Currently, the majority of classes are delivered online to help promote social distancing amid the COVID pandemic. Dawn also noted she received a call from a UAA staff member about two SW employees who had really been going above and beyond to help them; she asked how university employees can laud SW staff for their efforts. She would like to take this to the morale committee to discuss further.

8.2. [UAF](#)

Mathew noted the UAF Staff Council is focusing on promoting staff development and would like to propose a mechanism for distributing staff development funds. He also noted there has been interest in a mentoring program and they would like to develop something similar to what the faculty have (see facdev.uaf.edu). Mathew noted they are also working on restructuring the UAF Staff Council membership to focus less on unit membership and more on at-large members. They will have a hybrid model to ensure they do not have a concentration of at-large members from one area. This will be implemented at the end of the year and all members would be up for re-election (currently, they have an election cycle where even and odd number units are up every other year).

8.3. [UAS](#)

The UAS Staff Council passed a resolution of support for UAF's resolution regarding annual leave use during the pandemic and annual leave cash-out options/limits. The review committee has met and will begin work on the administrative review. Karen Carey was announced as the permanent chancellor for UAS; Eric noted there was overall support from the UAS community for this decision and that it is a good move for UAS as a whole. VC Ciri gave budget updates at a town hall meeting and tried to be as transparent as possible with regard to staff cuts and further reductions. David Felts noted staff at UAS feel leadership has done a good job in keeping them informed of changes due to the pandemic and new restrictions/guidelines for employees.

8.4. [SAA](#)

Lauren noted SAA passed a resolution on shared governance in decision-making and that it was well received by President Pitney. She also noted SAA was pleased to see movement on issues in IT; the CITO announced his resignation earlier this month and the president has appointed an interim who previously served as CIO for the state. IT is also working on filling vacant positions for critical areas, including a contractor who is being brought on as a full-time staff member. SW held a town hall meeting with President Pitney who noted her intent to reduce the number of executives across the system and at SW. The president also announced that she is stopping the digital transformation assessment (basically, we aren't ready for transformation). SAA is also working on year-end recognition events and charity drives. The group plans to invite Steve Patin to their next meeting to continue discussions on the admin review.

9. Reports

9.1. [HR Updates - September 2020](#)

9.1.1. [Title IX Positions](#)

9.2. Legislative Updates

10. Roundtable discussion

Members discussed shared governance and agreed to form an ad hoc committee to address the issue. Mathew asked Morgan to solicit members from the staff councils and arrange a first meeting in the next few weeks.

11. Agenda Items for December 9 Meeting

11.1. President Pitney

11.2. New Foundation President

11.3. New CITO John Boucher

12. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

13. Announcements