



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - SAN ANTONIO

Staff Council

Executive Staff Council Meeting Minutes – May 11, 2020 CAB 410 (Virtual)

In attendance from Staff Council

President - Nancy Larson

President-Elect - Miriam Magdaleno

Secretary – Sarah Timm

Historian/Parliamentarian - Ester Woodbury

Others in attendance:

A&M-San Antonio President – Cynthia Teniente-Matson

Chief Human Resources Officer - Martha Gonzalez

Absent:

Treasurer - Rachel Montejano

1. Review Minutes
2. Shared Governance Hot Topics
 - New Suggestion Topic Items

Allowance for Personal Internet/Phone Use for Remote Work (Anthony Perez, 4/14) Do you know if the university is looking into providing an allowance to employees for having to use their own internet/phone service for remote work? Alamo Colleges is providing a \$60 telecommunications allowance for the next 3 months, as well as waiving parking permit fees. **This suggestion was forwarded to Martha Gonzalez to present to the Cabinet.

Dr. Matson stated that A&M-SA gave employees almost two weeks to prepare for a remote working transition unlike Alamo Colleges which transitioned very swiftly. She also stated that A&M-SA allowed staff to take home desktops or work laptops and they issued mi-fi hot spots to help prevent staff from having to use personal internet/phone service for remote work. Employees also had the opportunity to work with their supervisors on AWL forms, schedules, etc. Martha added that FEMA does not consider remote working as an eligible cost to be reimbursed.

- i. Hazard Pay for On-Campus Work (Anonymous, 5/5) I'm asking administrators to consider hazard pay for those that need to be on campus and a structured way to request a reimbursement for using our personal phones during business hours. I believe the only current method to receive the credit for using our cell phones goes through the supervisor, but I'm not sure it's functioning well where someone can easily ask to be reimbursed.

**This suggestion was forwarded to Martha Gonzalez. Dr. Matson stated that she believed this was a two part question and in terms of the Hazard Pay, the answer is





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“No”. The working group that was led by Jessica Loudermilk, Dr. DeDiemar and Rita Arredondo really wanted to make sure those that remained on campus were appropriately social distanced with extra cleaning measures in place. The working group also honored those with underlying conditions and allowed them to work remotely. In terms of the second part of the question about cell phone usage, Dr. Matson doesn’t know that we’ve addressed this portion as much with the managers. Per Martha the school has a communication allowance in place (many people in IT are using this). Employees should request a communication allowance from their supervisor if they want to be reimbursed for using their cell phone. Dr. Matson asked Martha to talk to managers on campus of essential personnel to see if they needed more information on the communication allowance to be shared. Miriam also mentioned that she worked with ITS to have the soft phone installed on her laptop so she wouldn’t have to use her personal phone. She recommended getting the word out about this option as well in case the person who reported this issue was actually not on campus. Dr. Matson asked Martha to remind people about the soft phone option as well.

- Follow-up on Suggestion Topic Items
 - i. Summer Camp Initiative (Ester Woodbury, 6/19): Martha reached out to Art Olague to meet with him to discuss possible rec sports-related camps that might be offered. Dr. Matson has also talked with Art about this as a possibility for next summer.
 - ii. Vending Machines in the Modulars (Michelle Anguiano, 8/15): Johnny Guevara last noted that there was a possibility of vending machines being placed in Modular B, next to the new athletics offices. No updates from Johnny at this point.
 - iii. Amazon Prime Free Shipping (Anonymous, 10/23): Still waiting to hear if Business Affairs is going to approve this. Dr. Matson said that Kathryn Baxter feels like everyone should be allowed to use this so she is going to work with Dan Garza to get the final word on this.
 - iv. Picnic Table behind Modular C (Joanna Vela, 12/2): Table is installed behind Modular C
- 3. New Business
 - Summer Hours request: Even though Staff Council put forth a request to have modified summer hours, given the current situation and the complications surrounding when certain staff will return to campus, the modified summer schedule will most likely be retracted until next summer.
 - Nominations and Elections for Staff Council: Per Nancy we want to look at bumping the total number of Staff Council members up to 17 (we’ll have four members rotating off at the end of this year). We may look at combining the categories of EEO4 and EEO5 together into





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one group in a future Constitution revision since there are so few members of the EEO 5 category.

- i. Nominations will be sought May 11-15
- ii. Voting May 21-27
- iii. New Staff Council members to be announced June 1 – Miriam will take over at that point.
- iv. No change to Constitution needed regarding EEO categories without nominees

4. Staff Council Committee Reports

- All Staff Meeting
 - i. April meeting cancelled; possible WebEx meeting in June.
 - ii. First All Staff meeting for 2020/2021 academic year scheduled for Wednesday, August 12, 8:30 a.m. Vista room. Other scheduled dates are November 10, January 12, and April 14. Per Nancy we will have a WebEx option for the August meeting for those who can't come to campus. Dr. Matson suggested that depending on what the Return to Work group proposes, she might like to host a WebEx Town Hall style meeting to address additional questions staff may have in terms of returning to work on campus. As for the venue in August, Dr. Matson suggested we might need to host the all staff meeting in the auditorium so we can block off seats for social distancing. We could potentially allow for food in the auditorium so we could accommodate a gathering with proper distancing. Miriam will start working with Abigail to make this happen. Dr. Matson said she thought we should be able to use WebEx in the auditorium.
- Social & Community Service
 - i. March and April social mixers cancelled.
 - ii. Festival de Cascarones postponed. Per Nancy we will encourage participation in November instead.
- Appreciation/Recognition
 - i. Employee Spotlight Awards – Current program under reconstruction with different prizes and current nominations to be awarded in 1st quarter FY2020. There is a team looking into new prizes like t-shirts, cookies, etc. since most staff are currently working remotely and not able to take advantage of the preferred parking spaced. Dr. Matson said that PPE is a hot commodity right now and shared with us a very nice customized face mask that was created for her.
 - ii. Administrative Professionals appreciation not implemented in April.
- Communications/Marketing
 - i. Staff Council action calendar – Per Nancy this will alert Staff Council members on what things are due and when so they can stay on top of upcoming issues and events better.

5. Other issues/concerns: Per Nancy \$1,284.00 is the current balance in the Staff Emergency Fund. We're still not at the point where staff can use it (wanted to have \$2,000 balance). Dr.





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Matson suggested to provide some examples of what staff emergency needs are so Nancy and Miriam will work on this.

Dr. Matson's Remarks:

- The University has been communicating primarily through email broadcasts but also some video meetings with managers. We're anticipating a budget cut in the form of a 5% to 20% claw back. This budget cut could take the form of a recension from FY 20 budget, a reduction to FY 21 budget or some combination of the two. This will probably be announced in July so that's why A&M-SA announced the hiring freeze. The system presidents were also asked to look at expenditures they might not be using due to the working remotely and hold those funds in a reserve.
- How do we think about fall 2020? There are four task forces currently in operation covering the following areas: academic competitiveness, student pipeline, business continuity, and student success. We have made the declarative statement that we will be open and will serve as many students in person as possible in the fall semester. We're looking at mixed modality for our courses (some in person, some online, some online with some critical in person meetings). For business continuity, the group will be looking at who can be monitoring social distancing. She expects to see these four reports next week. The system has provided some guidance as well for re-opening. As stated earlier, Dr. Matson would like to reiterate that once the return to work report is out, it may be a good idea to have an all staff town hall to answer any questions staff may have about returning to work. She is available to do that. Nancy will bring this up at our Staff Council meeting on Wednesday to see if there is value added by doing a town hall. Miriam feels like there's a lot of anxiety surrounding what we'll do in fall 2020 so she would advocate for a town hall addressing staff concerns.
- Per Miriam, Jarrick Brown will be on the Business Continuity team on behalf of Staff Council.
- Miriam asked if something about the summer hours should be included somewhere so that people aren't left wondering about it. Martha suggested in our meeting this Wednesday, we discuss not bringing the modified hours back this summer given the complications of bringing people back on campus. Managers however always have flexibility in scheduling. Staff Council is retracting our previous recommendation for summer hours but will leave the recommendation open for next summer.
- Dr. Matson said we are welcome to share the PowerPoint slides that came out about the four different areas (Blue print for fall 2020) with staff again.
- Summer enrollment was up as of yesterday while fall enrollment remains down (but it's down everywhere). Freshmen numbers are up but we'll see if those remain. From what Dr. Matson's heard from the Jaguar Care calls, younger students are having a harder time with online courses versus the older students who really appreciate being able to stay at home and do their coursework.





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- Emergency Aid for students has been going well (almost 700 applications have been received). 60 applications for the Jaguar Lift Fund were received and they have disbursed about 30 requests so far. On average these students have received about \$300 each.

6. Adjourn

