



STAFF SENATE

ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY

Staff Senate Meeting
May 16, 2025 10:00am
McCandless Hall- Griffin Auditorium &
Zoom

Present: Pam Bridges, Carolyn Carthen, Diego Chulan, Kathryn Doaty, Ben Dumas, Kim Dunnavant, Donna Holland, Beth Jenkins, Elaine McGill, Valerie Sellers

Absent: Whitney Michael (secretary), Amber Skantz

1. **Order-** Meeting called to order by Amber Martinez at 10:00 am.
2. **Minutes-** Minutes for the April meeting were approved. Motion to accept from Kim Dunnavant. Second by Kathryn Doaty.
3. **Old Business**
 - a. Recycling committee- meet in June
 - b. Jerry Stephens- Lion's club call for 2-10 volunteers. Amber will send out a sign-up sheet where people can volunteer to work on Friday, June 20th.
4. **New Business**
 - a. Cabinet update

Mike McCoy spoke about different topics.

 - Updated progress of the renovations to Brown Hall and said hopefully it will be finished in August or September.
 - Updated on progress of the building of the Nazaretian House. The exterior is almost finished and focusing now on the interior. A porch will be added to the building on the northside. Plans are to have the building completed in July.
 - A Town Hall meeting will be held on Tuesday in Carter Hall in which there are hopes that financial support will be gained for the renovations to Carter Hall from the city of Athens, Limestone County and local supporters of different projects.
 - Demolitions of houses on Elkton Street and Hargrove will help with the completion of the extension of the walking trail.
 - Bench press weights will be ordered for the weight room and free weights will be put back in there. If Carter Hall goes offline a different location will need to be located for the weight room/exercise place during the Carter Hall renovations.
 - The Sprit Store and a Coffee Shop will go where the Bear Cage was located to make them more accessible.
 - There will be three tuition and fee increase options presented to the Board at the afternoon meeting to help with the budget.
 - The cost of PEPHIP insurance covered by the university is increasing this year but the increase in cost of insurance will not be passed on to employees.

Dr. Wehlburg spoke about different topics.

 - The tuition and fee increase options will be presented to the Board to help

balance the overall budget. There will probably be an increase in tuition for students. The budget is multi-stage process. 50% of the budget comes from tuition. Next years budget will a conservative one.

- At the Town Hall several renderings will be presented as to of how Carter Hall could look. Plans are to add columns to the building.
- Looking at Academic reorganization. Looking at the facilities management process. Bids are going out to hire an outside company to evaluate our facilities to see if a 3rd party might be used to manage facilities. Athens State will use resources the best way possible. The beauty of the campus will not be reduced.

Dr. Wehlburg asked if there were any questions.

- Maria Garner asked if the gym flooring could be purchased when it was removed. Dr. Wehlburg said some of the boards would be reused in the new Carter Hall but there would be options to acquire a piece of flooring to have a little piece of history.
- Amber Martinez asked if new dorms would be included in the facilities review. Dr. Wehlburg said the residence halls used for students are at the ACA in Decatur and residence halls would not be included in the review of the facilities.
- Jasmine Crutcher asked how are we catering to the younger students that attend Athens? Dr. Wehlburg said there will be a convocation for new students and current students on the first Friday of the fall semester. Tours will be given of the campus. Students will have the chance to familiarize themselves with the facilities available on campus. Plans are for a dinner with probably a dessert to be available where students can meet faculty and staff members. An Academic Academy for the faculty is being started this summer where faculty members can choose one course and revamp it. Faculty can take better advantage of the technology available for the course and make it a better experience for students than they can get elsewhere and faculty will be able to connect to the students better. There will be an opportunity to help name the new Spirit Store and Coffee shop through a survey that will be sent out.
- Carolyn Carthen, VA advisor, asked if there was plans for a common place for our VA students to meet and offer services to them since they are a large part of our campus body. She has been attending conferences on other universities to see what is available to VA students there. Dr. Wehlburg said it is a great idea and it is great opportunity to better serve our VA students. There is a proposal on the Federal level to increase full time status from 12 to 15 credit hours for students on Pell Grants and changing the availability of loans.

b. Committee updates-John Booty Award- Kim Dunnivant

Kim gave out handouts on the proposed revisions to the John Booty Award.

- Proposed Revision 1 was that nominations may be collected via an electronic survey tool by Staff Senate members.
- Proposed Revision 2 was to change the word Criteria to Eligibility.
- Proposed Revision 3 was to allow senators to be nominated for Outstanding Staff Member Award.
- Proposed Revisions 4 & 5 was to Add Kim Troupe (2024) and Tim Crafton (2025) to the list of winners and to remove the winner list from the Staff Senate Constitution.
- Add a comprehensive winner list to the Staff Senate page in the Portal and on

the website since the Staff Senate Constitution has to be amended each time a winner is added.

Amber asked if Staff Senate wanted to make a motion to vote on each proposed revision individually or vote on all proposed revisions with one vote. Carolyn Carthen asked to have time for Staff Senate to process the proposed changes before any decision is made for a vote. No decision was made at the meeting about any revisions to the John Booty Award.

5. Concerns/Announcements

- i. Kim Dunnavant reminded everyone that Fridays after 5 will take place this Friday on the Athens square.
- ii. Trish Dilullo asked about Staff Handbook where it states, "Athens State does not guarantee lifetime employment, employment until retirement, or employment for as long as the employee desires to work." Can someone explain that statement. Kathryn Doaty with Human Resources said Alabama is a "at -will" state where no one is guaranteed employment and budget changes or other reasons could change employment status. Reach out to Human Resources if anyone has any more questions.
- iii. Someone on Zoom asks about the amount given to the person awarded the John Booty Award. Amber said the amount was set by the family when the award was set up.

6. Next meeting is June 20th at 10:00 am in McCandless Hall

Meeting Adjourned- Motion to adjourn by Kim Dunnavant. Second by Beth Jenkins. Meeting adjourned at 10:47 am. Minutes recorded by Elaine McGill.