

Staff Senate Chair's Report

The following represents a series of activities, meetings, conversations and events at which I represented you, the Staff Senate, and our constituents during the month of June 2017.

June 7 – I met with a candidate for the ombudsman position with Dr. Enid Trucios-Haynes (Faculty Senate) and Dr. Beth Boehm (Graduate School). The three of our positions are the supervisors for this role, so we've been asked to meet with and question two top candidates. Then, I met with my SGA and Faculty Senate counterparts to discuss University parking with consultants brought on to help provide insight into our current and future parking situations. I expressed a strong desire to maintain costs for staff, particularly in years without increases; as well as ensuring we support and recognize our peers working in University Parking.

June 8 – A special meeting on the Board of Trustees was held, off campus, to brief us on the contents of the forensic audit conducted on the University of Louisville Foundation. I won't reproduce here any particular detail given the exhaustive coverage this topic has received in the local media, but suffice it to say I was taken aback by the contents of the report. As the Chairman of the Board has indicated, I fully anticipate a decision on the next course of action to be made at our July Board of Trustees' meeting.

Jun 13 – I attended the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) and although the original topic was to be a discussion of the University's full budget up for vote later that week, we instead discussed the process by which exceptions to the hiring freeze would be heard. We worked as a group on a request form to ensure it asked for, and in cases required, necessary information from which to make sound, strategic decisions on which requests to approve or disapprove.

Jun 15 – Board of Trustees meeting was held and we voted on the Budget. I noted that I have only been on the Board one full year as of July, but have already voted on two University budgets, the first being the budget passed late in August.

Jun 20 – Budget Advisory Committee met, but I was unable to meet as I was ill at home.

Jun 21 – Staff Senate Officers met in the School of Nursing. We talked about methods for improving our response time to Communications and Marketing for our senate write-ups going out in U of L Today. We've discussed and will convey to leadership that we need to understand the ways in which non-staff are feeling the burdens of the financial issues the University faces because it is perceived to be falling primarily to staff. We've discussed preliminarily the September meeting, whether a retreat is financially feasible, and how to best use our non-senate meeting months (August and January) to allow us opportunity to listen to staff directly.

Jun 26 – Staff Senate Executive Committee met in MedCenter One, suite 315. I revealed the imminent departures of two vice-presidents – Jeanell Hughes and Keith Inman. The officers' goals and objectives and status on those was discussed. Committees gave reports.

Jun 26 – Lee Smith, Dr. Enid Trucios-Haynes and I met to discuss the potential creation of a group to help advise Lee on purchasing/procurement related items in the coming fiscal year. It would likely be a small group, no more than ten, and allow access to constituent perspectives on major procurement decisions to be made.

Jun 27 – Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) met and a lengthy discussion was held on the criteria by which hiring freeze exemptions will be made. The default response will be ‘no’ unless hiring freeze exemption requests can meet certain mission-related conditions. The meetings have increased from 60 minutes to 90 minutes to allow ample opportunity for dialogue and perspectives from all members.

Jun 28 – A special meeting of the Board of Trustees was held, the purpose of which was to vote on items related to the transition of the University of Louisville Hospital (ULH) from KentuckyOne Health to University Medical Center (UMC). We voted on personnel actions, but I voted against them based on the financial realities of the University, and out of a need to convey staff discontent with compensation practices surrounding non-staff. I’ve been named to an ad hoc committee to review the tenure and nepotism policies; as well as placed on the Audit Committee.

Jun 30 – A warm and humid day, I made a decision to wear a wool coat to the topping off ceremony of the new Academic Building on the main campus. It really is an impressive structure, even framed as it is presently. Not being on the Belknap Campus much these days, it’s amazing to me to see the progress. I, and several senators, were there to sign the beam before it was hoisted up and set in its final position. It was a nice event, although muggy, and a wonderful change to have a positive experience with our peers.

Coming up

July 10 – Staff Senate regular meeting

July 11 – Budget Advisory Committee

July 12 – Ad hoc committee on tenure & nepotism policies (Board of Trustees appointment)

July 14 – I will have a 1:1 with Dr. Postel

July 18 – Budget Advisory Committee

July 20 – Operational Savings Advisory Group (Lee Smith)

July 20 – Board of Trustees meeting

July 24 – Staff Senate Executive Committee (SSEC) – HSC campus, Shumaker Research Building, 228

July 25 – Budget Advisory Committee