Members present: Brenda Achey, Nick Beech, Christina Clarkson, Matt Clatfelter, Renea Goforth, Wanda Holt, Angela Linder, Maria Lucas, Robbie Norton, Jeanne Patton, Stacy Salters, Randy Sessions, Emily Stephens, Hercilia Thompson, and Micah Thompson

Ex-Officio Non-Voting Members Present: Ellen Abbey, Michelle Barger, Joe Kleinsasser, Cheryl Miller, Sheryl Propst

Members and Ex-Officio Absent: Frankie Brown, Mary Herrin, Matthew Johnston

Randy – Handed out agenda – Everyone that is here for the first time I just want to let you know that everything in this meeting and then transcribed and that is what is put up on the website for the minutes.

Jeanne – If you are not on the regular committee and you are here when I am typing the minutes I will just list you as “Visitor” when you comment on something, I don’t know your name and I don’t need to know your name I just put it now as visitor made this comment.

Randy – First thing that we want to go over is the survey.

Emily – I know the survey has gone out in Vietnamese but we have not received any responses from that.

Randy – Maria thank you for doing that.

Emily – Maria had he translated over to Vietnamese and sent it over to Woody at the Physical Plant.

Maria – Woody had me send to Ed Gomez.

Emily – So at this point we have not received any responses back and I am hoping we do, but we have provided that outlet so that anyone that wants to respond to can. I have the responses from the survey and I will pass it around if you would like to glance through it. I will email this out to the committee so that you can have a copy of it. Quite honestly the committee chairs if you would like to take the one that pertains to your committee when we are done feel free to do that. Other than that we have not really received any other responses.

Randy – We will still take some in especially for those that were in Vietnamese we won’t turn those away even though it is pass the original deadline.
Angie – And I would like to say that I will follow up with Ed Gomez to make sure that he did get those out.

Randy – Maria did you have someone translate those or did you use Google translate.

Maria – I had someone translate.

Randy – Good maybe that will help to make them a little bit more accurate.

Emily – And of course we will go through the proper channels in order to get them re-translated back into the English version.

Randy – Lets review our sub-committees and where they are at.

Compensation & Pay – Wanda Holt – We put together, I took a draft of what I had done and in the committee we went over it and made changes that were recommended and I would like to bring them forth to the full committee to get your input and changes that need to be made. Also for purposes for clarifications I also printed out policy and procedures that cover some of these things. So look it over if you have questions, comments or changes please let me know.

Angie – If they have changes should they email who?

Randy – Go ahead and email Wanda so that she can get this information, because these are not final White Papers and for those of you are visiting these White Papers will be living documents throughout this process they won’t be finalized until we have final suggested policy that go to the University if this measures passes. If we have a vote in April that doesn’t mean that these White Papers are dead set at that time, because by state law we still have time that we can meet together and redo things and then submit that to the administration. We are going to be using policies at the university just like we do now, not a handbook. Policies tend to be a little bit more binding that a handbook is so we have policies now that we will be suggesting changes to those policies if this measures passes. This is a process for those of you who are visiting that will take 2-4 years to finalize it won’t be final next year if this bill passes. Input is required from everybody and that is the whole idea behind this. If this measures passes when we have a vote in April we will still be having meetings and we will still be taking input and suggesting things to change in the policies for the administration.

Randy – Layoffs and Furloughs committee Stacy I know that you just got your committee together.

Layoffs and Furloughs – Stacy Salters – Nothing really to report yet, we just put out a notice in the University Today and Renea put it out to the Classified Senate I did get a lot of interest but I have yet to get a hold of all of them to confirm that they are willing to serve. But I haven’t had a chance to get ahold of all of them yet. But in addition to that a suggestion by Matt Johnston is that I schedule these meetings regularly and hold them regardless of who can and cannot
attend and by doing so I may get regular participation even if they can’t attend every single meeting. So by doing that I had Emily put all of my meetings on the calendar through then end of the year for every Monday at 1:00 and hopefully we will get some things accomplished the meeting will be at the Woodman Center the Foley conference room on the south side of the building over by the Marcus Welcome Center.

Randy – Okay so if any of you would like to sit on these committees please just let us know. If you know of anyone that would like to sit on these committees please just have them let us know. The committee names and the contact person are listed on the website.

Appeals & Discipline – Brenda Achey – We met last week and we are going to meet again this Thursday the 24th. We have our 1st draft done so we will meet this week to talk about changes to me made to that.

Randy – Yes I only sent you one suggestion I think, to add a timeline.

Brenda – We are working on that, getting a flow chart and other things together. We are also going to be working on questions to ask the folks at KU on what they liked and disliked about the conversion that they made. We would like to either email them or call them.

Policies and Agreement – Hercillia Thompson – Is not here she didn’t have anything.

Performance and Evaluations – Angie Linder – As you see we met we have a draft of our White Paper I gave you a copy of it. If you have any suggestions or comments please email them to Angie Linder. We also went and met with Wanda because so much of ours is tied in with hers especially with compensation. So we did some collaboration and got some ideas from them and vice-a-versa so this is what we have so far. Next we are working on a comparison chart, I think all the committees might be doing that; it will be a comparison of what is currently happening and what will be happening with the change if we vote to switch to USS. Getting ready for the Town Hall meetings so we can hand those out so they can understand what really is happening and what will change, so if you have any comments or suggestions please email me.

Communications and Marketing – Emily Stephens – I was actually updating the website so I didn’t quite get everything up to date so thank you to everybody for sending me your meeting dates and times, any sort of notes all of that is going up on your section of the website. One thing that I ask is for everyone to go out to the website and look at everything not just your page so you can see what is there. Feel free to give myself, Micah, Joe and Maria on the website it is Wichita.edu/asc that is the shortcut that will take you there. Right before I came I was working on a section of the website devoted just to the Town Hall meetings and getting those dates out there to folks. Part of the section of the website that I would like to see done is to be a box on the Town Hall part of the website that says if you have questions that you know you would like to have answered at the Town Hall meetings giving them that opportunity to go ahead and pre-submit those questions for the Town Hall meetings. That way if anyone is unsure
to raise their hand or doesn’t want that spotlight on them this is giving them an outlet to still be able to ask those questions for the Town Hall meetings. Postcards, did everyone get their postcard in the mail? That was the last thing that went out.

Randy – The next thing on the agenda is just a reminder for those who have signed up for the KU trip on November 4th; I think we are leaving at 6:00 that morning. We have the big van because we have 10 people going. Town Hall Meetings they will start the 2nd week of November and we will run 7 of them total that will go from 1 hour to 1-1/2 hours, all the meetings will take place in Hubbard Hall either in room 231 or 218 those are bigger classrooms. I asked for rooms that would hold 100-125 we have meetings scheduled both at 8:30 in the morning for 3rd shifters as well as day shifters. We also have meetings scheduled for 3:30 pm for our 2nd shifters in particular our custodial crew and anyone that works 2nd shift they can be there also. We are going to try to get a hold of Woody and Randy and let them know when these meetings are so that they can get a hold of supervisors to let them know that their employees are to me allowed to attend these meetings. I know there is some that won’t attend but we want to make sure they know that it is okay for them to attend. The meeting will be on the Nov. 12th, Nov. 14, Nov. 19, Nov. 21, then we will skip the week of Thanksgiving then Dec. 3rd, Dec. 5th and Dec 10 those are the meetings dates and what Emily will be posting on the website. Two of those meetings are going to be set aside for Physical Plant staff only. I am not going to limit their attendance at any of the others so but it is so that we can cover your concerns that are different from the others.

Talking points at this time will during our meeting will White Papers questions and answers that we might have. The questions box that Emily is talking about can also take the anonymous questions it will be just a mailbox kind of thing where people can just a question in if they do not want to raise their hand to ask a question. There will also be handouts, I haven’t decided exactly what they will be but one will be copies of the statue that applies to this move so they can read that and get an idea about what is going on. A couple of other things have come up this week, Nick I heard there were some issues over in the Police Department? I guess you resolved that kind of?

Nick – Yes, the issue was people were afraid that their State Commission would be revoked if we switched and moved to a Security Support Staff, but that is not the case we are protected.

Randy – So you guys will not have any issues with commissions you will maintain that. The only thing that I saw would be an option to go to the Board of Regents Retirement instead of your current.

Nick – That is correct, that is the other thing that we looked at.

Randy – That is a selective thing; you can do or not do it?

Nick – Right
Randy – The other thing is I emailed Peggy Palmer who is the President of the University Support Staff Senate at KU, I asked her about concerns KU had regarding this move. Her statement back was “I believe the KU Support Staff has benefited from moving away from the Civil Service. Overall we have benefitted in working with the University of Kansas, two areas that I have heard the most issues expressed has been less leave accrual and with staffing being all internal with our hearing boards”. So there will be if this change happens no State Civil Service Board or anything higher than the University that can be appealed too. Then I asked her about the other issue that I have been hearing a lot about on this campus is that they are being forced to move into the unclassified professional service. Here is what she said about that “Human Resources at KU is conducting a classification in market study review on the KU staff positions to review classifications and compensations as part of this we are able to move from the University Support Staff to unclassified professional staff and that is only if they want too, they are not being forced to make this move”. So if they want to make the move to unclassified they are being allowed to do so, nobody is being forced to do it. The one thing that happens with this is the fact that if that position opens up then that position is being changed over to unclassified. Now with that all being said if you take a look at some of the things going on in Topeka right not the legislature is moving to get rid of the classified service and move everyone to unclassified any way. So what happens when you become unclassified, you get a year to year contract, no choice. Because if the state does away with classified everyone becomes unclassified, the protections that you have now are gone! I had a question the other day: Isn’t that a violation of our contract? As of classified staff we sign no contract, we do not have a contract with the state. We are classified Civil service and if they do away with it we are unclassified with year to year contracts. By moving to USS we still have layoff protection, we still have bumping rights and we still have grievance procedures even though it will end at the University instead of the State. There is a very good chance that classified service within the state of Kansas will be gone within the next 2 years.

Visitor – I said it would be a 50-50 chance, remember politicians have consequences for this, the university there is no consequences, and there were layoffs at KU shortly after the vote at the Physical Plant.

Randy – You know there if there will be layoffs it won’t matter if we are classified or unclassified.

Visitor – More chance if we moved over to USS

Brenda – By law we can’t be laid off because we are moving and that is by law.

Randy – They didn’t have those layoffs because of the move they had those layoffs because they lost money and those layoff would have happened whether the move had been made or not. But bumping rights stay in place and you still have the grievance procedures even though it ends at the President’s Office with the University.
Stacy – Actually the bumping rights do not stay in place that was a fallacy that Matt Johnston clarified for me.

Randy – Well then we work that out with your Furloughs and Layoffs committee then, that is still something that we can keep as long as we want to keep them within the policy, so that is not an issue there. If there is something that we want to keep we will keep it. Any layoffs that have happened at KU have been because of lack of money not because of this change.

Randy – Now you guys who have not been at the meetings before are there any questions from you?

Visitor – We would like to know, some of us want to see the actually policy before we vote.

Randy – That came out with some of the surveys that came through. There was some misunderstanding with the survey, the survey wanted to know what your opinion of the current stuff was, not was what was going to happen. These White Papers are still even when we start our meetings next month are just drafts, we are going to still see some changes to the White Papers these are the suggestions we have that point coming from these meetings and from the survey. So when we start meeting with everyone we hope that we get the majority of the staff at one of those meetings and by the time that we finish the Town Hall meetings we have talked to almost everyone. These White Papers change drastically, even when the vote happens there can still be changes from that. Part of the comments that we have been hearing is about the longevity bonus, this isn’t there for everyone now 10 years from now they won’t have the longevity bonus it is just not there that is part of the state’s decision. State law right now mandates that it is limited to $40 and it is capped at 25 years so you get $1000 no matter how long you are here after 25 years. KU I don’t know if they still have a cap but they jumped their longevity bonus to $50 because they are not required to fall under state legislative laws that says you can only give classified staff $40 for longevity. KU is giving their staff $50; over the period of time that KU has been in the USS they have only had 2 years that they have not had raises. They have received raises every other year, I do not know what the percentages have been but they have received raises every year but two since switching over to the USS. They moved over I believe in 2006 maybe in 2005. My best guess right now is if we stay with the state we are going to receive either no raises or very limited raises. It used to be that we received cost of living raises and stepping raises but they have done away with one or the other then we would get one maybe and it would be very minimal then we might get the other then we would get nothing at all. Now in the last 5 years the University has had money to give their unclassified professionals 2 raises in the last 5 years and we as classified staff have not send anything and the price of gas, price of bread, price of everything goes up and we have not had any raises in the last 5 years. My personal opinion is that this is the best way to go because we would be dealing with local administration instead of Topeka and talking to people who have no idea who we are. You go up there and talk to the legislature and they want to know who you are and tell us we are lucky we have a job; there is no money to give raises. Topeka doesn’t appreciate the jobs that classified staff does anywhere in the state, the local administration will tell you differently about how they feel about the classified service here at the university. Those
White Papers will go out and the final draft will be finalized in the next weeks and we will mail those out before we start the Town Hall Meetings in the middle of November so that people will have time to look at them and ask questions about them.

Matt – Now we you go off of the opinions or changes from the other staff on the White Papers?

Randy – If there are descent suggestions for changes we will go with them, we are not limited to just what comes in from this meeting. This meeting was put together to gather information to see what would be the best option for the classified staff if we decide to make the move. That is what we are trying to do and we are trying to appease everyone. Some of you have seen it some of you haven’t the KBOR is trying to get with the legislature right now to try to increase the about of leave time that classified employees have to include the USS at KU. They are trying to increase it to the same amount that the unclassified professionals receive. What they are trying to do is move us from those who come in brand new and make 3.4 or whatever it is for the first 5 years for vacation everybody will come in brand new from day one just like the unclassified professionals do and make 6.7 hours per pay period.

Visitor – Shouldn’t that be a University decision like everything else?

Randy – No, that is paid by the state not the University, and that was one of the things that we were going to address when and if we make this move anyway. Because once this move happens if it does then benefits will be covered by the University.

Visitor – Just to clarify the last meeting you said that there would not be any uniformed policy between State schools.

Randy – No, we will all be different because we are different.

Visitor – My question to that is this: Now that this is coming up because now that is what we have talked about, K-State is trying to do the same thing with leave, wouldn’t it better for the Regents to have a uniformed procedure across the State Universities. Sounds like to me that they are not going to say yes to WSU and no to another university.

Randy – Some things you are right when it comes to leave and some of the benefits. There is no reason to have a different leave policy across the states’ universities.

Visitor – Sounds like KU is going with what they are and if that is the truth do we just need to start looking at KU policies and say after the accrual it will be like this.

Randy – Quite honestly one of the things that I have asked everyone to do is to not re-event the wheel, so we are looking at KU, K-State and Pitt State very heavily to see what they are doing and what they are getting approved. K-State and Pitt State is getting ready to take their vote in November.
Visitor – I have looked at K-state and actually their appeals process isn’t a bad idea the only thing that I would add is in the final vote that not and HR member be part of that final vote on the appeals board. That is the only thing that I would add, K-States doesn’t look bad, if you really look at. The only issues that we are having or that has been big in the whispers is go to KU and look at the $15 per hour for a plumbing supervisor and then look at what they are asking of the guy. That is very little money for that, go around to every local area in town and ask for those qualifications and see what they are paying those types of guys. I understand that we have the benefits and I am not saying that we deserve $23 per hour.

Visitor – I understand that if someone leaves or walks away from their job or they have taken another job. So now you have a new hire coming in as an unclassified and then that is slowly hacking away at the USS jobs and that is what everyone is afraid of.

Randy – I am not sure what you are saying with that.

Visitor – It just looks like everyone is eventually going to be turned into unclassified anyway.

Randy - That is not what is happening, KU yes is trying to make that move

Visitor – Well is that the same policy that we need to be afraid of.

Randy – The State quite honestly is looking at doing that as well, if you would look at the workforce reports for the State of Kansas the number of unclassified staff hired within the state of Kansas has increased 25% within the last year. So most of the jobs are being converted by the agencies to unclassified.

Visitor – So the way that I look at the USS is kind of a stepping stone or a safe haven for us that already work here.

Randy – You could look at it that way.

Visitor – But if you leave then that job will become an unclassified position.

Randy – KU is doing that on their own it doesn’t mean that WSU will do that. That is just something that KU’s HR is doing. The comment that I got back is yes you can do it if you want but what KU is looking at is that it would be easier for them to handle one category of employee versus two and as unclassified they could still may them more. What happens is at KU you have a brand new electrician job come open and you come in your license and ready to go, classified we can’t hire you above that grade 4, you come in and you are making the lowest amount that you can make with that grade 4. But with the USS structures because of your qualifications coming in you could be hired in at a higher level. There is a range that you could be hired within, so it is a little bit more flexible.

Visitor – Or they could offer you an unclassified position and pay you a little bit more.
Randy – Possibly if HR wanted to do that, I don’t know that we would be going that way here with our HR.

Visitor – You see it on their web page and you ask a question and you can’t even get an honest answer.

Randy – There is a lot of people who do not know what is really going on, the other thing that I got from the lady up at KU is that their first phase of that just ended last week. So they had no numbers that they could supply as far as who took the option to become unclassified, I might be able to find out this week. It may be minimal, but you are right it looks like what they are trying to do is get rid of everything and move it to all unclassified. One of the things that Topeka is looking at the House of Appropriation Committee is the first phase it to take all State Lawyers, all IT people and all upper level supervisors that are classified and make them unclassified. From that point on the next phase would be anybody that is demoted, anybody that is promoted or vacated and re-hired will become unclassified the next phase after that is do get rid of all classified. The state is going to do this, it is going to happen, so we can either take what is being offered now as protection or in 2 or 3 years not have any protection at all.

Visitor – Is the elimination of State Civil Service a trend across the nation?

Randy – I do not think so, I haven’t seen where that is. We have a couple of legislatures that say by having classified staff it limit productivity and creativity, so they want to do away with it.

Robbie – I have seen that 5 states have done away with it.

Randy – I don’t know if 5 states out of 50 is a trend. But that is the way that Kansas is leaning, because we have got legislature that think that our creativity as classified staff is limited as well as our productivity. They think by going to unclassified staff that will get better.

Randy – Anything else guys?

Robbie – You mentioned the leave for unclassified is it 6.7 or is it 8 for the unclassified?

Randy – It is 6.7 for the unclassified per pay period. That is what you get roughly after 10 years for classified it used to be 15 years but now it is 10 for unclassified to reach the 6.7 per pay period.

Visitor – Is there any way for us to build into this some sort of safety net that if HR wanted to start converted us to unclassified that we would need another vote?

Randy – Yes, we could probably build that in somewhere.

Visitor- Would that make you guys feel better?
Visitor – You know realistically the more that I read about this is get what you can out of these and jump ship if you really what my honest opinion that is how I feel, I do not really care about classified or unclassified there is not much difference but I think the biggest thing that you are going to have to get in this vote in after we have a rough draft there is going to have to be a letter right behind from KBOR or the President saying that he guarantees that we are not going to go backwards if we vote yes.

Randy – I can probably get that if we vote yes.

Visitor – I would probably vote yes, if I could get a guarantee that we are not going to go backwards. I understand that you will have to look at job descriptions, pay, raises, the fine tuning of the policies with the lawyers involved, I get all of that. But no one wants to say “hey this is want I voted on and this is not want I voted on”

Randy – That is why we will continue meetings even after the vote, if you look at the law after the vote we maintain the current classifications until we get them all changed and that will have to work with HR to do that. Once they are all changed that is when we would move over to the new pay scales and with the new job description. Every job description on campus will have to be re-written every pay scale will have to be looked at and re-written, maybe within a better market value range than what we currently have. There are a lot of things that will have to happen even after the vote. But we want to be as accurate as possible to what we would like to see change before that vote happens.

Visitor – So are you saying that on this fair market range that if they determine that I am making too much money they will take money away from me?

Randy – NO – they cannot by law the Kansas Statue you cannot lose money. There can be no pay loss, we keep our benefits as they are now, KPERS stays in place and there are no layoffs by law. So no you will not lose money, there are no worries there.

Randy – Anything else?

Randy – Please invite other people to come to these meetings and to our sub-committee meetings.

Thank you.