Alternative Service Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2014
Lindquist Hall room 200

Members present: Matt Clatfelter, Renea Goforth, Wanda Holt, Angela Linder, Maria Lucas, Robbie Norton, Jeanne Patton, Stacy Salters, Randy Sessions, Emily Stephens, Stephanie Sauls, Bryan Carter, Shirley Lewis,

Ex-Officio Non-Voting Members Present: Ellen Abbey, Frankie Brown, Joe Kleinsasser, Sheryl Propst, Christina Gregory

Members and Ex-Officio Absent: Brenda Achey, Nick Beech, Hercilia Thompson, Micah Thompson, Darryl Carrington, Michelle Barger, Mary Herrin, Matt Johnston, Cheryl Miller

Meeting Opened.

Stacy – Our meeting yesterday was cancelled because of snow so we didn’t get the opportunity to talk to Mary, but we’re on her calendar for next Monday. We came to a conclusion about bumping rights. We tallied everything that you guys submitted and took a vote of the people present at the meeting. We came to the conclusion that we are keeping bumping rights as is except we’re going to suggest that it be open across campus and not stay just within the division. So everything else is basically as is according to all the responses that we got, that was the majority. It wasn’t all of them, but it was the majority. We will hammer out one more issue hopefully next Monday and then we will be putting it all together and submitting it.

Randy – Ok great.

Robbie – What other issue do you have left?

Stacy – The employee advocate.

Randy – We need to get Renee in on that. Actually in one of Angie’s meetings last week the thought came up that using a subcommittee of the classified senate, or if the move happens the University Support Staff senate, and have an employee advocacy subcommittee on the senate and let them handle that.

Stacy – Ok, there is also a little bit in the policies and procedures for faculty that talk about having an advocate in cases like that.

Randy – Absolutely.

Stacy – So I think that if there is something in place already we can kind of copy that.

Randy – You know if nothing else just for somebody to vent, to let off some steam to. Just somebody to talk to.
Stacy – Right.

Randy – Ok good. Brenda is not going to be here so I don’t know where that sits. Hercilia is not here. Angie?

Angie – My committee met and one of the outcomes since the last time we met was that we did meet with Matt from HR to go over some of these issues that we are having. We are still hashing out some issues with our white paper, but the one main thing that we’re battling is the changing of the form. We really feel strongly in altering the form and making it more simplified and so we have a few more meetings to iron that out. We’re working on it, but we do not have any resolutions on that but next meeting I will know more. That’s all.

Randy – Ok. Emily, you got anything?

Emily – As you all know the vote announcement went out electronically after our last meeting. It also went out on paper by the end of that week. It’s also been translated into four different languages: Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese and Filipino. If you can think of any other languages it needs to be translated into then please let me know. Copies of those translated vote announcements went both to HR for them to keep in case anyone asks for a copy, and they also went to the Physical Plant to go to employees that would need them over there.

Angie – Who did you send those to?

Emily – At Physical Plant? To Ed and Larry.

Angie – I will call them to follow up.

Emily – Yeah I sent it to them. And the ones I sent to HR I sent to Micah so he should have those. I will get with Joe about putting it in WSU Today too.

Randy – I skipped over something with compensation and pay, I forgot about this. Brian handed everybody this packet of papers. We’ve had some discussion about this, and I know he’s talked about it a little bit with some of the rest of you. Brian why don’t you go ahead and tell us what you found on this.

Brian – Last meeting I was a little late and you guys had already gone over the tuition assistance program. If you look at the handout that first paragraph kind of explains what it is. It’s called the CIC Tuition Exchange; Newman, Friends, Baker and Barton use it and it is for full time employees to get tuition for free. There are over 400 schools that are in this program. There are some things in these white papers that we are just not getting for certain individuals. There is no guaranteed raises, no guaranteed cost of living, no guaranteed longevity pay. Certain things that we’re asking for is great, but some people are still going to vote no, people that are my age and are a year away from 6.77 hours of vacation, or they’ve already got it and longevity, so why would they give up anything? Unless they’ve got young kids like me. It would be a big thing to be able to get some kind of tuition assistance. Ohio State gets 10 credit hours?

Ali – Yeah they do 10 credit hours and dependents can get up to 10 credit hours. They don’t have to apply for it, you just enroll in the program and they figure it out for you. And that’s where Bardo comes from.
Brian – If you want to go to the website it’s cic.edu.

Randy – Does the Ohio State one cover dependents or just employees?

Ali – It’s dependents and employees.

Randy – Wow.

Brian – Most universities give something. Like I said, for a lot of people there is not a lot to gain out of these white papers. At the end of this all we’re really asking for is to be bumped up to unclassified. And the big thing is we can’t afford to do it. If you read this and go to this website you’ll see we can. These are private universities, private entities, private money and over 400 schools who are willing to let you go to their school for free. And we’re one school that gets state money already. And you can go around to these classrooms and the classrooms are just not full. But there can be things put on it, like the class being full and you can get bumped or kids get bumped. That’s fine. They allow up to two kids a year, so if you have a third you’re going to have to pay one which is completely understandable. But it’s for 4 years. I gave away some of the FAQ’s but if you go to cic.edu and type in the search “tuition exchange program” it will give you a list of everybody in it. A lot of people have left this university to go to Friends and Newman, even though the pay is about the same. But the benefits of having your children go to school is a big one. I don’t see why we don’t ask for the highest amount on these white papers, and then if you have to ask for the 6 hours. Let’s not start in the middle, I don’t understand that. This could be a guaranteed thing every year, but there is no guarantee you can get a pay increase.

Stacy – So looking at this from the university stand point, what is required for the university to become involved? What is the down side? Why don’t they offer it now?

Brian – You know, I don’t have any answers.

Stacy – You might have to get Gina involved from the Registrar’s Office to get those questions answered.

Frankie – What I’ve provided to this committee is that tuition assistance is not a classified benefit. What I would suggest is that the presidents of the senate groups meet collectively and present this to the university, rather than try to fight it out on the classified side. And I agree with you, when I first started I was excited and kept hoping that it would be changed so by the time my daughter attended college she would have used some of the benefits, but unfortunately it didn’t happen. So I understand what you’re saying but I’m not sure if they’re wanting to include this in the white paper.

Randy – I like that idea, getting the other senates involved. If you get the entire campus, all 3 of the senates asking for this, I think we might have a better opportunity to get something through.

Matthew – I would assume that the reason we don’t have this is because we’re state classified employees...

Frankie – State employees.

Matthew – State employees. Ok but we’re still state classified employees now. So what they offer to one state classified employee they have to offer to everybody else.
Frankie – That’s right.

Matthew – While we’re on that system they can’t do it without offering it to highway patrolman, and so on and so forth. But if we’re all going to go our separate ways and just become university employees then yeah, we can all get together and do that.

Randy – Is this something Renee that the senate would be willing to work on?

Renee – I think so.

Randy – OK

Renee – I know when I started working here I asked the same thing. I do have a daughter that graduated from here as well. And it’s a huge, huge benefit. I thought about going to Newman or Friends for just that very reason.

Robbie – Well I agree, if we don’t ask for it...

Randy – They can’t say yes or no if we don’t ask.

Robbie – Yeah. And if there are some stipulations like you can’t be in the class if it’s already full, but when there are seats there it’s not going to cost them anything more to have another person sitting in that room because you’ll have to buy your own books because the only thing it’s going to pay for is your tuition. I don’t see why we shouldn’t.

Ali – What would a person put in the white papers, and then even if they probably say no, then we’ll take it up with the senates. Maybe we can at least plant the seed in somebody that this exists.

Frankie – Whose white paper is it in? I would suggest that you meet with Mary Herrin. She is the one that chaired the tuition assistance committee, she’s the chair of that.

Randy – She’d be a good starting point. You got anything else with that Brian?

Brian – No, that’s really it. I just want to put it in everybody’s ear.

Randy – And one of the things we need to find out is the cost for involvement with this would be. What’s it going to cost the university? But yeah, I think we need to ask for it. And I think if we can get the senates on campus to ask for this then I think we’ve got a good chance of at least making it heard.

Brian – Honestly, how many of you in this room would take advantage of it for your or your children right now? I know not every employee is going to use it. But I’m 12 years out from needing to worry about this with my son.

Renee – It’s definitely incentive to stay though.

Brian – Yeah, it’s a huge incentive.
Randy – Ok. Wanda, do you have anything for us?

Wanda – Yeah one thing. We can’t use the word longevity. So you guys help me, continuing? Continuous? Survival?

Randy – Here’s the deal that happened, Renee had a meeting with Andy Schlapp. It was a legislative meeting and Andy stated that we can’t use the term ‘longevity pay’ because if we do the legislature will work on taking it away from us.

Renee – I don’t know if he said legislature, or somebody.

Randy – And we don’t understand what the reasoning behind it is, why the terminology, maybe Topeka has out a trademark on the word ‘longevity’ like the NFL did with Super Bowl? So we need to look for a different term. We can still do it, and ask for it, but we have to have a different term and that’s what Wanda is struggling with right now.

Stacy – Well it’s all about seniority, correct? It’s about that length of service, so maybe a length of service bonus? Rather than longevity.

Randy – Hate to use tenure as the faculty uses that. Don’t want to get confused with the faculty.

Stacy – I kind of like ‘length of service bonus.’ Or ‘service bonus.’

Randy – I like survival.

(laughter)

Renee – I sent a message out to all the other classified senate presidents and none of them have heard this.

Randy – I was wondering. I know they’ve all used it before.

Renee – Right, and he was in that meeting and said “By the way, you’re not going to be able to use ‘longevity’ because they are just going to wipe it.” And that was at that legislative meeting.

Wanda – But has KU’s been wiped?

Renee – I don’t think so. So I don’t understand what he was talking about. But he said he had just heard it that day.

Jeanne – Maybe KU was grandfathered in?

Randy – Maybe we need to get ahold of Andy?

Renee – That’s what I think. Get a little more clarification from Andy.

Stacy – Well, something to consider is that it might just be nit-picking and something that could easily be changed.
Randy – Oh yeah.

Stacy – The policies now are changed very fluently.

Randy – Terminology can be no big deal, so if we just continue with longevity pay at this point until we know for sure what the rationale and reasoning behind it is, then I think maybe we can just...

Renee – Yeah I think that if he thinks that it’s something that could go away then we need to really look at changing the terminology if that’s the case. Maybe it’s just something that he’s hearing.

Randy – The other thing I’d have to look at with that is if we become University Support Staff, our pay is no longer administered by Topeka. That longevity pay would come from the university and it wouldn’t be mandated by Topeka, it would be mandated by the administration here. So how can they take it away in Topeka?

Jeanne – It already comes from the university through Topeka...

Randy – Right, budget wise. Ok, got anything else Wanda? Or is that your big worry for the day?

Wanda – That’s my big worry for the day. And I can go ahead and change the tuition assistance if that’s what you guys want.

Randy – Why don’t you get with Brian and work on something for that and let’s see what we can come up with.

Wanda – And then go see Mary?

Randy – Yeah, get an appointment set with Mary and then Renee can take it to the senate and we can see about working all three of the senates into it to make it a university wide drive.

Wanda – OK

Randy – I’ve got down there as number two, collaboration between committees. One of the things that came up in Angie’s committee yesterday was “what about an employee filing a grievance for not getting an evaluation?” We know you can file an appeal if you get a bad evaluation, but what about an employee filing a grievance against their supervisor if they do not receive an evaluation on time?

Wanda – Is there something here that could set up some tension?

Randy – It could, and that was brought up yesterday. But that’s what I’m talking about for collaboration, is she’ll need to work with Brenda’s committee to see if something can be worked out. But yes, it could cause some tension.

Wanda – We’re not trying to do anything that causes animosity.

Randy – No. Absolutely not, I agree.
Brenda – But not getting an evaluation causes animosity.

Randy – When we’re starting to tie pay raises into evaluation that can cause some issues.

Stacy – But maybe that’s not the first step.

Randy – No the first step…it still needs to go through the regular process where you have some verbal contact first, and then maybe you go over to HR and Matt talks to the supervisor. That’s what we need to look at, the process to do that. Do we follow the standard grievance process in place now, or do we have some special process for that particular incident?

Stacy – Ok so, refresh my memory. How is it set up now? Because last thing that I read was that after a certain amount of time the department head or division vice president would get notified if it was just ok’ed and signed off on. So how would a pay raise come in to play here? Would it be less pay then?

Angie – That might come in to play. A lot of people, especially when you are asking for a pay raise, if they know they are exceptional and the supervisor fails to give a performance evaluation then the system will roll over and give you that satisfactory rating. Which is minimum and they could feel they deserve more than that, so that’s when the conflict comes into play. It’s those people that have not had evaluations for years. The system is already notifying the VP’s and the supervisors, and still nothing is happening.

Stacy – So my question is how pay raises would be associated? Are they on a sliding scale based upon your performance?

Angie – Yeah, they are a percentage…

Stacy – Or does it just mean that if you have satisfactory or above then you are available for a percentage?

Angie – Yes.

Stacy – So it’s not necessarily a percentage itself. The percentage that you are available for, is that compromised?

Randy – It can compromise, yeah.

Wanda – The merit part would be compromised.

Frankie – I’m not sure, and I’ve been around. But in the 80’s when I first started the classified employees did have merit step increases. You could receive a 1 or a 3 step increase depending on your rating. Now the times where a supervisor did not complete the evaluations the employees were not penalized, they received a 3 step increase. We then advised the supervisor, but the employee was not penalized.

Robbie – I thought I read that if your supervisor does not give you your evaluation then it automatically goes to satisfactory. And then those who get better than satisfactory would get more of the raise than those that are just satisfactory?

Stacy – See and that’s my question right there. If a raise was given on a sliding scale...
Frankie – That employee was not penalized and they were given the 3 step. That was my point.

Wanda – So then the department is penalized.

Angie – So they should get the whole 3 step.

Stacy – And that’s what I think needs to be written in there, that the employee cannot be penalized for not receiving their evaluation.

Renee – But then why would you want an evaluation? I’d want the 3 instead of 2, so don’t give me one, please.

Matt C. – Don’t evaluations play into bumping rights then?

Stacy – Yes. Yeah it really does. And I am kind of at a standstill as far as what I have to do based on what you determine as well. So again it goes back to committees talking to each other.

Randy – And I think we are at that point, and that’s why I threw that out there. I think we’re at the point where we need to start doing some inner-communication so we can get this done.

Brian – The bottom line is a lot of people are frustrated that they are not getting their evaluations. I didn’t get my last one, and if our layoffs/raises have anything to do with it then there should be something that goes against our supervisor and hold them accountable.

Randy – And in most cases a supervisor is not going to want you to not get a raise.

Angie – Stacy I will be getting with you.

Randy – The rest of the stuff that’s on here is all just reminder information. For the Town Hall Meetings I do have a request in to MRC to have them live streamed, so hopefully we will have that available. And down there at the very bottom of the agenda, KSU issues. I got an email yesterday from Carol who is my counterpart at K-State and she said their process is pretty much ready to go to the Board of Regents. They have not submitted yet, even though they have had the vote. Their vote was affirmative but there were a few things they needed to tweak in their paperwork. But when she emailed me yesterday she said they have had some sort of a grievance filled with the Board of Regents from the union up there. What the basis of this grievance is that they didn’t have paper and that they didn’t have an outside entity count their votes, so therefore it wasn’t democratic. The government counts the votes for the president and they consider it democratic, so, you know... She doesn’t think it’s going to go anywhere, the Board of Regents has forwarded that paperwork back to the KSU legal team for them to review it and write a rebuttal. She said she would keep me informed as it moved forward. That being said, we are having paper and electronic. Jeanne and I talked with David Wright and his staff is going to handle it. They are working on the process now. What we’re looking at for online is an expireable link where you login with your Shocker ID number and then click on the link once and it’s gone. If you don’t vote once you click on the link you’re out of luck. If you want to do a paper vote we will have people checking WSU ID’s and those ID numbers will be put on the paper.
Jeanne – I think he also said there would be a computer there too, so if they want to do paper there will be someone sitting there at the computer and they will click on the link for them to vote which will then disable that link so they can only vote once.

Randy – The other thing we will do over at the Physical Plant is use their classroom and put a couple of laptops in it, with someone there to assist with the voting if people want to do it online or they will have a paper vote option as well. So anyone who is uncomfortable trying to do it online will have someone to assist them, as well as check ID’s.

Brian – Is there any way we can speak with the president of the union here? Just go over what we’re talking about for the voting so we can agree on what’s happening. If K-State is going to file, I think people here will file.

Randy – I’ve had one person say if there is no paper the union will sue us. But there will be people there to assist them. And the members of this committee will just steer clear except to turn their vote in.

Brian – Their president is pretty mild mannered. If you run it by him and he thinks it’s a good idea then they can’t put a grievance against us. I think it’s worth an email or at least a face to face.

Ali – Is anyone going to be upset with it not being anonymous? I know there’s not another way to do it, but...

Randy – Well we’re not going to have access to those numbers and names.

Ali – We know that, but some won’t do it because they are suspicious that there is going to be a list of who voted for what and they will be judged for it.

Randy – Good point.

Shirley – We almost need to do it like they do with a major election. You have a room where you vote. Your myWSU gets you in the door, register that you’re voting and it’s completely anonymous like a paper thing without your ID, but you’ve been checked in that you voted. Or even if they set up a computer or something.

Ali – The only issue with that is if the union goes after you then you don’t have the evidence, they could say you stuffed the ballot box.

Shirley – You might have to hire a 3rd party, a disinterested party to run that. So they can say they are disinterested and they’re not going to stuff it.

Renee – Isn’t that the point of having David Wright do it?

Emily – They are kind of our 3rd party at the moment.

Randy – The problem though is that people still say it’s university that’s doing it.

Emily – Well but there’s lots of things we have to vote for using your myWSU. If you vote for people on the senate you log in to your myWSU and you cast your senate votes that way.
Stacy – Yeah, but that’s not as volatile.

Emily – It is what it is though. I fully see your concern, but people are going to be mad either way.

Ali – Some say “someone sees this and they see what I voted for.” No amount of reassurance will make them feel better.

Randy – Jeanne, can you talk to David about that a little bit? See if his software guys can come up with something for that?

Jeanne – Yeah.

Joe – What was the K-State vote by the way?

Randy – I don’t know how many actually voted but the difference was like a 2 to 1 ratio.

Jeanne – If we do a check in at the door kind of thing how are we going to do the off campus?

Emily – If we do a check in at the door kind of thing we’ve also just kind of gone against what we’ve already put out in the vote announcement. It says that voting will be available online.

Robbie – I would think that it would be more advantageous for the whole group if we knew we were only going to vote once and nobody else was going to be able to use our ID. That would be more secure than checking in at the door.

Renee – I think it’s better to just have it online. I know not everybody knows how to use it, but can we do a voting booth where it’s online?

Jeanne – But then you go back to the union thing, where they are said we didn’t have a paper vote.

Brian – Could we say they have to contact Randy if they want to do a paper vote?

Randy – They should probably contact David’s office, someone not on the committee.

Angie – We can rent laptops from MRC and take them to Physical Plant.

Randy – And we can probably do some computers over at the library.

Jeanne – We’ll have a laptop and paper sitting there. And if they choose to do a paper they can, but somebody is going to click on the link on the laptop. Or we can get them logged in and they can click on what they want.

Stacy – I like the idea of the online voting. I have had some doubts regarding printing out a paper ballot at your desk and sending it in. You could use any ID number over and over again. What about instead of printing it out you have a place where they have to go in if they want a paper ballot?

Randy – I think that’s what we need to do.
Renee – That’s what I thought it was.

Jeanne – That’s the plan, they can’t print it.

Stacy – Check in at the door with your ID, but don’t actually put their ID number on the ballot, that way it can technically be anonymous.

Randy – We’ve got to validate ID numbers somehow, because part of the issue is whoever David has doing this stuff is going to have to count the vote and compare the number of ID numbers used to make sure there is no double vote.

Renee – Is there any way to borrow a card swiper so that way the ID can be swiped and not handwritten in any way?

Randy – I don’t know, possibly.

Renee – Because then you would swipe it and then you wouldn’t have it on your ballot, but at least it was swiped and not handwritten.

Brian – You’re asking a lot of people that have had cards for so many years to go get new ones if theirs doesn’t swipe.

Ali – If someone has to check the ID’s anyway, they could just type the number into a spreadsheet.

Emily – We need to table this.

Randy – Yes. Jeanne, can you set us up a meeting with David and the officers?

Jeanne – Yes.

Randy – Ok, we’ll go talk to David Wright. We will take all these concerns with us, and as soon as we’re done meeting with him and hopefully have some answers we’ll get back to everybody and let you know. We may have some issues, but we may be able to get the software guy to rewrite some stuff to get this figured out too. If we can get something online and get something that tires directly into the database that has numbers of people doing it electronically then that will tell us if somebody has voted or not. Does anyone have anything else?

Robbie – Do we know where the President Bardo meeting is going to be?

Emily – Right now it is slated for the 1st floor Morrison Hall boardroom. If it changes I’ll let you know.

Randy – Ok. There is an error on the dates. The white papers are not due the 14th, they are due February 28th because we have our meeting with President Bardo on the 11th, so we need them prior to that. You’ve got a little more than two weeks. Everybody think they’ll be OK? You’ve done a lot of good work lately. Anybody got anything else?

Ellen – What are you going to do with the stuff for Policies and Agreements?
Randy – Once these white papers are all done Hercilia is going to have to start compiling them and bring them all together. We’re going to have to have more than just her and a couple of other people do it. It’s going to take a group effort to do.

Jeanne – Maybe what we need to do is decide who is going to be helping her and then see if we can reserve this room and put it up on the screen so we can merge it all together.

Angie – If we had a format to follow we could put our own stuff in it.

Randy – We can look at what K-State has. Ok, anything else? If not, thanks everyone.