**Staff Council**  
**Official Minutes**  
**November 26, 2014**

**Members Present:** Dennis Coplen, Meredith Coplen, Debra Cortinas (Ex-Officio), Carrie Coursey, Shawn Elizondo, Kathryn Funk Baxter (Advisor), Jacqueline Hamilton, Cindy Hanson, Tiffany Hearne, Rachel Kirk, Patrick Larkin (Ex-Officio), Betty Mounts, Gaylen Nuckols, Christopher Palfreyman, Jonathan Payne, Ruby Pollard, Nora Sai, Leslee Schauer (Ex-Officio), Karol Stewart, Cynthia Turner (Proxy for Judy Harral), Derek Vest, Jennifer Weir.

**Members Absent:** Karen Cullinan, Ronnie Emanuel, Valerie Gibbons, Judy Harral, Sara Lopez, John (JP) Regalado.

I. **Call to Order**  
Meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m. by Meredith Coplen.

II. **Presentation – Campus Wellness Committee** – Jacqueline Hamilton and Debra Cortinas

- Human Resources and Recreational Sports have initiated a collaborative endeavor for wellness. The initiative is called Be Well To Excel. Human Resources’ primary constituents are faculty and staff, while Recreational Sports serves students, faculty, and staff. The website for the initiative can be accessed through either Human Resources or Recreational Sports website.
- They sent a request to Committee on Committees, and developed a proposal that was approved by the President’s cabinet for the beginning of this Fall semester.
- Both departments have partnered for years in pilot programs such as the Employee Wellness Program. This is a broadening of that partnership. A $13,000 grant was given by the System Center for the last fiscal year and current fiscal year and it is being used for the Islanders Be Well to Excel Initiative. Three programs are being derived from this:
  - Islander Walk for Wellness. Faculty and staff that join this program can pick up t-shirts from Recreational Sports and walk the track in the facility for free. Last year Recreational Sports had 140 employees and now it is up to 180 employees taking advantage of this program.
  - Punch Pass allows faculty and staff to use the Recreational Sports facility five free times each month. Many people in the walking program also do the Punch Pass program. There are about 300 people taking advantage of this.
  - Fall Islander Rewards allows faculty and staff that are already members to get a $45 refund if their card swipe is used 45 times during the Fall semester. A report will be generated on December 23 to see those that reached the goal of swiping their card 45 times. After the Christmas Holidays it will be evaluated if the program can continue.
- The University is doing a Healthier Campus Initiative which is part of the Partnership for a Healthier America. This is used to help fight obesity. The University has three years to meet the objectives. There were 23 objectives that were chosen. Hamilton met with Reggie Wade, the University Services Director, and Corey Fischer, the Chartwells Director. Some of the objectives would be to have a certain amount of fruits and vegetables at the Dining Hall and the University Center dining area when it is opened. The fruits and vegetables will only be required in the areas that are flexible and not the programmed areas such as Chick-fil-A. Also to have more promotion and communication on this as well as having more nutritional
information. Also nutritional services will be available from a nutritionist that Recreational Sports will hire from the increase in fees. Signs that say “Stop for Pedestrians” will go up to make walkers feel safer. A partnership with Chartwells will be formed for cooking lessons. This initiative will give the University national attention, and this University is the only one in Texas to do this. More information will be available as it comes. If the campus embraces this, it will probably spread out to the greater community. With the Affordable Care Act, prevention is getting more attention.

- A survey is being developed for faculty and staff that consists of about 20 questions to see if the Chancellor’s Wellness Initiative was successful. It will come out early in the Spring semester. The survey will help gather information what can be done for programming and what the faculty and staff needs are. It will also help in reporting how the funds were used from the System Center grant.

**III. Vice-President’s Report** – Meredith Coplen

- The Employee Excellence committee discussed going a different route than the Pizza Rama for next year’s State Employee Charitable Campaign. Some ideas were to make it more like a Break in the Day and to change the food from pizza to other food items. The jailhouse will still be utilized. Packets do not have to be sent to everyone which will save the time to stuff 1,200 packets, but a big marketing push will need to compensate since the packets will not be there as reminders. Coplen is working on a report which she will share with the President’s Cabinet. The administration will be challenged to support the SECC a little more. Other universities that are very successful have administrative support. It was discussed that the University may have outgrown using building captains and it may go to using departmental captains which also might help tracking of the percentage that each department gives. It was noted by Cindy Hanson that the SECC received $16,000 in online donations and Coplen said total was about $25,500.
- Coplen reminded everyone to sign up for the Christmas Potluck which will be on December 16th at the Art Museum at 11:30 a.m. A white elephant will be done, nothing over $10 or just find something at home to wrap up. Kathryn Funk-Baxter will cover the cost of the Turkey, Karol Stewart will provide beverages and the leftover drinks from the Pizza Rama will be used as well.

**IV. President’s Report** – Sara Lopez – (Meredith Coplen)

- Debra Cortinas said the Staff Council should have a representative participate in the Web-based Recognition Program. Lopez attended the last meeting and reported lots of good features such as sending e-cards, e-buttons, and a Hall of Fame. Supervisors can track recognition and it is used to help design recognition connections. The goal is to launch in February. One question was how to get the word out and Lopez had contacted Dennis Coplen-Chair of the Staff Council Luncheon Committee. D. Coplen will meet with the committee about it.
- Executive Board Luncheon is on December 18th.
- Kudos to Carrie Coursey and the University Relations Committee for a great job in both the Break in the Day and the Islander Lights in only a 3 week time period.
- The Staff Council Potluck is on December 16th. Drinks will be provided by the Art Museum. Those that want to participate in the White Elephant please do so.

**V. Treasurer’s Report** – Nora Sai
• Staff Council - $11,851.20
• Campus Events - $7,974.00
• Dorothy Yeater Scholarship - $2,122.55
• Ink Cartridges - $1,040.59
• SAC Gifts - $1,908.70

Motion was made by Karol Stewart and seconded by Jaqueline Hamilton to accept the treasurer’s report.

VI. Historian’s Report – Rachel Kirk

- Rachel Kirk said thanks to everyone who is saving information to the “I” drive for the Staff Council. For those who have not been in the “I” drive, if they look at the SC FY2015 folder which is the fiscal year 2015 folder, everything is in there. The newsletters, minute meetings, treasurer’s reports, flyers from events, Break in the Day photos. Everyone is doing an awesome job. It is noted that only the Executive Committee has access to the “I” drive.

VII. Approval of Minutes – Christopher Palfreyman

- Minutes were read by Christopher Palfreyman. Corrections were made. The Pizza Rama was noted as receiving over $900 which actually was only $700 and $200 came from the jailhouse. In the minutes, a committee name “Express Activity Committee” should have been Expressive Activity Committee. The word packets was misspelled. The minutes state that the December potluck is held at the South Texas Institute Art Museum and actually it is just called the Art Museum which is part of the South Texas Institute of the Arts. The spelling of Ann DeGaish’s name should have a capital G. The minutes stated that under the Islander jobs that the current posting would be closed by November 11th which was supposed to be November 12th. It was noted in the minutes that five people received Kudos when only four people did. Motion was made by Jacqueline Hamilton and seconded by Nora Sai to accept the minutes of October 28, 2014 with corrections.

VIII. Old Business

- None.

IX. Committee Reports

- Benefits and Employee Development – (Rachel Kirk)
  - Rachel Kirk informed the Staff Council that in the December newsletter will be a call for volunteers for a 30 second video of “Why I Work Here.” The committee is looking for volunteers from every department for a very diverse variety of campus employees. Instead of having several minutes of one person stating why they work here, the committee is looking to have several snippets of different people. Please feel free to tell others of this opportunity.

- Bylaws and Constitution – Karol Stewart
  - Last meeting the Secretary, Christopher Palfreyman, read the changes to the Bylaws that were proposed. Tiffany Hearne and Rachel Kirk made motion to discuss the changes. Cindy Hanson had concern about the South Texas Institute of the Arts representative being chosen and perhaps having other off campus centers not being considered. Also perhaps an election in the Art Center itself should be conducted so that one person is not the representative on the council for an unlimited term or have a similar term limit to all other council members.
in case someone else wants to serve. Leslee Schauer stated that if the member from the Art Center has an unlimited term then to have that member an ex-officio role with no voting power or an election be held. Karol Stewart had expressed the same concern. Stewart did research and in 1996 the Creative Arts Center, the Garcia Center, and the Art Museum became affiliated with the University under the South Texas Institute of the Arts (STIA). It was felt that the director should appoint someone because of the small amount of employees. Also if the employees from the STIA were placed into the general pool of elections for the Staff Council, that no one really knows who those people are. Stewart at first thought she was elected initially then she found out she was appointed. Stewart agrees that perhaps other departments should have the same representation that the STIA has and she realizes that she does not necessarily know the employees at the Garcia Center even though she is representing them. She is ok with either having the STIA represented be an ex officio or to have an election within the STIA. Debra Cortinas said that a list is produced each year of eligible people to be on Staff Council but there was a question if Art Museum employees were on that list. Jacqueline Hamilton summarized that majority was going for the STIA member to have a term limit. Hanson and Stewart discussed if other off site locations should also have the same representation as STIA. Cindy Hanson proposed that the members of STIA should be able to vote for their representative and Leslee Schauer asked who part of STIA was. Karol Stewart stated that the Art Museum has about 12-13 full staff and with the Garcia Center it adds up to about 15-20 full staff. Debra Cortinas reiterated that we do have a special carved out process for the STIA but why not for the other off site locations. Dennis Coplen agreed on STIA voting for their representative, but not all the staff of the STIA are in the same EEO category. Cindy said that Karol should finish here two years and then talk to the Director to have an election for representation with no restriction on EEO category. Debra Cortinas said maybe that person also represent other offsite location. Kathryn Funk-Baxter said it was this way because the Art Museum members do not have a daily interaction with the main campus employees. Those members at the Art Museum if they were to vote for representation would not know who they are voting for. This way the STIA representative would be able to report back to their constituents. Alumni Center is part of Institutional Advancement, The Innovation Center is part of College of Business which both of those off site locations have interactions with main campus employees. Meredith Coplen reiterated that STIA is different because they do not have interaction with campus employees. Leslee Schauer mentioned to have STIA vote and not worry about EEO category. Dennis Coplen added that the interaction issue should be a guideline so other departments do not follow suite. Jaqueline Hamilton said that this one section could be tabled and then readressed with the committee and asked if there were questions on the other sections to be revised. Debra Cortinas stated that if the STIA is voting then the one year requirement should be implemented, which requires that Staff Council members be employees for one year before being eligible for Staff Council. Karol Stewart summarized the issue would be tabled and the committee would change the language, put in the one year requirement, allow the STIA members to vote for their representative without concern of EEO category, and to have
that representative have the same term limit as other Staff Council members. It will be re-proposed to the Staff Council in January.

- There was discussion that being a new employee on Staff Council would make the employee learn a lot faster about the University, but it was decided to still stick with the one year requirement.
- Leslee mentioned that on the number one proposed change the language “may serve” should probably be changed and it was proposed that “could serve” may be a better alternative phrase.
- Debate was closed by Meredith Coplen. Motion was made by Meredith Coplen and Nora Sai.

- Nominations and Elections – Jonathan Payne
  - No report

- University Relations – Carrie Coursey
  - Carrie handed out left over candy canes from the Islander Lights event.
  - November 13th was the Fall Break in the Day. Over 80 people worked and attended the event. It was a good turn out with the change in location. The committee will take the advisors into consideration next time since they could not come because of registration. People liked the photos.
  - November 21st was the Islander Lights with Santa photos. The event was moved indoors to the Island Hall Gym. Thanks to Rachel Kirk, William Coari for the photography, and to David Spencer for being Santa.
  - All the November Kudos were delivered except for Melissa Windle located at the Costal Bend Business Innovation Center. Melissa will be added to the December Kudos since hers was not delivered yet.

- Staff Annual Luncheon – Dennis Coplen
  - Have not met yet and will meet after Thanksgiving and have a report in December.

- Dorothy Yeater – Shawn Elizondo
  - Scholarships are now open. A few applications have been submitted but not as much as she has hoped for. She is reaching out to people who are taking classes and to those that applied for the scholarship before.
  - The committee will meet again in December for the Administrative Professional’s Day in April.
  - If you know anyone taking classes in your area, encourage them to apply for the Dorothy Yeater Scholarship.

- Employee Excellence - Meredith Coplen
  - Covered the SECC in the Vice-President’s report. Committee will not meet again for a while.

X. University Committee Reports

- Calendar Committee – Sara Lopez – (Meredith Coplen)
  - Meredith Coplen attended for Sara. Coplen said that the main discussion was changing the academic calendar to have graduate classes that used to start at 4:30 p.m. to start at 5:00 p.m. which was well received. A discussion to perhaps adding on a later class which may not have been as well received. A smaller committee will work on the details. More information will be available for Staff Council by next month.

- Committees on Committees – Gaylen Nuckols
  - No report
• Community Outreach – Ruby Pollard
  o No report

• Environmental Health & Safety Council – Dennis Coplen
  o Last meeting was cancelled and it has not been rescheduled.

• Expressive Activity – Leslee Schauer
  o The committee has been meeting since June. They have a representative from Faculty Senate which is Dr. Isabel Araiza and a representative from Staff Council which is Leslee Schauer. They worked on rules and procedures for free speech on campus. Those rules already exist but the committee is amending those rules and having the procedure to have free speech on campus much more simple. It used to be that those expressing free speech would need a permit and had to be in a free speech zone. The committee is trying to eliminate that. Lisa Perez and Dr. Donald Albrecht will be working on that and present it to the committee and Leslee will present it to the Staff Council.

  o SGA is taking a trip to the capitol, for students to apply please visit the SGA website. SGA will fill a whole bus and pay for the lunch and dinner. Students have to miss a day of classes and be in good academic standing.

• Faculty Senate – Meredith Coplen
  o Coplen stated that Kathryn Funk-Baxter was the presenter and presented on the budget. Coplen noted that that while watching the faculty that they are very concerned on the staff’s behalf as well as what the budget means for their workload.

  o Dr. Chris Markwood said he should receive a report from the Price Waterhouse Cooper anytime and it will be made available online and everyone will have access to it at some time.

• I-Adapt-Jennifer Weir
  o The committee met on November 10th and the next meeting is December 8th. Right now is a Holiday Prevention Initiative going on for prevention of drinking and driving on the holidays. Some e-mails and posters have gone out. There is a program called the 21st birthday card program and when a student turns 21 an e-mail is shot out to them with ideas to do besides drinking on their 21st birthday. They added a bunch of coupons to the program such as Uber, which is sort of a taxi service. When the student got the e-mail, they used to be able to go to the Counseling Center and get a t-shirt, but the committee almost ran out of t-shirts and their budget is kind of tight so they were thinking of other promotional items such as a key chains and 21 things to do on your birthday.

• Inclusive Excellence – J.P. Regalado-(Meredith Coplen)
  o Coplen stated that there was a meeting was last Thursday. In the meeting there was talk about an overview for new committee members. Dr. Donald Albrecht said they should revamp the charge to make it align more closely with the new strategic plan. There was talk about the new website that is coming up. There is a link of bottom of homepage called Diversity. They will be adding to the diversity catalog and updating it. One of the big topics of discussion was to make sure it is up-to-date. An interesting topic was mapping all the unisex bathrooms on campus. Facility Services has worked with Dr. Donald Albrecht on that. It was available on campus before and it will be clearer now. This is good for transitioning students or students that don’t identify with the gender that they look. Schauer noted that this spawned from the Islander Forum discussion and it is more important to campus community than Dr. Susan Murphy and
Schauer were aware of. The more the word can get out the better. Schauer noted that on the day of Islander Forums that Dr. Jacqueline Hamilton and she ran into two different students transitioning.

- International Education Council- Rachel Kirk
  - They will meet after the holidays. Starting December 1st, Ana Billeaux will be no longer working for the International Education Office, she has accepted a new position working with CASA and the First Generation Students.

- Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement Council -
  - No report

- Student Success and Retention Committee – J.P. Regalado
  - No report

- Parking and Transportation Committee – Derek Vest
  - Derek was not getting the invites to the meeting, so now he will be able to attend the meetings from now on.
  - Liz Gonzalez’s who is Dr. Kathryn Funk-Baxter’s assistant said we need another volunteer for the committee which Dennis Coplen has volunteered for.

- University Center & Student Activities Advisory Council – Karen Cullinan
  - No report

- Veteran’s Affairs Committee – Christopher Palfreyman
  - No report

- Recreational Sports- Jacqueline Hamilton spoke for Judy Harral
  - Next meeting will be in January

XI. New Business

- Homecoming – Tiffany Hearne
  - Shawn Elizondo is on the committee for Staff Council and Tiffany Hearne on the committee for Academic Affairs. There was a discussion on getting staff and departments involved in Homecoming week. Shawn and Tiffany met and came up with some ideas such as a Spirit Competition just for the University departments not tied to the Homecoming Spirit Competition. The ideas they came up with were such as a door decorating contest and doing a game to promote Spirit Day as well as wearing your blue and green shirts. Encourage departments to take pictures of staff wearing their shirts the Friday before the games and submit them the Staff Council and post them to the Staff Council website. The departments involved would be large departments such as Recreational Sports, the Round Building, the Library, CASA, all of the College Dean’s offices and maybe individual departments, the Academic Advisors, Center for Faculty Excellence, the Distance Education Office, Human Resources, Contract Budgets, and Accounts Payable.
  - Staff Council can help solicit volunteers to work with Amy Kotulski, Assistant Director for Student Activities. Encourage spirit shirts that week. It will be a throwback theme.
  - Next meeting is December 5th.

XII. Good of the Order

- Schauer stated that the Islander Forums will be from January 13th to the 15th. The main event will be on January 14th with the catered lunch and the staff sessions will be the morning of January 15th. Kathy Funk-Baxter suggested to go the Comptroller’s Office to find an Excel guru. Becky Torres and her team from the Comptroller’s Office will be doing
Excel workshop for Intermediate to Advanced. Intermediate to Advanced Microsoft Word will be taught by Jan Brott and Rosie Ruiz. Schauer has tentatively scheduled Michelle Rice and Ronnie Emmanuel to an Argos and Banner training. Ronnie had accepted and Leslee is waiting for confirmation from Michelle.

- Cortinas passed out Dining operating hours from now until Christmas break. Twice a year employees have the ability through payroll deduction to purchase a meal plan. Average meal cost is $7 as opposed to $10. If you buy the plan you can get 30 meals to use at the Dining Hall and other dining sites through the exchange program.

- Stewart mentioned that last week there was a fire at the 5400 block of Alameda and a staff member at the Art Museum was affected and lost his place. The staff at the Art Museum all helped with getting him in a new apartment that night in the same complex. The staff helped out in getting furniture and groceries delivered, supplies and towels were also provided. It was great to see staff come together to support each other. President Killibrew granted the staff member emergency leave.

- Dr. Patrick Larkin asked how many students stay over the Winter break. Coplen replied with at most 250 and most of them are international students. There was concern of where they will eat over the holidays.

- Carrie Coursey passed out Kudos the following were selected. Melissa Windle will be added to this group:
  - William Coari, Academic Advising
  - Elizabeth Palacios, Academic Advisor for College of Business
  - Edward Evans, Application Technology Support Director
  - Ralph McFarland, Assistant Director of Disability Services
  - Kay Lawson, Business Support Specialist of the President’s Office

- Stewart noted that the Art Museum is having a Holiday Camp for Children on December 22\textsuperscript{nd} and 23\textsuperscript{rd}. There is a morning session only, an afternoon session only, and it can be both morning and afternoon and you can arrange for lunch to be provided by Hester’s

### XIII. Meeting Adjournment

There being no further business, Derek Vest made a motion and Cindy Hanson seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 4:38 PM