

# Staff Senate Meeting

**Date: March 14, 2024, 2:30-4:00 pm**

**Location: Great Plains Room A, Nebraska East Union**

Note: These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the full Staff Senate meeting as corrected by those participating.

## **Present**

**District 1:** Patrick Barrett, Beth Barry, Eileen Bergt, Jolene Deinert, Sara Haake, Celeste Spier, Bethanie Zager

**District 2:** Jill Flagel, Jordan Gonzales, Jerri Harner, Kim Rauscher, Kim Schellpeper

**District 3:** Michael Bergland-Riese, Spencer Hall, Tony Lazarowicz, Sara Mattson, Doug Pellatz, Markeya Peteranetz, Terri Pieper

**District 4:** Cindy Agee, Tricia Besett-Alesch, Adam Fitzwater, Carrie Jackson, Kristin Jagels, Derek McConnell, Morgan Green McConnell, Julia Stubblefield, Pat Tetreault

**District 5:** Regina Flowers, Greg Fritz, Katelyn Rife

**District 6:** Stephanie Bonnema, Jessie Brophy, Joan Kunzman, Christina Franklin, Marissa Kemp, Meg Kester, Samantha Link, Lisa Vonfeldt

**District 7:** Kate Carlin, Megan Ebbers, Ashley Washburn

**University of Nebraska System:** Amy Barry, Brad Severa

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The meeting was called to order at 2:33 p.m.

## Consent Agenda

Minutes from January 11, 2024

- Proposed edit: strike the bullet in President's report that Trev Alberts will visit Staff Senate once he has a clear plan of the renovations for Memorial Stadium and how that might impact employee ticked holders.
- Proposed edit: remove reference to Personnel Committee that is in the notes (seems to be a repeated section)
- Minutes approved with the suggested change.

Approval of today's agenda – approved with unanimous consent

Consent agenda committee reports provided by Liaison, Bylaws, Communications, Legislative, Elections and Personnel Affairs committees.

A reminder to committee chairs to use the Standing Committee Reporting Form for consent or agenda reporting. The form can be found on Teams under the Liaison Committee folder.

## Officer Reports

### **President, Sara Haake**

**Change in membership:** Jodie Barnes (District 6) resigned. A special election was held to fill the Secretary position. Regina Flowers (District 5) has been elected Secretary.

**Chancellor's Office:** E.K. Franks, Director for University Relations, attended the March 5<sup>th</sup> Staff Senate Executive Committee meeting. There were no updates on the University President search and no timelines or numbers on further budget challenges at this time. Low morale and staff workloads were also discussed. The Chancellor continues to approve positions throughout the hiring freeze. Senators and district members can share ideas on ways to address budget concerns or morale with the Executive Committee. E.K. Franks will attend the May 9 Staff Senate meeting to introduce himself and answer questions.

**Campus Inclusion:** Thanks to a suggestion from Tony Lazarowicz (District 3), the Staff Senate has an opportunity to record a video that will be played during the undergraduate and graduate ceremony processional.

Thanks to Celeste Spier (District 1) starting in May Staff Senate will have a role in New Employee Orientation. Executive committee created a script. A digital sign-up sheet will be distributed through Teams for Senators who want to participate.

Updates from the campus Parking Advisory Committee will be shared at the May meeting.

Reminder to Senators to let the Liaison Committee know if you hear of new campus committees so they can work to ensure Staff Senate has representation.

### **Internal Vice President, Jordan Gonzales**

**Legislative Bill 1330:** The bill was not prioritized by a senator this legislative session. Although several factors may change in the remaining days of the session, it is likely LB 1330 will not advance this year. There is concern that LB 1330 could be re-introduced in the 2025 90-day session.

**Campus Budget:** University leadership anticipated a second round of academic-based budget reductions in early 2024. However, no budget reduction plan has been presented to the university's Academic Planning Committee yet.

**Association of American Universities:** [General presentation](#) on the Association of American Universities, benefits for academics and research, and UNL's history with AAU.

### **External Vice President, Jessie Brophy**

**NU Staff Advisory Board:** Group met in February, ongoing work to help UNMC to establish a staff advisory board. All University of Nebraska institutions (UNL, UNK, UNMC and UNO) need staff advisory groups to have representation with the Board of Regents.

**Legislative Bill 1064:** Bill would prohibit Board of Regents granting tenure did not get prioritized this legislative session and may not make it out of committee this session.

**Bylaws Updates:** Brophy expressed gratitude to the Staff Senate for implementing changes to the bylaws at the January 2024 meeting. Bylaws committee is reviewing bylaws X.3.2, X.4.1, and X.5.3, <https://staffsenate.unl.edu/documents/bylaws>

**2024 Strategic Plan Update:** Brophy shared a list of actions that have been taken related to the aims and strategies of the Staff Senate.

### **Committees**

#### **Recognition Committee, Morgan Green McConnell, co-chair**

A reminder that Staff Senate award nominations are due on Friday, March 15. There are eight award categories, and the hope is to give out two awards per category. The Recognitions Committee will review submissions over the next few weeks. All individuals who are nominated will be notified. Awards will be presented at the All-Staff conference.

#### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, Jordan Gonzales**

The DEI Committee received an invitation from Faculty Senate diversity and inclusion committee to work together on a wellbeing survey for faculty and graduate students. The DEI committee is discussion parameters before moving forward in a joint effort.

#### **Anti-Bullying Subcommittee, Joann Ross**

Our working document currently addresses bullying between staff members. We have received feedback on the content from Dr. Sue Swearer, who is an expert on bullying, particularly in academic settings. We have also asked Dr. Mario Scalora, an expert on threat assessment and workplace violence. While we have not received Dr. Scalora's feedback, we hope to hear from him soon. We know that bullying in an academic environment, where hierarchies are often rigid, does not happen just among staff. Therefore, the ultimate goal is to develop a policy that includes scenarios that include staff, students, and faculty. To that end, we plan to engage Faculty Senate, ASUN, and the GSA, hoping that they will buy into the need for such a policy. With their assistance, we will expand the current draft to include the various interactions where bullying might occur. Finally, we would like to share the policy with the Institutional Equity and

Compliance (IEC) Office since their office is the one who would address situations that rise above the level above our policy that would constitute actionable offenses.

## New Business

### **Motion from Executive Committee to Suspend the Rules for District Movement (X.3.2) for Senator Leticia Garcia – passed with two-thirds agreement.**

Senator Garcia's district move was due to university restructuring. Motion to retain Senator Garcia to finish out their term resulting in an extra voting member for District 4 for one year and four months. Question from the floor where the plan was to this for anyone in this situation. The motion is only for Senator Garcia and let the bylaws committee do their work and come back with any proposed bylaw edits.

### **New Employee Orientation Involvement, Sara Haake**

Covered in President's report, but open for additional questions or discussion. Question from the floor on date/time and number of Senators needed. Sessions will be second Wednesday of the month with the Staff Senate timeslot around 11:30am. There will be spots for 2-3 Senators each session.

### **DEI Committee on Staff Ombuds Program, Jordan Gonzales**

Kudos to DEI and Personnel Affairs committee. Senator Schellpeper and Senator Edgington are working on this initiative. The Ombuds program is housed under Human Resources. There is concern it should be its own independent office to align with the position of a third-party mediator and as an additional mechanism of confidentiality. Work is ongoing.

## Open Mic

Patrick Barrett (District 1) brought a staff member guest and Senate nominee to the meeting. Barrett encouraged other Senators to do the same as the Senate is an organization for staff.

Derek McConnell (District 4) shared the Staff Senate Recognition webpage:

<https://staffsenate.unl.edu/staff-senate-recognition/>

Sara Haake, President (District 1) commended the Communications committee for their makeover of the Staff Senate website. <https://staffsenate.unl.edu/>

Meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

The minutes are respectfully submitted by Joann Ross, Coordinator, and Regina Flowers, Secretary.