



Staff Council Meeting  
November 18, 2009

Present: John Lane, Elliot Ballard, Michelle Henninghaus, Debra Shouldice, Liza Alonzo, Sarah Castillo, Kevin Dorsey, Lois Green, Jackie Smith, Michelle Falcon, TC Wilson, Heather Davis, Paulette Purdy, Ross Heinsohn, Becky Van Meter, Chandra Slaughter, Mary Torres, Andrea Guillory, Brenetta Brooks, Belinda Hernandez, Jemma Caesar, Sylvia Medellin, Edward Aries, Gwendolyn Carter, Minh Lam, DeWayne Loville, Edna Alvarenga

Special Guest Speakers: Dr. Flores and Chief Boyle

- I. The meeting was called to order at 2:04.
- II. The minutes of the October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting were approved. John announced that future minutes would be posted to the website and we would try to bring a few copies to the meeting.
- III. Old Business

Elliot gave a quick update on the standing committees. Randy was taking pictures for the bulletin board that Staff Council has on the second floor. The Communications Committee is in charge of the bulletin board and Michelle H. has custody of the bulletin board keys. The Communications Committee will be responsible for making submissions to Skyline announcing meetings three days in advance. The Events Committee had met prior to the regular meeting and elected Debra Shouldice as chair and Michelle Henninghaus as her co-chair. Their first order of business will be the Christmas Decorations Contest.

John asked Paulette to speak on the House of Tiny Treasures. The House of Tiny Treasures, under the umbrella of SEARCH, is an early development center designed to help homeless children. These children, aged 1-6 years old are developmentally behind their age group. Every holiday she collects things and makes up packages so that every child gets something, including the older brothers and sisters.

This year the focus is on survival items to help the children stay warm. So they are collecting sleeping bags, a tote bag, pajamas, underwear, socks and stuffed animals. Randy asked if Paulette had an idea what everything would cost per child. Paulette replied that she thought they would average \$50-60 per child. She also explained that they anticipate putting together these gifts for 60 children. John has asked Staff Council to challenge departments to raise money to pay for the sleeping bag set for a child. Liza suggested that maybe each department could pledge to “adopt” one or more children.

The House of Tiny Treasures is the only organization of its kind in the country. Becky asked if we had a deadline in mind for when donations would need to be in by? After some discussion it was decided that December 15<sup>th</sup> was a good date to cut off the donations so that we could get the money to Paulette so that she could get everything and put the bags, etc. together.

#### IV. New Business

- A. Dr. Flores thanked the staff because we help to make this a better university. He spoke briefly about the leadership retreats and what they hope to accomplish. Their intent is to focus on what is important to staff, faculty and the students and to learn what can be done to improve UH-D.

He has visited classroom, attended focus groups, gone on the leadership retreats, participated in Registration Week in order to get a better sense of the university. To learn more about what do, what we're capable of.

This is important because it takes an university FORTY years to mature. We are coming up on our forty year mark. We've been one thing for so long but a dramatic change is in the making and we will need to change and grow in order to be competitive. The population of the university is changing and growing; future predictions indicate that we could have as many as 20,000 - 25,000 students. This will include on-campus, off-campus, day and night students. We need to determine how to best serve all of our students.

Some of the ways that we can better serve those students is to expand services at night and on the weekends. We need to develop an adult-entry program, and a better sense of community that is not strictly focused on the full-time student. We need to determine what the students need and provide it for them. One example is a childcare/dependent care program.

Another issue that Dr. Flores is addressing is how can we enrich staff development. How do we make this a better place to work? Everyone wants raises, but we have to consider the financial situation for Texas. The Board of Regents do support merit raises but didn't support any raises this year. We want to avoid layoffs, expand the university and make this the best possible university to work at and to go to school at.

Becky asked about marketing for the investiture. Dr. Flores replied that they were hard at work marketing the investiture, and raising money.

Brenetta mentioned that offering extended service has been an issue that has needed to be addressed for a long time. Dr. Flores agreed and added that it might be addressed by using flex shifts, and having some employees that take Wednesday off and work on Saturday instead. He suggested that some people could work from 7:00-3:00, some from 12:00-8:00 and some from 5:00-12:00.

In closing, Dr. Flores stated “Without you there would be no university.”

- B. John has asked Staff Council to please read the new Mission Statement and give him feedback on it.
- C. We have received several Edge Award nominations; these have been handed over to the Staff Affairs Committee for review.

V. Issues/Concerns

- A. Chief Boyle came to Staff Council to address the concerns of staff regarding recent events. The Copy Center is now accepting packages for mailing. On November 11<sup>th</sup> two packages were brought in for mailing. After the party had left the employees noticed that both packages had several of the warning signs of a suspicious package. The mailing from address was the same as the mailing to address, the packages had a large amount of packing tape on them, and both packages were paid for in cash. They alerted the campus police who in turn called in the Metro police and their bomb dog. The dog did not alert to either package. They then brought in a bomb tech who x-rayed the packages in place. One package was cleared as harmless, the other was questionable. A senior bomb tech came in and preformed more x-rays in order to determine if they would need to water-bomb the package in place or not. He decided to go ahead and open the package. It turned out to be a computer hard drive, a couple of cell phones and some wires.

The university is in the process of adding two new services to help campus police in notifying staff in the event of an actual emergency. The first is a text messaging service. The second will be an alert program that will enable campus police to immediately alert everyone’s computer. This program is currently being installed on campus computers.

- B. John reminded everyone to be sure and finish the Mandatory Training and to remind their co-workers as well.

VI. The meeting was adjourned at 3:06.