

## **Staff Senate Meeting minutes**

January 21, 2015

**Present:** Marilyn Patrick, Fred Sullivan, Theresa O'Leary, Frances Holmes, Annalee Werkmeister, Peggy Delaney, Melissa Kump, Chancellor Blackketter, Casey Vanatta and Joyce O'Neill

Fred reported that Staff Senate is working on finalizing the Staff Senate Bylaws and staff recognition info. The Senate has met with Maggie Peterson regarding funding for staff recognition.

Chancellor Blackketter talked about the work that the Commissioner of Higher Education is proposing in the Legislature. The governor's pay plan is increasing wages by 50 cents/hour and increasing benefits by 50 cents/hour for all state and university employees. The university system would like to have all the money put into the pay increase. There is also a Present Law Adjustment which would be a 2% cost of living raise. There is an initiative for research across the system and an initiative regarding long range building plan. The ELC addition will be jointly funded by the State and private companies. There has been discussion regarding Highlands College changing class start times to the ½ hour so that students can get between the two campuses more easily. The state funds are for instruction only and cannot be used for auxiliary functions. The pool renovation will be starting soon.

Fred talked about the Study Abroad program and our involvement with UM. Staff Senate wants to have a Staff Senate retreat to work on building the website, employee recognition and the data base. Some of the ideas that have been generated include; coffee mugs for new employees, recognition of 5 and 10 year longevity landmarks, getting employees pins for anniversaries, and staff luncheons. Fred said that two themes have emerged- staff recognition and community building.

Chancellor Blackketter answered questions about staff changes and new academic programs. These changes include hiring a new Director of Human Resources and Maggie Peterson will keep the Financial Officer responsibilities. There will be two new jobs added; Director of Distance Learning and Director of Enrollment Management. There are also some additional degrees added on the academic side.

Melissa talked about the importance of having a Kudo's thank you program so employees know that their hard work and effort is appreciated. Casey will build a form for nominating people for Kudos that can be stored in a database which will be accessible.

Respectfully submitted, Joyce O'Neill