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| Staff Council Meeting | **October 25, 2023**  **3:00 P.M.** |

**Attendees:** Amy Wilson, Dean Cockerham, Henrique Donati, Jackie Chouinard, Joy Skinner, Rebecca Ehretsman, Stephanie Newsom

**Not** **Present:** Jamie Hollaway, Sheila Kittleson

## Minutes

***Agenda item:*** Staff Council Mission

**Discussion:**

We shared the mission statement we have been working on with Becky and asked her to share her vision for the group with us. She agreed with what we had in our mission and expanded on her vision.

Her vision included making our group a representative group for all staff, where we speak on behalf of all staff members and not ourselves nor our agendas. The goal of the Staff Council is to make the voices of our staff members to be heard unfiltered through the chain of management. Additionally, the group should not only work on bring up problems, but also to celebrate victories and bring up the invisible day-to-day work that we all do to keep the college moving forward.

We brought up some of the challenges we faced in the past on getting participation from different areas, particularly OEM and Dinning Services, and Becky proposed the concept of breakfast or lunch meetings and potentially using of the president’s fund to help make those happen if needed.

When talking about different things the PAC had done in the past, Stephanie brought up the Staff Retreat and the employee wellness initiatives we’ve done in the past and we’d likely continue to do. Becky brought up an example from a previous institution where the staff retreat was “fundatory” and people complained – much like it has happened here at Wartburg. We talked about offering a strategic additional day off as an alternative, like we have done around the Christmas time in years prior.

***Agenda item:*** Staff Council Structure

**Discussion:**

As previously stated, Becky is looking for a more representative group, particularly with areas from multiple Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members. We talked about seeing the staff representation per SLT member as a ratio of total staff and come up with our structure based on that. Henrique will have numbers by the next meeting.

Becky reinforced the idea of members serving by “invitation” as opposed to by “election”, and us being able to rely on the SLT members to identify the right people to bring to the council. We should also keep in mind to avoid redundancy of members that are often in other strategic groups on campus – you don’t want someone on the extended senior leadership team to also join the Staff Council for example.

Amy brought up that we should also strive for exempt vs non-exempt representation like we have in years prior.

Stephanie mentioned having a structure within her department where different staff can bring concerns to her, and we all agreed that’s a good model to mimic for our own departments.

***Agenda item:*** Staff Council Website

**Discussion:**

Joy had brought up in our previous meetings the idea of having a web presence for the council as well as a form to gather feedback from the staff. Becky and group were very receptive to the idea. The idea was suggested to use “Questions, suggestions and applause” as opposed to feedback to avoid our page becoming a complaint central.

Jackie brought up the idea of a peer to peer display of achievements or thank yous from a previous institution, where people could post to a web page their appreciation for different staff members and/or departments. Henrique asked if Becky would be willing to receive some of those to be posted on the presidential news letter as well, to which she gladly agreed to.

We looked at our current web presence I the [www.wartburg.edu/hr](http://www.wartburg.edu/hr) website and the infoCenter, and realized we haven’t been doing minutes like this one. Henrique and Joy agreed to take turns writing meeting minutes moving forward.

***Agenda item:*** Open Discussion – Dishes, where do we do them?

**Discussion:**

Henrique brought up an issue between his team and maintenance regarding where to do dishes or wash recyclables. Particularly in relation to bathroom sinks and food residue. All mentioned they either have a kitchen or kitchenette in their department, use the bathroom sinks or do them at home. However, all agreed that food residue is to be disposed on trash cans, not sinks.

Henrique asked about potentially using the kitchen from other departments to which Becky brought up that college property does not belong to any of us and should be shared among staff members. Henrique will follow up with neighboring departments that have a kitchen area with a sink and direct his team to use those moving forward instead of the bathroom.

***Special notes:* Next meeting will be the first one on the new schedule of 2nd Friday of the month at 10:30AM, on Friday, November 10th, at 10:30AM.**