



STAFF SENATE

ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY

September 12, 2025
McCandless Hall Auditorium & Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Present: Jerry Stephens (Presiding Officer), DJ Doorenbos (Secretary), Amber Martinez (Officer At Large), Lauren Blacklidge, Elizabeth Bowden, Kathryn Doaty, Magen Johnson, Jennifer Mares, Gabrielle Whitney McGraw, Victoria Mould, Tricia Oleyte, Morgan Stanford –PROXY Christen Lott

Absent: None

1. **Order** - Meeting called to order by Jerry Stephens at 10:00am
2. **Approval of the agenda** – Agenda was sent earlier this week for review but was not approved prior to meeting. Motion to approve agenda by Gabrielle Whitney McGraw. Second by Lauren Blacklidge. Motion carried.
3. **Minutes** – Minutes for the August meeting were approved. Motion to approve by Kathryn Doaty. Second by Gabrielle Whitney McGraw. Motion carried.
4. **Presiding Officer Comments**
 - Jerry Stephens extended thanks to former senators for the work they contributed in the previous year as well as thanks to the new senators for their commitment to the upcoming term.
 - Jerry also noted gratitude for Amber Martinez’s continued support in the handoff to the new Presiding Officer.
 - Jerry asked senators to encourage other staff members to participate within the committees to encompass representation throughout the staff body.
5. **Old Business**
 - Staff Professional Development Funds update
 - Amber Martinez presented standing of Staff Professional Development Funds. Currently have roughly \$4,100.00 in additional funds left for the budget year. All POs must be submitted by September 17 for approval, so submit any request



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ASAP. Amber will send email with the Staff Professional Development Funds application to staff.

- Fund requests can exceed the \$250.00 for the remaining budget year.
- The Staff Professional Development Committee discussed ideas proposed to the committee that would benefit all staff:
 1. Tickets for Javon Glasgow event on the ACA campus. This was not approved as the event would take place outside of the budget year. The could be approved in the next budget year. The committee will review in next meeting.
 2. Professional development books that could be housed within a designated area of the Kares Library available for all to check out. These could be purchased through Amazon to have the order fulfilled by the September 30 deadline. The current estimate is roughly \$300.00.
 3. Ducky awards need replenishing, so suggested ordering more ducks. This was not approved as professional development related material and would need to be covered under other funds (possibly the Agency Fund).
- Trish Dilullo asked if online teambuilding would be an acceptable option. Committee recommended applying for review.
- Additional requests have been submitted to the committee for review.
- Jerry Stephens invited Kathryn Doaty to make a motion to approve the staff professional development book order for the Staff Professional Development Committee. Kathryn made a motion for \$300.00 approval. Second by Elaine McGill.



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1. Discussion included suggestion by Victoria Mould to amend the motion to approve up to \$500.00 to allow for additional expenditure if more books are suggested.
 - a. Kathryn Doaty amended the motion to approve up to \$500.00 for the purchase of books for staff professional development. Second by Elaine McGill. Motion carried.
 - Jerry Stephens requested the Professional Development Committee to vote on Coursera approval of \$399.
 1. Kathryn Doaty motioned to approve pending the committee approval. Second by Elaine McGill. Motion carried.
 2. Staff Professional Development Committee will meet to discuss incoming requests for funds before the PO deadline of September 17.
 - Agency Fund has roughly \$195.00 available to use for Staff Senate events, and this would be for things like fundraisers set up and Ducky awards.
6. New Business
- Approval of the meeting dates – Motion to approve from D.J. Doorenbos. Second by Tricia Oleyte.
 - September 12, 2025
 - October 17, 2025
 - November 21, 2025
 - January 16, 2026
 - February 20, 2026
 - March 20, 2026
 - April 17, 2026



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- May 15, 2026
 - June 12, 2026
 - July 17, 2026
 - August 21, 2026
- Committee Appointments – Reviewed committee volunteers and committee positions still open.
 - D.J. Doorenbos asked to confirm if Ad-Hoc Committees must be chaired by a current senator. It was confirmed that Ad-Hoc Committees are open to be chaired by any staff member. Staff Senate will revisit Recycling Committee and inquire about further interest from staff.
 - Any number of committee members is possible, so encourage participate to fellow staff members.
 - Amber Martinez requested to note that any committee membership gives voting rights to that committee.
 - Jerry Stephens proposed accept committee appointments with the inclusion of D.J. Doorenbos as Staff Mentorship Committee Chair. Gabrielle Whitney McGraw made the motion. Second by Kathryn Doaty.
 1. Events: Magen Johnson - Chair, Elizabeth Bowden - Secretary
 2. Fundraising: Elizabeth Bowden – Chair, Magen Johnson – Secretary
 3. Elections: Gabrielle Whitney McGraw – Chair, Victoria Mould – Secretary
 4. Professional Development: Kathryn Doaty – Chair, Whitney Carroll – Secretary



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5. Staff Mentorship: D.J. Doorenbos – Chair
 6. Constitution/By-Laws & Policy Review – Lauren Blackledge - Chair
- Events & Fundraising
 - Magen Johnson proposed the fall fundraising event continue as the chili cook-off, bake sale, and pumpkin decorating on October 28. Motion made by Magen Johnson. Second by Elizabeth Bowden. Motion carried after following discussion.
 1. There will not be a costume contest this year.
 2. These are the possible causes for this fall's fundraiser: Scholarships, replenish funds, and Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Magen Johnson will send more information on options to review for October meeting.
 - Any staff member interested in participating in the Events & Fundraising Committees should contact Magen Johnson or Elizabeth Bowden for more information.
 - Elizabeth Bowden requested additional information on how the funding can and should be allocated and if it can go back into Staff Senate funds:
 1. Professional Development funds can be used only on professional development related materials and expenses.
 2. Fundraising must support itself mostly, but the proceeds minus event cost should be donated to cause.
 3. Agency Funds can be used to assist with general costs like materials to start events and Ducky Awards.
 4. Staff Senate can ask the Foundation for supplemental materials like water, additional supplies as well.



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- Whitney Michael shared information on previous use and discussion of funds. Staff Senate voted in previous years to replenish cost of events and to retain a small percentage of earned funds to cover costs of next event startup. The rest of the funds would be allocated towards a charity. This is not part of the bylaws and was not amended into the bylaws at the vote.

7. For the Good of the Order

- Fiddler's Convention - October 1- 4
 - Please volunteer if possible.
- The Wall That Heals – November 6-9
 - Volunteer opportunities will be available 24/7 during the residency
- Storyteller's Convention in October

8. Next meeting – October 17, 2025

9. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 10:46am. Minutes recorded by D.J. Doorenbos.