



# STAFF SENATE

## ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY

March 20, 2026

McCandless Auditorium

**Present:** Jerry Stephens (Presiding Officer), D.J. Doorenbos (Secretary), Elizabeth Bowden, Kathryn Doaty, Magen Johnson – Proxy Michel McAllister, Jennifer Mares, Gabrielle Whitney McGraw, Victoria Mould, Tricia Oleyte, Morgan Stanford

**Absent:** Lauren Blacklidge, Amber Martinez (Senator at Large)

1. **Call to 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 Victoria Mould. Second by Gabrielle Whitney McGraw. Motion carried.
3. **Approval of minutes** – Minutes for the February meeting. Motion to approve by Elizabeth Bowden. Second by Kathryn Doaty. Motion carried.
4. **Senior Staff updates**
  - No update.
5. **Committee Reports**
  - Constitution & Bylaws – Lauren Blacklidge
    - No report.
  - Elections – Gabrielle Whitney McGraw
    - Voting for the John Booty Award is underway, so be sure to vote if you haven't.
    - The committee is currently reviewing the award process for future award years.
    - The John Booty Award plaque is broken, so Gabrielle reached out to Abernathy's for quotes on a replacement.
      1. The current plaque is 74-80 plaques, but the closest Abernathy's has is a 72 plate plaque.
        - a. Cost for a walnut plaque would be \$605, and the cost for a rosewood plaque would be \$670.



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b. Several name plates would have to be replaced as well for additional cost.

2. The plaque was last updated 2019.

3. Gabrielle is open to recommendations for companies to contact for additional quotes.

- Events/Fundraising – Magen Johnson and Elizabeth Bowden
  - The Staff Appreciation Luncheon is scheduled for April 30<sup>th</sup> from 11:30am-12:30pm.
    1. A flyer with more information will go out soon.
- Professional Development – Kathryn Doaty
  - The committee met on Wednesday of this week to discuss upcoming events.
  - The Yoga series was approved, so keep an eye out for sign-up emails.
    1. A waiver will be required to participate.
  - The Driftwood Dragonfly event was approved by Staff Senate, but it must also be approved by the Cabinet.
    1. The Cabinet will review it at the next meeting.
  - Brandy Conway presented to the PD committee about the possibility of having Vitale Buford Hardin present with the Foundation collaborating for the cost of the event.
    1. The cost would be \$5,000 total, but the Staff Senate portion would be less than half of that.
      - a. There's concern over exhausting funds with further presentations coming later in the year, but there's interest in pursuing the speaker if the Foundation covers most of the cost.
    2. Kathryn will send a list of the topics to Senators to review further.



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- The committee is looking to have a speaker in September, and more information will come later.
  - Staff Mentoring – D.J. Doorenbos
    - D.J. reached out to Jackie Gooch to discuss possibility of half day where staff “re-introduce” themselves to the other staff on campus and received support from the President regarding the event.
      1. Next meeting to begin planning will be in April, so please reach out if you are interested in the planning portion.
      2. The committee agreed to move forward with a structure similar to Faculty Mentor plan where the new hires meet monthly with a common presentation of need-to-know information while possibly having an individual mentor.
  - Recycling - Jerry Stephens
    - Jerry Stephens met with the Athens Lions Club, and they are not interested in partnering for the recycling project.
- 6. Old Business**
- No old business.
- 7. New Business**
- No new business
- 8. For the Good of the Order**
- Spring Break is next week.
  - Don’t forget to submit the Great Colleges to Work For survey and the Best Places to Work survey if you’ve received it.
- 9. Next Regular Meeting – April 17, 2026, at 10:00am**
- 10. Adjournment**
- The meeting was adjourned at 10:23am. Minutes recorded by D.J. Doorenbos