

Tulane Staff Advisory Council

November 17, 2021, 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Stibbs Room, Lavin-Bernick Center and via Zoom

Present: Gale Marie Abbass, Shannon Aicklen, Trina Beck, Kathleen Carneiro, Steve Coy, Julie D'Antoni, Laura Doré Wiley, Will Ferbos, Janel Fielding, Natalia Fuentes, Kevin Grant, Julie Henriquez Aldana, Ashley Hicks, Monique Hodges, Anita Jobson-Wolfe, Kristen Jones, Korey Lane, Regan LeCesne, Jean Paul Lefort, Marissa Lespinasse, Marie Maywalt, Carmen McCaffery, Robert Morton, Shawn Potter, Jonathan Remkes, Tsetsa Dankova Rosensteel, Barb Ryan, Chloe Simoneaux, Christopher Stokes, Matthew Tombaugh, Sharon Valle, Taryn Vinet, Brittney Yandle, Antoine Young

Excused: Lindsay Hellwig, J. Malbrough

Guests: Jonathan Small, Jessica Witcher, Prabjot Sohi, Jorge Valentin Diaz, Brooke Stewart, Tyrus Stewart

Absent: Lea Goodwin, Brittney Hamer, Lucia La Salle, Evan Nicoll, Phillip Odom, Andrew Squitiro, Phillip Stitt, Kady Weingart

Call to Order 3:01 pm

Welcome everyone.

Please email us at sac@tulane.edu to confirm your attendance if you are on Zoom on your phone. In the future if you are unable to make the meeting, please email us at sac@tulane.edu so we can mark you as excused.

1. **Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Minutes from the October 2021 meeting prepared by Anita Jobson-Wolfe were reviewed and voted on. Minutes are approved.
2. **Announcements by Human Resources:** Sharon Valle reported on the HR email that went out today and outlined the highlights including the retirement consolidation of retirement accounts. Fidelity accounts will be rolled into TIAA.
 - a. As of December 1, there are workplace injury reporting changes. If a workplace injury occurs, there is a number to call instead of filling out the previous website form. If needed, a nurse may triage the injured staff member and help. If a nurse is not needed, the employee will be advised by a concierge to help advise where they need to go. This is for all campuses and the Primate Center special issues are being taken under consideration so they can work out the details.
 - b. Spring Tuition waiver program is open through January 28, 2022. The link is in today's HR email.

- c. Two more orientations for new 2021 employees – one on Friday, 11/19 and the other on December 3rd. Going forward, there will be only one new employee orientation in December.
- d. Trina brought up the compensation concerns that have been expressed to SAC about salary compression following the minimum wage increase. Sharon deferred to Denise Cordova, director of compensation and records, who should attend a future SAC meeting. Jonathan Small mentioned that they discovered in certain instances some salary compression issues and they are reviewing these individual situations and adjusting if needed. Overall, the initiative to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour was well-meaning, and, in certain cases, it has had some unintended consequences. More to come. Who should we direct people to when they come to SAC? Jonathan said to refer them to him. Natalia asked what percentage did the increase affect? Jonathan said it was a significant amount who were below \$15 but did not give a specific number.
- e. Marie asked about resuming campus wellness classes (i.e., yoga, Zumba, etc.) Jonathan will gather info and give an update at the next SAC meeting.
- f. Natalia asked if the pool repairs at Reily Center were done? Trina said it's undergoing major renovations with no timeline for completion.
- g. Jonathan mentioned that the University's Flexible / Remote Work arrangements has been rolled out and hope that everyone has been discussing the options with their supervisors. Feedback is that this has been well received. Anita asked if there was a timeline to hear back from the head of your unit, and Jonathan said there was nothing in place as it was a managerial decision but expects it to happen within a reasonable amount of time. Shannon asked when the six months countdown started for this pilot program. He said the six months started November 5, 2021, and they want to make sure everything is going well. Shannon also brought up the computer issues for those employees who still have desktops.
- h. Jonathan also shared about the Hurricane Ida impact on the employee population and the emergency grants and loans that Tulane provided to employees:
 - i. Grants \$1.152M
 - ii. Loans \$465K
 - iii. Total grants and loans 1.6M to 2,700 employees

3. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- a. Board of Administrators (BOA) – Trina reported on the September 23rd Board meeting that she attended for Kathy Carneiro. In the President’s report on Ida recovery, he gave the staff credit for their hard work. He mentioned working with Entergy on improving the grid so the university does not need to close for weeks on end. There was a report from the Chief Investment Officer Richard Chao who talked about the investment office in Connecticut with 11 staff members who are split between investing and operations. The Tulane Endowment currently stands at \$1.9 billion which is nearly double what it was in 2011 (right around \$1 billion). It paid out \$66.5 million in FY 21. Tulane maintains a really low risk and high return as compared with our peers. Endowment is doing well. Will Ferbos reported that the full board will meet again in January.
 - b. University Senate – Carmen reported they elected new committee members to committees and reviewed a course retake policy change. Trina reported on President Fitts’s report which focused on the university’s efforts to recognize staff for their hard work by extending winter break, offering free coffee and wellness activities, and a staycation raffle. Will Ferbos reported that the winners of the raffle had been notified. President Fitts talked about the mask mandate removal policy. There was a question if faculty have authority to require masks in the classroom. Answer was yes as could TA’s. Building updates were discussed. Homecoming had 6,000 alumni planning to attend with the Tipping Point concert being sold out. Also discussed the Carolyn Barber Pierre Center for Intercultural Life dedication that is scheduled for during Homecoming.
 - c. Budget – no meeting
 - d. Committee on Committees – no meeting
 - e. Equal Opportunity – no meeting
 - f. Benefits – no meeting
 - g. Information Technology – no meeting
 - h. Facilities – no meeting
4. **SAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:**
- i. Community Service – Janel reported on the SAC toy drive. Please post the flyers everywhere and use the QR code to donate funds instead of toys. Donations need to be in by December 2nd. Marie reported on what the Primate Center is doing for the toy drive as well. Have had 19 donors on the online site with \$1375 so far raised. Link for the flyer is in Teams for SAC members.
 - j. Health & Wellness – Korey said that a TU Wellness committee meeting will be held on Friday and then he will discuss initiatives after Thanksgiving with the committee. Marie

mentioned that the Primate Center held Rally days to help employees get onto the Blue Cross/Blue Shield app and the Rally app and help them get their Rally points. They had over 50 people attending over two days.

- k. Staff Appreciation: the Football Game Ad Hoc Committee. Football is this weekend! 114 people have RSVP'd with additional people coming. Everyone needs a football ticket and to RSVP to the SAC site. Tailgate starts at 7am but the table will be manned by 9am. There will be some food at the tailgate. There will be raffles as well. Robert is the person to chat with about questions. Trina reviewed the volunteer signup sheet. If working the tailgate, do I need a ticket? Not if doing the tailgate yes if doing stadium check in.
 - l. Staff Issues – Natalia reported that they had a meeting re HR stuff and about how HR can give them advice. Would like to make sure all the university knows about the staff issues committee.
 - m. Electronic Technologies– Antoine said the committee met last week and their main goal is developing a survey for the staff to find out about their technology (hardware and software) needs. Goal of next meeting is to discuss about the communications newsletter and how they can assist with the production of this newsletter.
5. Old Business
- a. Telehealth guest speakers postponed due to delays in the roll out.
6. New Business –
- a. Elections for the open positions on the University Senate (1 seat), the Senate Budget Review Committee (1 seat) whose rep needs to be from Uptown and the Equal Opportunity Committee (1 space).
 - i. For the Senate seat, interested parties are Shannon Aicklen, Kevin Grant, Julie Henriquez Aldana, Monique Hodges, Shawn Potter, Matthew Tombaugh, Tsetsa Dankova Rosensteel, and Korey Lane.
 - ii. For the Budget Review Committee Uptown rep, interested parties are Korey Lane, Julie Henriquez Aldana, Shawn Potter, Tsetsa Dankova Rosensteel, and Matthew Tombaugh.
 - iii. For Equal Opportunity, the position needs to be a non-exempt staff member, please email SAC@tulane.edu if interested
 - iv. Election Qualtrics email will be sent out next week. Those interested in running gave their stump speeches.

- v. Natalia suggested having a proxy to fill in if someone else has to step down for the Senate seats.

Outlook invites will be sent out soon for the Spring SAC meeting dates and hope to encourage more people to be at the meetings in person.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm.