

Staff Senate

<http://www.staffsenate.vt.edu/>

May 21, 2020

12:00-1:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Attendees: Bruce Harper, Robert Sebek, Tamarah Smith, Amanda Shephard, Amanda Villar, Amber Robinson, Amy Hill, Amy Ingram, Angel Carter, Beth Anderson, Brandi Webb, Brandy Morse, Bridget Szerszynski, Bryan Garey, Carol Slusser, Chelsea Keating, Chris Whitlock, Cindy Gautier, Cyril Clark, Debbie Breon, Dwayne Pickney, Hannah Parks, Heather Snidow, Jennifer Earley, Jennifer Pike, Jenny McCoy, John Bush, Judy Alford, Julia Gregory, Katherine Wilkes, Kristen Cox, LaTawnya Burleson, Laura Hagy, Laurie Stacy, Leisa Shelor, Leslie Sullivan, Lisa Wilkes, Llyn Sharp, Melanie Darden, Nicole Akers, Pheobe Peterson, Kimberly Ridpath, Robena Hughes, Sally Shupe, Sarah Owenscreen, Serena young, Sandra Gabbert, Sharon Gotkiewicz, Shelly Johnson, Sheree Montgomery, Sheila Early, Sue Ellen Croker, Sue Teel, Tasia Persson, Tatiana Early, Teresa Price, Tina Lawrence, Velva Groover, Zerita Montgomery, Becky Smith

Speaker: President Tim Sands

Call to order at Noon by President, Tamarah Smith

The agenda was electronically submitted to senators on Friday, May 15th. With no additions, the agenda was approved at the meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

Approval of April 2020 minutes was done electronically.

Recognition of 2020-21 Officers: Ms. Smith

President: Tamarah Smith

Vice President: Serena Young

Secretary/Treasurer: Angel Carter

Parliamentarian: LaTawnya Burleson

Recognition and Update on Brian Huddleston and Heather Parrish: Ms. Smith

Brian Huddleston had a kidney replacement and Heather Parrish is the one that donated a kidney to him. Both are doing well and if you would like to send them, a card please forward it to Tamarah Smith in Summer and Winter Sessions at 0392 and she will get it to them!

President Tim Sands:

- Thanks us all for all of our hard work during this difficult time
- Fall-Hope classes can resume
- Announcement on June 8th about the structure of classes
- HR working on Scenario for Functions and Workforce
- Awaiting guidance from the State of Virginia
- We want to preserve our workforce-we were doing well before the pandemic and would like to keep the momentum trending up
- Right now 80% of employees are working through telecommunication

- Some work cannot be done
- We have learned a great deal and realized that some work can be done remotely and we foresee that some of this will continue into the future
- Recovery Planning Efforts are in place
- Changing Fall Semester to start August 17 and end before Thanksgiving semester in case of a resurgence of COVID-19. Students will not have to leave and then return.
- Again President Sands thanks us for our service and hard work before taking questions

Questions:

- We have helped several thousand students in need with Private donations
- We have engaged Noel Bissell for testing
- Final Announcement in June, We are buying time to see what happens but are optimistic for fall. Students are in low risk groups. Employees may not be so the University is trying to plan around this. Working with the community as the return of students will affect them also.
- We will have to test those returning to campus coming from high risk areas
- Looking to have all large classes online
- We are not taking more students to cover costs! How many will actually show up, we do not know
- VT is built around community so students want to come back
- Is there a tentative date to return to our offices? May start to phase back to our offices in early June, we will not go back all at once
- Extra restrictions will be in place with voluntary disclosures
- Not contemplating any hazard pay-hope to avoid this with remote options and ways to be safe on campus
- Fall sports working with the NCAA and NCP. We would have to have them safely on campus by mid-July
- Looking into all scenarios of working remotely on an individual basis
- Regular Testing-two testing labs are up and running in Roanoke and in Blacksburg and are gearing up to test in the fall. Trying to decide if we will test everyone returning or just ones from high risk areas
- Hoping that antibody tests will be available
- Financial Situation
 - In a strong position before the pandemic
 - We are awaiting instruction from the Commonwealth
 - Salary and hiring freeze is in place
 - Reforecasting on Revenue from the State in August
 - All units to have a 5% and a 10% Budget Cut Scenario in Place
 - Looking at a way to reduce workforce (temporary workforce reduction)
 - Don't know if we need to yet
 - Avoid Layoff if we can
 - A lot of uncertainty – but in a good place right now
- More frequent meetings with us
- Work on communication with staff
- Dr. Pinkney offered more communications

❖ **Bryan Garey**

- Temporary workforce reduction-temporarily reduce for a period. Continue employment, retirement and benefits from 10% to 100%.
- Trying to avoid layoff or termination of employment
- Buyout for Retirement could be an option, but we are trying to avoid if possible. Would be expensive and we want to preserve the talent
- Highering Freeze-preserve budget
- Compensation Increase Freeze
- Temporary Employees-allow these to end and be careful how we add these employees back
- Addressing telecommuting-How to stress the importance of this to managers?
 - Interested in a mixture of both on site and telecommuting
 - Incremental return to campus
 - Look at roles and who really NEEDS to return
- On Call Status-intention
 - Identify where those folks were
 - Look at this population and have those people fill in if someone is sick
 - Pass that period of some work load has been reduced
 - Looking at college by college and area by area to get these people productive again
- Building and Construction during this time. It has continued and tried to accelerate
- Special attention is given to make sure we are social distancing and have cleaning supplies available as well as shields and masks where needed.

Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting date is June 18, 2020 and will be a zoom meeting

Adjourned: 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:
Angel Carter